

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Frank O’Gara or Elaine Kanellis

Voice: (703) 588-3260 or (703) 588-3265

Email: frank.ogara@hq.dodea.edu

elaine.kanellis@hq.dodea.edu

DoDEA SCHOOLS BEGIN 2008-2009 SCHOOL YEAR

ARLINGTON, VA – Nearly 80,000 students have begun the 2008-2009 School Year in Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) schools around the world.

DoDEA plans, directs, coordinates, and manages the education programs for Department of Defense (DoD) dependents who would otherwise not have access to a high-quality public education. DoDEA consists of the Department of Defense Dependents Schools (DoDDS) located overseas, and the Department of Defense Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools (DDESS) located in the United States and its territories and possessions. DoDEA provides education to eligible DoD military and civilian dependents from pre-kindergarten through grade 12.

The Non-DoD Schools Program (NDSP) provides support and funding for the education of eligible sponsors assigned at locations where the DoD does not operate a school within commuting distance. For more information about the NDSP, visit www.dodea.edu/schools/nonDoD.

All schools within DoDEA are fully accredited by the North Central Association (NCA).

School Statistics

DoDEA operates 192 schools configured into 14 districts located in 12 foreign countries, seven states, Guam, and Puerto Rico. To support educational achievement for all DoDEA students, the system operates and maintains more than 1,400 facilities around the globe.

Construction will be complete for five new schools during the 2008-2009 School Year in these locations:

- **Ryukyu Middle School, Okinawa.** The previous middle school configuration on Okinawa accommodated only 7th and 8th grades due to lack of space for the 6th grade in the two existing middle schools (Kadena Middle School and Lester Middle School). Construction of this school will allow the sixth grade students that were located in elementary schools to transition to a middle school environment. This new school was funded by the Japanese Facilities Improvement Program (JFIP) and will have an enrollment of 542 students. The school has a complete campus including a football field and 400M track, swimming pool, and basketball courts.

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DoDEA Begins 2008-2009 School Year—2/2/2

- **McCool Elementary School, Guam.** The project replaced the existing elementary school at Guam and has a capacity of 850 students. The total cost of the construction was awarded for \$39.7 million.
- **Sigonella Elementary and High Schools, Sicily, Italy.** This new school replaced the functionally deficient and seismically inadequate elementary school and high school facilities. This school was constructed to accommodate 700 students 1st -12th grades.
- **Grafenwoehr Elementary School and Middle School, Germany.** This joint elementary and middle school was constructed to support USAREUR restationing actions. This new elementary and middle school will accommodate all of the 1,444 Kindergarten to 8th grade students in the Grafenwoehr/Vilseck area.
- **Gordon Elementary School, Ft. Bragg, North Carolina.** (To be completed by December 2008.) This new elementary school is required to accommodate enrollment increases as a result of new Army housing construction in the Northern Training Area. The school will have a 450-student capacity and will be supporting students in Kindergarten – 5th grade.

Assessment Achievements in DoDEA Schools

In School Year 2008, DoDEA students continued to perform well above the national average in the TerraNova Multiple Assessment, administered in the spring to students in Grades 3-11. On the whole, DoDEA students scored 10-26 percentile points above the national average (50th percentile) in all subject areas (Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science) for 2008.

Leadership and Organizational News

The 2008-2009 School Year brings leadership and organizational changes to the DoDEA system. Dr. Shirley A. Miles is DoDEA's new Director. Prior to becoming DoDEA's Director in June, Dr. Miles served for more than one year as DoDEA's Associate Director for Education and Principal Deputy Director.

Mr. Kevin Kelly is just completing his first year as DoDEA's Associate Director for Financial and Business Operations. Prior to joining DoDEA, Mr. Kelly was the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Planning and Administration with the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Environment, Safety and Health. Mr. Kelly, a twenty-year veteran of the U.S. Army, has nearly 35 years' experience in the military, government, and private sectors in the areas of programming, planning, and budgeting for globally dispersed organizations as well as logistics, procurement, safety and security, information management, and financial management.

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DoDEA Begins 2008-2009 School Year—3/3/3

Mr. Charlie Toth will begin his second year at the DoDEA Headquarters this fall. Mr. Toth is currently the Acting Associate Director for Education, pending a permanent selection for that position. In October 2007, Mr. Toth was named as DoDEA's Assistant Associate Director for Education. Mr. Toth, who has served with DoDEA for nearly 29 years, was DoDEA's District Superintendent for the Korea District prior to his arrival at DoDEA Headquarters.

Mr. Bob Blewis was named as DoDEA's Chief of Staff in July. Since arriving at DoDEA in January 2006, Mr. Blewis has served both as the Assistant and Acting Associate Director for Financial and Business Operations.

2008 Alignment to the 2006-2011 DoDEA Community Strategic Plan

In April 2008, a committee composed of representatives from HQ, Area Deputy Directors, and employee union/association officials met in Arlington, Va., to review the 2006-2011 Community Strategic Plan (CSP). Their charge was to ensure congruency and alignment among goals, outcomes, measures, and milestones. The result of that committee's work was an alignment to the plan, called the 2008 CSP Alignment.

DoDEA's CSP provides a roadmap for keeping it in the forefront in advancing the Department of Defense's agenda for education, and as a leader in the Nation for improving student performance and achievement.

The 2008 Alignment to DoDEA's 2006-2011 Community Strategic Plan (CSP) is part of DoDEA's efforts toward continuous improvement in providing the highest quality education for all students to ensure their success inside and outside the classroom. It is easier to read and understand, provides clear and specific outcomes, and defines measures to better match outcomes. The 2008 Alignment to DoDEA's 2006-2011 CSP is a downloadable document, available at <http://www.dodea.edu/pubs/docs/csp2008.pdf>.

2008-2009 School Year Initiatives

DoDEA will implement several new initiatives and programs during the 2008-2009 School Year, including GradeSpeed and a Standardized Report Card for Grades 4-6.

GradeSpeed

DoDEA is implementing GradeSpeed for School Year 2008-2009, for grades 4-12 worldwide. GradeSpeed will make communication between parents and teachers easier, more effective and more timely.

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DoDEA Begins 2008-2009 School Year—4/4/4

Through this web-based program, parents will be able to log in and see grade and attendance data for their children. The teacher will also be able to email progress reports to parents. After logging in, parents will also be able to view school announcements and calendar events.

Standardized Report Card for Grades 4-6

A new Standardized Report Card for School Year 2008-2009 will be introduced for Grades 4, 5, and 6 in Department of Defense Dependents Schools (DoDDS) in Europe and the Pacific as part of DoDEA's ongoing effort to align educational programs at all schools throughout the system.

A similar report card was adopted for Grades 4, 5, and 6 in the Defense Dependents Elementary and Secondary Schools (DDESS) in 2006 and this year, the initiative was expanded to DoDDS schools. Sixth graders who attend middle schools will not use the new report card.

The new report card is an electronic report card that allows parents to view the DoDEA curricular standards to see how their child's performance aligns with meeting grade level standards. The Standardized 4-6 Report Card features sections on Student Achievement, Student Performance, Learning Skills, Attendance and Tardiness, and Overall Comments. Using the new report card, parents will be better able to monitor their child's progress by using performance and achievement grades given in each subject area throughout the year.

2009-2010 Kindergarten Program Change

DoDEA will make an important change to its entrance age eligibility requirement that will affect the Kindergarten Program for the 2009-2010 School Year. The entrance eligibility birth date will be adjusted from October 31 to September 1. That means a child must be five years old by September 1 to enroll in kindergarten. The change aligns DoDEA with national trends as well as the age requirement in many military-impacted states.

This change will also affect students in DoDEA's Pre-Kindergarten, Sure Start, and first grade programs. A child must be four years old by September 1 to attend Pre-Kindergarten or Sure Start and six years old by September 1 to attend first grade.

Future Initiatives

To prepare students for the 21st Century, DoDEA will devote resources and efforts toward reviewing and renewing curriculum standards across all subject areas and using technology to deliver that curriculum.

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DoDEA Begins 2008-2009 School Year—5/5/5

Because DoDEA students live all over the world and the challenge of transitioning has a great impact on their education, DoDEA will be placing great emphasis and effort on its distance learning program to help more students, especially at the secondary school level, get the coursework they need and have those courses appeal to their interests. DoDEA is also developing a virtual school that will deliver quality educational opportunities to all of its students – 24 hours a day, 7 days a week -- no matter where they may be.

More Information about DoDEA Available Online

Additional information about DoDEA schools is available on the system's web site, www.dodea.edu. Parents can access information such as school locations, addresses, school contact information, school calendars, immunization and registration requirements, curriculum guides, and school lunch programs.