

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 24, 2012

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DoDEA Begins School Year 2012-13 with a Focus on Excellence

ALEXANDRIA, VA -- As the Department of the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) opens doors at 194 schools throughout the world, many improvements and new programs will be under way to make this school year exceptional. With a goal of excellence at all levels, DoDEA plans, directs, coordinates and manages pre-kindergarten through 12th grade education programs for nearly 87,000 students around the world.

DoDEA's mission is to "Educate, Engage, and Empower Each student to succeed in a dynamic world."

"Our focus this year is very simple," said DoDEA Director Marilee Fitzgerald. "Every child has a great teacher. Every school has a great Principal and every school is a high performing school."

DoDEA is a unique school system serving the children of our Nation's Service members and civilians, crossing far more than school district and state boundaries, with schools on three continents. DoDEA maintains three areas of operation: DoDEA Americas or our Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools (DDESS) stateside, and DoDEA Europe and Pacific or Department of Defense Dependents Schools, (DoDDS) Europe and DoDDS Pacific.

A total of 194 schools in 14 school districts are operated by more than 16,000 employees in these three areas. Additionally, our DoDEA Virtual High School (DVHS) serves DoDEA-eligible students, whether they are enrolled full-time at DVHS or are supplementing their other DoDEA coursework.

In recognition of the 1.2 million military children who do not attend DoDEA schools, DoDEA has the opportunity to share resources with military-connected public school districts to increase student success, provide professional development for teachers, implement support practices that minimize the impact of transition and deployment, and provide access to rigorous educational opportunities.

DoDEA is a DoD field activity operating under the direction, authority and control of the Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness.

All DoDEA schools are accredited by AdvancED® <http://www.advanc-ed.org/>.

DoDEA-Americas (Domestic Dependents Elementary and Secondary Schools - DDESS-DoDDS-Cuba), with headquarters in Peachtree City, Ga., is composed of five districts, with 65 schools in the United States, Puerto Rico, and Cuba. While the schools on Guam are officially DDESS entities, they are managed on a daily basis by DoDEA Pacific.

School 2/2/2

DoDEA Europe (Department of Defense Dependents Schools - DoDDS), headquartered in Wiesbaden, Germany, operates 80 schools in Germany, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Belgium, the Netherlands, Turkey, Bahrain and England.

DoDEA Pacific (Department of Defense Dependents Schools - DoDDS), headquartered in Okinawa, Japan, operates 49 schools in Japan and South Korea. While DoD schools on Guam are officially DDESS schools, they are managed on a daily basis by DoDEA Pacific.

Current enrollment for each school, district, and area can be found at:

http://www.dodea.edu/datacenter/enrollment_display.cfm

School Leadership

Director for DoDEA

Ms. Marilee Fitzgerald is the Director of the Department of Defense Education Activity. Fitzgerald has oversight of all DoDEA schools, in the U.S. and overseas, to include the DVHS.

Principal Deputy Director

Mr. Adrian B. Talley was selected as Principal Deputy Director and Associate Director for Education for the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), effective September 4, 2012. As DoDEA's Principal Deputy Director and Associate Director for Education, Mr. Talley will be responsible for the instructional and educational programs worldwide. He will also oversee personnel operations involving more than 16,000 DoDEA employees who support military families overseas and in the United States and its territories.

Area Director for DoDEA Americas Schools

Dr. Linda L. Curtis was appointed in May 2011 and currently serves as the Acting Senior Leader for DoDEA Americas Schools.

Area Director for DoDEA Europe Schools

Dr. Nancy Bresell is the Area Director for DoDEA Schools in Europe. She was assigned as the Area Director in July 2009.

Area Director for DoDEA Pacific Schools

Ms. Martha Brown was appointed in May 2012 and is currently serving as Senior Leader for DoDEA Pacific schools.

Commitment to Education

DoDEA is charged with the responsibility and privilege of educating and supporting the children of our nation's military, and we are fully aware of the toll that war and conflict has placed on our Service members and their families. In providing the absolute best educational experiences possible for their children, we strive to honor and support their valor and service.

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School 3/3/3

A rigorous curriculum and high academic standards are the foundation for a student body that is academically and socially prepared and positioned for success in life. DoDEA students, pre-kindergarten through 12th grade, have a world of academic opportunities available to them. DoDEA schools are consistently ranked in the top ten states for student performance on nationwide assessments such as the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). African American and Hispanic students in DoDEA continue to score higher when compared with their stateside counterparts.

DoDEA students' performance reflects the emphasis and delivery of increased academic rigor and a challenging curriculum despite the unique circumstances the system faces every year through transition, deployments, and an annual 1/3 student population turnover.

On average, DoDEA students score at or above the 63rd median national percentile in core subjects on the standardized, norm-referenced TerraNova Multiple Assessments. The sum of scholarships, financial aid, and grants offered to DoDEA seniors in 2011 was \$38.7 million.

Community Strategic Plan Implementation in School Year 2012-13

To advance DoDEA to new levels of excellence, DoDEA, along with students, parents, military leaders and other stakeholders, engaged in a comprehensive process to revise the Community Strategic Plan (CSP). This plan will guide our near-term imperatives and our long-term opportunities. DoDEA's mission is to "Educate, Engage, and Empower Each student to succeed in a dynamic world." The CSP outlines five goals aimed at achieving that mission: Student Excellence, School Excellence, Talent Excellence, Organizational Excellence and Outreach Excellence. The plan expands opportunities for all military-connected children, and sets a common understanding of our shared mission, vision, core values, and strategic goals both internally and to our stakeholders.

DoDEA will annually review the goals and initiatives contained in the CSP to ensure we are providing our students with a high-quality education. We are dedicated to using data to identify our strengths and challenges in order to make strategic adjustments that will produce the best outcome for our students.

This plan represents the collective commitment from all involved in the pursuit of educational excellence for military-connected children, which is what we owe our families who have made a far greater sacrifice for our country.

To learn more visit the DoDEA website at: www.dodea.edu

Common Core Standards Adopted in School Year 2012-13

DoDEA is joining 46 states, two territories, and the District of Columbia in adopting the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) into its curriculum, instruction, and assessment programs. All participants in the CCSS Initiative are working together to implement high quality standards in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science for Kindergarten through 12th grade. These curriculum areas are research-based, rigorous, relevant to the real world, and reflect the knowledge and skills America's students need for success in college and careers.

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School 4/4/4

Teachers, administrators, parents, and military commanders will play key roles in this process. Adopting the CCSS will benefit DoDEA's highly mobile student population which moves frequently between public schools and DoDEA schools.

DoDEA's 21st Century Schools and Facilities Renovation and Construction Initiative

In School Year 2010-2011 DoDEA launched an aggressive and comprehensive program to completely renovate or replace 134 of its schools worldwide. In FY 2012 Congress appropriated \$483 million to support our school construction program.

This year, DoDEA opened the doors of the new Irwin Intermediate School on Fort Bragg, NC. During the 2012-13 school year DoDEA will continue to move forward with its military construction initiative. The pace of the DoDEA military construction program has increased dramatically over the past year. During the last year, DoDEA initiated 40 school designs and made five school construction awards. In the upcoming calendar year, DoDEA anticipates an additional 21 designs to be initiated and 13 additional construction awards.

DoDEA recognizes that schools of the future must be flexible and adaptable, facilitating new and innovative ways to deliver instruction and meet the needs of all students.

DoDEA's 21st Century schools take into consideration innovation in education, curriculum delivery, use of technology, and the growing expectations for sustainability and energy conservation. We are pleased to announce that the Antilles ES was awarded for construction recently and is on pace to be one of our first schools purpose-built to facilitate a 21st century educational delivery. There will be many more to follow.

New Construction and Renovations

DoDEA opened the doors for students at the new Irwin Intermediate School on Fort Bragg, NC after a complete replacement of its facilities. The pace of the DoDEA Military Construction has increased dramatically over the past year. DoDEA currently has 49 projects in design and 8 projects in construction. During the last year DoDEA has initiated 40 school designs and made five school construction awards. In the upcoming calendar year, DoDEA anticipates an additional 21 designs and 13 construction awards.

Assessments and Student Performance

In support of a challenging curriculum, DoDEA continues to measure student performance with a variety of assessments, such as the TerraNova, the PSAT, and the SAT. At the end of the year parents received the scores for the TerraNova, and parents are encouraged to contact schools how these results are used this year and how they can help at home.

DoDEA average TerraNova results continue to show achievement above the national average in Reading, Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies in all grades tested. From 2011 to 2012 DoDEA scores also show gains in most grades and subject areas.

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School 5/5/5

DoDEA's 4th and 8th grade students will participate this year in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the Nations Report Card. The purpose of this nationwide test is to provide comparisons of student achievement in Reading and Math with national performance and the performance in each state of the nation.

All DoDEA schools participate in the continuous improvement process to ensure continued accreditation by a prestigious U.S.-based accreditation agency, AdvancED, that is approved by the U.S. Department of Education. The accreditation process certifies that our schools adhere to challenging standards that support excellence in the education of all students. This year more than 40 schools will receive an external visit from AdvancED to certify the adherence to rigorous standards of excellence and continuous improvement of services for our students.

21st Century Teaching and Learning

Twenty-first Century Teaching and Learning (21st CTLL) is a student-centered approach to learning that builds on Responsive and Inclusive Teaching to engage students through technology and the environment so that students create richer meaning from their learning. Although 21st CTLL is not new, using technology and the environment for student construction of meaning is. It is a response to learner needs and a student-centered approach incorporating innovative instructional strategies that acknowledge student differences for learning.

In DoDEA's 21st century schools, development of school environments that support flexible and adaptable spaces will be critical for teaching and learning. Teams of HQ staff visited schools and communities to listen and learn. DoDEA's three 21st CTLL Technical Work Groups (TWG) developed products to assist the organization in a broad understanding of 21st CTLL.

As we begin the school year, the 21st CTLL TWGs will continue their work to define 21st century teaching, learning, and leading. They have drafted student outcomes, defined a curriculum and launched a website that will house research, the project's development and a site for feedback. The TWG membership includes Area leadership, Area and District Instructional Specialists, Teachers of the Year, Principals, Association Representation, and Headquarters staff.

STEM

DoDEA recognizes that competence in STEM, especially in science and mathematics, gained in grades K–12, forms the foundation of an educated, capable, and technical future workforce. Likewise, careers in STEM fields contribute greatly to the nation's capacity for innovation and are among the fastest-growing and highest-paying careers in the economy, therefore it is vital that we engage and prepare students in STEM education as well as excite them about career opportunities in STEM.

DoDEA's main goal for STEM education is to increase the number of students -- particularly those from traditionally underrepresented groups -- who are prepared for post-secondary studies and careers in STEM. To accomplish this goal, DoDEA is taking several steps; last school year we piloted four Career Technical Education (CTE) engineering applications courses- Biotechnology Engineering, Gaming Technology Engineering, Green Technology Engineering, and Robotics.

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School 6/6/6

This year, DoDEA has expanded these CTE offerings in STEM coursework to nine more schools: Daegu High school, Daegu, South Korea; Kadena High School, Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, Japan; Zama American High School, Camp Zama, Japan; LeJeune High School, Camp LeJeune, North Carolina; AFNorth Unit School, The Netherlands; Incirlik Middle/High School, Incirlik Air Base, Turkey; Vilsek High School, Vilsek, Germany; Kaiserslautern High School, Kaiserslautern, Germany; and Naples Middle School/High School, Naples, Italy.

These efforts are only one prong of DoDEA's multifaceted approach to advance STEM education. Mathematics and science are essential parts of the foundational knowledge that all students need to acquire, and a solid knowledge base in these areas enables students to succeed in high school and careers.

Because math should be a gateway, not a gatekeeper, to a successful college education or career, we will ramp up efforts to increase student proficiency in mathematics by increasing graduation requirements for mathematics and adding four new courses (Algebraic modeling, Advanced Functions, Financial Literacy, and Engineering Applications).

In addition, we will expand efforts to support an effective STEM-focused approach to existing curricular resources in grades 9-12. This includes the purchase of new textbooks and resources for all high school science courses and replenishing and purchasing materials and equipment for the CTE engineering applications courses.

As we look outward to the future, technology provides the means to expand learning beyond text-based facts. Technology can help students understand hard to grasp concepts in all subject areas, particularly in mathematics and science.

Special Education

DoDEA knows that all students can learn when instruction is geared to the students' strengths and when the students are given sufficient opportunity to learn. Special educators work collaboratively with general educators and share the responsibility for ensuring that students with identified disabilities will meet with success.

DoDEA will pilot the ReThink Autism Program in all schools. This web-based program assists in generating individualized plans, assessing each student's current level of performance, and developing individualized program goals. It also provides access to evidence-based teaching interventions so a student can follow a customized curriculum path based on ongoing assessment.

This year, we will pilot 150 electronic tablets in select special education classrooms for student with disabilities. The tablets will be used to increase access to the general education classroom for students with limited language skills, improve life skills, and pre-academic skills.

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School 7/7/7

1:1 Laptops

The role of computers in education has evolved into a versatile tool that helps students learn at school and outside of school, thus enabling smarter learning. For that reason, ten secondary schools began DoDEA's one-to-one (1:1) laptop initiative in the second semester of school year 2011-2012. Four more schools in the Pacific -- where sufficient bandwidth and wireless density is available -- will be joining the initial pilot schools. The laptop program is geared toward providing students and teachers with access to contemporary materials required for college and career readiness.

Additionally, students will have access to emerging digital curricular materials and teachers will have access to professional development geared toward lesson design, digital citizenship, and classroom management. We understand the importance of providing teachers with professional development. Professional development is crucial to any implementation; therefore, professional development options based on the needs of teachers, whether site-based or job-embedded, will be provided. The lessons learned from the pilot will help immensely in planning for a larger roll-out to secondary schools around the system.

School Year 2012-13 Calendars

DoDEA schools begin School Year 2012-13 on different dates in each area. School breaks vary in each area as well. School calendars can be viewed at:
<http://www.dodea.edu/home/calendars.cfm>.

Graduation Requirements

The current DoDEA high school graduation regulation will be revised during school year 2012-13. This revision will ensure all future graduates are prepared for the increased demands for a work force capable of responding innovatively to critical issues and the constant flux of global changes in the 21st century.

We will increase student proficiency in mathematics by increasing graduation requirements for mathematics. Four additional courses will be introduced to the curriculum as well (Algebraic modeling, Advanced Functions, Financial Literacy, and Engineering Applications). Changes under consideration are: calculation of grade point average; rigorous course requirements; and diploma types.

DoDEA wants to ensure all stakeholders have an opportunity to provide input into this revision process. This will be accomplished virtually via the DoDEA website for both internal and external stakeholders between August 1 and September 30, 2012. Please visit the DoDEA website to provide input.

The new graduation regulation will be implemented school year 2013-14 for the graduating class of 2017. Current DoDEA high school students will be grandfathered under the current graduation requirements when the new graduation requirements take effect next school year. The new graduation requirements will apply to incoming freshmen beginning in school year 2013-14. Learn more at: <http://graduation.dodea.edu/>

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School 8/8/8

DoDEA Virtual High School

As a fully accredited virtual learning program, the DoDEA Virtual High School (DVHS) offers flexibility for DoDEA secondary students to meet academic and career goals through enrollment in courses to supplement local school offerings or to earn a diploma through a fulltime option for students enrolled through the Non DoD School Program (NDSP). The DoDEA Virtual High School offered diplomas to its first graduates in June 2012. Pilots to extend DoDEA's Virtual School Program are also planned for blended delivery of elementary and middle school course offerings in spring 2013.

In School Year 2012-13, DVHS will offer approximately 60 courses, including 18 Advanced Placement, and 42 core curriculum courses designed to meet all DoDEA graduation requirements. To make course requests, DoDEA secondary students may register through their local DoDEA schools or Area Non DoD School Program (NDSP) Office. For more information about the program or to contact DoDEA Virtual School Program staff, please see the website at <http://virtual-hs.dodea.edu>.

The Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

DoDEA represents DoD as an ex-officio member to the Council of State Governments' Interstate Commission on the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children. DoDEA is committed to ensuring its own school policies and procedures mirror those in the Compact guidelines, and related rules to the extent permitted by law.

The Compact governs member states in several areas, including school placement, enrollment, records transfer, and graduation for children of active-duty military families. Currently 43 states are members of the Compact.

DoDEA's Educational Partnership

DoDEA's ability to impact educational outcomes for children of military families is best leveraged through outreach and partnerships with school districts, professional organizations, and most importantly parents.

DoDEA's Educational Partnership is devoted to providing resources and support military connected school districts. The majority of the 1.2 million school-age children of military families do not attend DoDEA schools.

Through outreach, DoDEA's Educational Partnership works collaboratively with the U.S. Department of Education and provides resources to public school districts that educate military children. The Educational Partnership is focused on transforming the responsiveness of educators and to build the capacity of the social and emotional climate of schools as well as increase student achievement.

Since 2008, the program has awarded grants to more than 165 military-connected public school districts. These three-year projects impact nearly 280,000 military-connected students and improve academic instruction in nearly 900 schools.

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School 9/9/9

The grant program provides resources to military connected public school districts to develop and implement projects that are designed to:

- Promote student achievement in the core curricular areas.
- Ease the challenges that military students face due to transitions and deployments.
- Support the unique social and emotional needs of military students.
- Promote distance learning opportunities.
- Improve educator professional development.
- Enhance and integrate technology.
- Encourage parental involvement.

In addition to providing grants, DoDEA develops and disseminates information and resources, and provides professional development opportunities for educators in military connected schools. Examples include:

The Students at the Center resource guide provides educators with an understanding the unique issues military children face and provides the military community with information on public school systems. To date over 13,500 Students at the Center guides have been distributed; and

Professional development provided to public school educators through a set of 16 special education modules, and face-to-face training. To date, DoDEA has distributed 220 Special Education module sets to LEAs and trained 529 teachers and administrators from eleven public school districts.

In response to the increasing number of children with a deployed parent, DoD expanded the Child and Youth Behavioral - Military and Family Life Counselor (MFLC) program to support and augment military-connected public schools. There are currently 220 MFLCs in 337 military-connected public schools providing emotional support and guidance for over 113,705 students and provide support to educators as they serve students.

Library Information Centers

DoDEA will launch a fully integrated library automation system which will allow our students to access school library materials, eBooks, and information from over 25 online databases through one search box. Students will have the ability to retrieve current information resource products that are updated daily, from any Internet accessible computer in the school, home, and community, as well as, while transitioning from one school to another.

The launch of this system provides equitable access to contemporary information products across DoDEA for all students and standardizes the process for using these materials. DoDEA school library information specialists assist students in identifying, locating, and evaluating information. They help students deconstruct informational messages communicated through print, electronic media and the Internet in order to develop higher order thinking and problem solving skills. The implementation of this system will serve as the foundation for teaching digital literacy skills that help our students become critical consumers of ideas and information.

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School 10/10/10

DoDEA's Student Meal Program

The DoD Student Meal Program follows the same USDA regulations and guidelines as schools throughout the United States for nutrition and meal components. School menus follow USDA nutritional requirements. Students who qualify under federal guidelines are provided free and reduced-price meals. Over 7 million meals are served annually in 185 DoDEA schools in schools throughout the United States and overseas.

On January 25, 2012, First Lady Michelle Obama and Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack unveiled new standards for school meals that will result in healthier meals for our students. The new requirements will raise nutrition standards for the first time in more than fifteen years and improve the health of nearly 32 million children that participate in school meal programs every school day. The healthier meal requirements are a key component of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, which was championed by the First Lady as part of her Let's Move! campaign and signed into law by President Obama in December of 2010.

The nutrition standards will be phased in over a three-year period, starting in School Year 2012-13 and will include ensuring that students are offered both fruits and vegetables every day of the week and substantially increasing offerings of whole grain-rich foods. Schools will also only offer fat-free or low-fat milk varieties and saturated fat, trans fats and sodium will be reduced.

Nutrition and the meals served in our schools are very important issues to DoDEA and ones that we take seriously. In addition to the above nutrition changes, DoDEA has been spearheading a Food Transformation Task Force with USDA, Military Services, Navy Exchange (NEX), Army, Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES), and Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) representatives in order to address a new direction for the DoD Student Meal Program.

The Student Meal Program in DoDEA schools overseas is operated through the Military Services. The Services appointed, as the school food authorities, the Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES), now The Exchange, on Army and Air Force installations, the Navy Exchange (NEX) on naval bases and the Marines provide their own meals in Iwakuni. The school food authorities provide 27,000 student meals daily to DoDEA students in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade throughout Europe and the Pacific.

The Student Meal Program in DoDEA schools in the United States is operated independently at each community by a Child Nutrition Director who oversees the cafeterias at each school.

Overseas schools will not see a price increase for the 2012-13 school year. Some stateside DoDEA schools prices will have to be increased to comply with federal regulations.

DoDEA's Student Transportation Program

A great deal of planning and coordination is involved in operating DoDEA's worldwide student transportation system. More than 50,000 DoDEA students are registered bus riders. These students travel nearly 56,000 miles every day on 1,500 separate routes. DoDEA also provides transportation support for students traveling to and from curricular and co-curricular activities, after-school activities and clubs, sports practices and events, and other special school events. DoDEA provides special needs students with dedicated transportation services that are supported with trained safety aides on board every school transportation vehicle.

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School 11/11/11

Student Activities

After school activities vary by school. DoDEA offers a full range of interscholastic athletics programs in our high schools. All schools offer a range of academic clubs and activities to address a wide variety of student interests. Check with your school to see specific availability for after-school activities.

To learn more about DoDEA's Back to School efforts, visit www.dodea.edu.

DoDEA consists of the Department of Defense Dependents Schools located overseas, and the Department of Defense Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools located in the U.S. and its territories and possessions. DoDEA provides education to eligible DoD military and civilian dependents from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. DoDEA also provides support and resources to Local Educational Activities throughout the U.S. that serve children of military families.

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