



Pacific Area Update
March 20, 2020

COVID-19 Action Report

Dear Colleagues,

It has been a difficult and challenging few weeks. We have been submersed in bad news of the developing pandemic. Not surprisingly, this has caused a great deal of concern for the health and safety of our students, families, and selves.

FEA has received worried reports and inquiries from a large number of our members during this time. Since the first notice of the potential impact of the COVID-19 Virus, our FEA leaders have engaged with DoDEA leadership to mitigate the impact on our members at every level in the chain of command. Given the fluidity of the situation, efforts are ongoing and consultation is happening on a daily basis with agency representatives. Protecting your health, security, and rights has been at the forefront of our efforts.

Your FRS and Country Presidents have worked numerous hours to help coordinate a united message, to make your voices heard with our administrators and to ensure that the support that you need is provided.

I know you realize that with working in a military community, there are many stakeholders with many diverse ideas and perspectives. Finding a path forward that satisfies the high level of scrutiny from so many with a vested interest is a challenging task. Please know your FEA leadership has worked closely with their DoDEA counterparts to develop a plan that would address the concerns of the stakeholders and still ensure that the mission is being accomplished. Also, know that administration has listened and considered everything that we have brought to their attention.

Korea, The Pacific East, has been at the forefront of this developing crisis with students successfully learning virtually from home for several weeks now. TEAK President, Sharon Manuel, and Superintendent, Dr. Jeff Arrington, have collaborated for countless hours to ensure teachers' needs were taken into account while constructing a plan for students to work from home. Their product has served as a model and has impacted all other areas of DoDEA as those areas have subsequently been called to teach and learn from home during this time of crisis.

As you have recently found out, schools in the Pacific East and in Okinawa of the Pacific South will close and students will be learning from home for the next two weeks with the intention of returning to the classroom after Spring Break on April 13. While this is new to students and faculties in both of these areas, the efforts to prepare for this has been ongoing since schools in Korea first closed their doors.

"Strength Through Unity"

In the Pacific East, NEATA President, Mike Adair, and Superintendent, Dr. Judy Allen, and in Okinawa, AEAO President, Mary Anne Harris, and Superintendent, Mr. Jim Journey have closely monitored the developing situation. They have received your many concerns, elevated them when necessary and discussed solutions. During these deliberations, the safety and health of our students and teachers has been at the forefront of their minds as decisions are made for the next steps

Additionally, to further illustrate how comprehensive the effort has been, Pacific DSE, Ms. Lois Rapp has been considerate and responsive to all concerns that have been elevated to her desk directing available staff and resources to help meet demands. FEA President, Brian Chance, and DoDEA Director, Mr. Thomas Brady have met regularly and worked together in Washington to consider your concerns and make sure all of the resources of DoDEA are made available to our students and teachers ensuring their needs are met to the best of their ability.

Finally, the chain of command has worked! Maybe it has not worked as quickly as some of us would have liked, but it has worked at every level. Your concerns, your voices are being heard. Please continue to do the amazing job you do with students and know that you can elevate your concerns through your Faculty Representative Spokesperson at your school and feel confident that we will work to find the best answer for you.

Kind regards,

Jamie



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