DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
EDUCATION ACTIVITY
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MAY 21 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR DODEA EDUCATORS

SUBJECT: Adoption of the Common Core State Standards

I want to share with you the decision made by the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) to adopt the Common Core State Standards. We are at a very pivotal and exciting time in our schools, and have the opportunity to embark on bold pathways to position our students for success in whatever course they choose.

The Common Core State Standards Initiative began more than two years ago as collaboration between state governors and education leaders to reform education systems across the nation. This collaboration gathered energy and momentum and has evolved into a group of 46 states, two territories, and the District of Columbia. All are working together to implement high quality curriculum standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics for Kindergarten through 12th grade. These curriculum standards 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.

Embracing the Common Core State Standards places DoDEA side-by-side with other school systems in the United States that are committed to improving education for all children in this country. Adoption of the Common Core State Standards marks a defining point for our highly mobile students. Consistent standards will enable DoDEA students to stay on track even when their families are moving between the states or overseas.

Our educators will play a key role as DoDEA begins the process of implementing the Common Core State Standards. Therefore, we believe it is critical for all teachers and their respective teacher union organizations to be involved early in the process. DoDEA will be actively seeking and encouraging your input, opinions, and expertise. Common Core State Standards will not mean that DoDEA is moving toward a single national curriculum. We envision the adoption and implementation of these standards as a means to use a diverse array of rich curriculum resources that will help DoDEA formulate its own curriculum to meet the needs of our students.

DoDEA's implementation of the Common Core State Standards will take place gradually over the next several years. We will move with alacrity to keep pace with our counterparts, but will do so in thoughtful, measured steps to ensure we do our best to wisely integrate changes in curriculum, instruction, and assessment into our existing framework. Our goal is to provide a smooth transition from our current curriculum standards to the Common Core State Standards in our classrooms across the world. As we focus on Continuous School Improvement, the Common Core State Standards will be integrated to create more student-centered learning opportunities and environments in our schools.

I will keep you updated about our progress as DoDEA moves forward with implementing the Common Core State Standards. To learn more about the Common Core State Standards, please visit the website at http://www.corestandards.org.

In order to make the transition to the Common Core State Standards a success, we will need the help of everyone in the school community – students, parents, teachers, administrators, and military leaders. DoDEA is very fortunate to be able to call upon a committed and talented educator workforce that makes things happen, and I know I can count on your support during this important and exciting transition.

Marilee Fitzgerald
Director