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News Release

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Federal Education Association Calls for Investigation into Complaints Against DoDEA Director and Senior Staff

The Federal Education Association is urging an immediate and thorough investigation into numerous complaints of waste, fraud and abuse and other irregularities allegedly conducted by DoDEA Director Dr. Shirley Miles and members of her staff.

The complaint was filed with the Inspector General of the Department of Defense in September by a longtime DoDEA employee and former assistant to Dr. Miles.

Among the allegations made in the complaint to the DoD Inspector General (IG):

- That Dr. Miles violated federal contracting and procurement laws in the awarding of a multi-million dollar DoDEA contract by maintaining improper and potentially illegal contacts/communications with the winning group, and possibly providing them with insider information.
- That Dr. Miles engaged in illegal or improper hiring practices for a number of positions. Among the complaints:
 - That Dr. Miles failed to reveal her past friendship/professional relationship with the candidates hired for DoDEA's newly created Area Superintendent positions in Europe and the Pacific and failed to recuse herself from the interview process.
 - That Dr. Miles pressured DoDEA staff to find a teaching position for her daughter-in-law and that senior staff at DoDEA Headquarters assisted in the process, despite knowing the hire would violate Veteran's Preference rules as well as other practices.
 - That senior staff at DoDEA headquarters by have illegally changed competency codes for headquarters employees in order to protect junior staff from an upcoming Reduction in Force, at the expense of older employees.

- That Dr. Miles committed and/or ordered numerous instances of waste, fraud and abuse, among them:
 - That Dr. Miles regularly abuses the Joint Travel Regulations by purchasing “upgradeable” airlines tickets for travel. Such tickets are more expensive than regular tickets. Dr. Miles also allegedly requires that all of her travel be booked on her favorite airline, regardless of the cost relative to other airlines, so that she can continue to accrue Frequent Flyer Miles.
 - That Dr. Miles abused her government purchase card on numerous occasions, including purchasing a computer that she then refused to use because she did not like the shade of red that it came in.
 - That Dr. Miles has willfully wasted taxpayer funds by scheduling DoDEA meetings and conferences at spas and other resorts – such as the Squaw Peak Resort in Phoenix, made famous by AIG as the sites of one of its taxpayer-funded retreats.

The above allegations and others were made by Belinda Croteau, a former DoDEA employee who worked at the agency for nearly 10 years, including working as administrative assistant to Dr. Miles and her predecessor, Dr. Joe Tafoya.

Ms. Croteau’s experience and proximity to Dr. Miles give added credibility to the allegations and demand that they be taken seriously, according to FEA President Michael Priser.

Priser went on to say: "These allegations are very troubling and, if true, indicate serious problems in the management of DoDEA. FEA takes waste, fraud and abuse of federal funds, as alleged in Ms. Croteau's complaint, very seriously. The possibility that veterans and military spouses may have been unfairly passed over in the hiring process is also very troubling."

"FEA calls upon the Inspector General to investigate these allegations thoroughly. To do any less would leave serious doubts about the quality and accountability of DoDEA management. Where wrongdoing is found, those responsible should be held fully accountable in accordance with federal law."

A copy of FEA’s letter to the DoD Inspector General’s office is attached.

With nearly 6,000 members, the Federal Education Association (FEA) is the leading advocate for educators and classroom excellence throughout DoDEA. The association was founded in Germany in 1956 and now represents faculty and staff in Europe, Asia and Stateside.