



Pacific Area Update
March 2020

COVID 19

News sources, and social media are unrelenting with updates and tragic stories regarding the impact of the Corona Virus. Around the Pacific, Districts and schools are preparing for the possible worsening of circumstances surrounding the spread of the virus in their area and the closing of schools. In Korea, schools have been closed to students for many days and most teachers have been assigned to work from home. Understandably, this has been the cause of much fear and uncertainty. Many of our members have contacted us and expressed concerns for the safety of their students, families and themselves.

Please know that we are aware of the developing situation and we are actively working with DoDEA management daily at every level to ensure that the provisions of the Pandemic Emergency Plan MOU that FEA President, Brian Chance, referred to in the “Presidents Report” ([Link](#)) are being implemented fully.

Check with your school’s Faculty Representative Spokesperson if you have any questions/concerns about what is going on.

Pacific Area Leadership Council

The PAL Council held its winter meeting February 1-3 in Okinawa.

During the meeting, a number of concerns/topics are addressed to included but not limited to: CSI/Cognia, RAT/PCS/DTS Order, LQA Payments, Manning Documents, Onboarding New Teacher, Testing, JCC promotions, DoDEA HR, DPMAP, FC Tuesday, Grievance Resolution, FAP & Abuse allegations, School Climate, Mentoring Program implementation, SLP caseload, NEA dues system, Elections, school administrator concerns, CTE program cuts, additional duties creep, and more.

Additionally, reports from council members were given pertaining to concerns for their area. The UniServ Attorney and Assistant UniServ joined the meeting via video conference to discuss ongoing issues and to give reports. Strategies for addressing current and ongoing concerns were discussed and plans were made. Budgetary reports were given and related concerns are discussed.

It was a very productive and informative three days and a big thanks goes out to TEAK President, Sharon Manuel, NEATA President, Mike Adair, AEAO President, Mary Anne Harris, AEAO HCRC, Teresa Snowden, Assistant UniServ, Stephanie Trotter, and Uniserv Attorney, Robin Smith for their Contribution and attendance.

“Strength Through Unity”

FEA Elections

FEA elections are being conducted. Ballots have been mailed to members and packets include a preaddressed and prepaid envelope. If you have not received a ballot, you can contact your FRS for a copy. Please follow all official Ballot guidelines when voting. Ballots **must be received via USPS at the FEA Washington office by March 24.**

Please vote!

Whistle Blowing

During my tenure as an association representative, members have raised numerous concerns about lack of help from our Human Resources Department and gross mismanagement of employee job related issues by various administrators. FEA continues to confront these concerns as they come up by sounding the alarm with management, seeking reparations, and pursuing grievance actions against DoDEA. Some change has happened, but it has been slow.

Many of us are unable get any support from DoDEA HR when we need help or guidance with a concern relating to our job. It is very common for emails to go unanswered for days or weeks if they are answered at all. Phone calls are difficult to manage with time differences and constraints, and when a call is made, it may not be answered or returned.

The DoD & DoDEA has a couple of vehicles to report on good and poor customer service or mismanagement. One is Interactive Customer Evaluation (ICE) and the other is DoDEA OIG (Office of the Inspector General) for Fraud Waste and Abuse.

A short time ago, I was perusing the ICE website. I had not realized that it also provides information regarding the number of positive or negative reports submitted to each office. I was a little surprised to see that most DoDEA offices had 3 or less submissions. I know I hear more frequently than that about the service or lack of, provided by many DoDEA offices.

If you experience good or poor service from a DoDEA office, please consider submitting an ICE comment. It will be more meaningful to include your contact information if you are comfortable to do so. For your convenience, I have included links to the various offices and their purpose:

<https://ice.disa.mil/> Use this link to leave feedback for DFAS, DoDEA Area, District, or School administration

https://ice.disa.mil/index.cfm?fa=site&site_id=171 Use this link to leave feedback regarding services provide by Headquarter's offices: DAPS, EAS, Personnel (DTS), Benefits processing, Personnel Actions Processing, TOPS

<https://www.dodea.edu/Offices/OIG/index.cfm> Use this link if you suspect fraud, waste or abuse of power at your school.

If you have any questions or are unsure if your concern fits into one of these resources, please consult with your FRS.

Retirement

Are you near that point where you can stop living at work and start working at living? If so, the following information is for you. It comes to you in part from the January Pacific Area Consults and part is borrowed from some other sources.

Creditable Service Computation:

Creditable Service is service that can count toward retirement. Should you have a question about other service that may count toward **retirement**, you can check these sites to know for sure. <https://www.opm.gov/retirement-services/fers-information/creditable-service/> - employees covered under FERS <https://www.opm.gov/retirement-services/csrs-information/creditable-service/> - employees covered under CSRS

Employees considering retiring should review the Army Benefits Center website at <https://portal.chra.army.mil/abc> for information on Planning for Retirement, Pre-Retirement Benefits Overview DCS Briefings, Retirement- Civil Service Retirement System (CSRC / CSRS Offset) and Retirement - Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS).

Benefits/Retirement Specialist at ABC-C are available to answer any questions and can be contacted via telephone or email at: Toll-free: (877) 276-9287 / Commercial: (785) 240-2222 / DSN: 520-2222. Note: From the main menu, you will have the option to enter your SSN or DoD ID Number or you can press* to bypass this option and then select #4 for DoDEA employees. Fax: (785) 239-6228 or DSN 856-6228

Specialists are available from 7:30 to 4:30 (CT), Monday through Thursday except federal holidays.

Email address for DoDEA employees only: usarmy.riley.CHRA-HQS.mbx.abcc-DoDEA-Inquiries@mail.mil. Email inquiries will be answered within 48 hours of receipt.

Mailing Address:

Army Benefits Center - Civilian
305 Marshall Ave
Fort Riley, KS 66442-7005

Members are encouraged to submit a request for a retirement estimate in GRB (formerly EBIS) if they are within 5 years of retirement. This allows ABC to review their records for accuracy prior to retirement. To request a Retirement Estimate:

1. Log into GRB Platform <https://www.ebis.army.mil/> using a CAC enabled computer. (Please use internet explorer as your web browser)
2. Once logged in, click on "Launch"
3. Click on "Menu" at the top
4. Click on "Requests"
5. Click on "Submit a New Request" at the top right of the page
6. Use the drop down to select "Retirement Estimate"
7. Fill in all of the requested information and continue on through the prompts until your request has been submitted.
8. Please allow at least 30 days for the processing of a request. Employees will be notified via email once their estimate has been completed and they can log back into the GRB platform to retrieve a copy of their retirement estimate.

Our CHRA partners at ABC-C have also produced several YouTube videos and continue to work on additional topics related to Benefits and Retirement. Please note both the current and future lists below. (*ABC-C = Army Benefits Center-Civilian*)

ABC-C YouTube Channel - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPKLtn8DnceWIZDmJgjJMzQ>

- Types of Retirement (FERS)
- FERS Coverage
- FEGLI into Retirement
- FERS Civilian Deposit/ Redeposit
- ABCC Health Retirement Packets
- ABCC Retirement Estimate Report
- ABCC Completing Beneficiary Forms
- ABC BATS R
- ABC eBATS
- ABC Injury Comp (IC)/ Unemployment Comp (UC)

NOTE: GRB is the site formerly known as EBIS mentioned in the above videos.

Videos currently being worked:

- FERS P56 (Military Deposit)
- FEHB into Retirement
- eCOMP
- New Employee Orientation
- Disability Retirement (FERS)
- Calculating your FERS Ret
- Survivor Annuity (FERS)
- TSP
- CSRS Ret System
- CSRS Deposit/ Redeposit

(Note: you can find additional information regarding most of the items on the list above by simply using the bulleted topic terms to search other videos on YouTube.)

Information is also posted on the DoDEA website at <https://www.dodea.edu/Offices/HR/index.cfm> as well as DoDEA CONNECTS at <https://www.dodea.edu/DoDEA-Connects.cfm>

RAT/EDT-Summer Recess 2020

Order processing for summer RAT is ongoing. If you are participating in RAT or if you are going to be requesting EDT for your dependent, it is advisable to request your orders early to avoid delays.

An updated RAT/EDT instruction guide is being developed, but no completion date is available. The guide will first be published to <https://www.dodea.edu/DoDEA-Connects.cfm> and will be shared with us afterward. Until the guide is released, teachers are advised to continue to use instructions that were provided last year. These are attached to this document for your convenience.

Helpful information to note:

- TOPS orders (DD Form 1614) will not include fund site information. Employees need the DTS travel orders with funding information in order to procure tickets via SATO.
- Funding information on the DTS order is an estimated cost for budgeting purposes and not an allowable expense amount for the travel. Reimbursement for self-procured airfare is limited to the GSA constructed cost that can be calculated by SATO or found on the GSA City Pairs website <https://cpsearch.fas.gsa.gov/cpsearch/search.do>.
- It is better to request an alternate destination at the start instead of requesting an amendment later. Alternate destinations are reimbursed up to the GSA constructed cost to the HOR. Requesting amendments will delay the reimbursement process.
- Excess baggage mailed in USPS must be to the HOR or approved alternate destination.

RAT/EDT Voucher Submission

We believe at this point most our FEA members have been repaid for RAT 2019. However, if you have not been reimbursed for last year or prior years, please email Brian Chance (bchance@NEA.org) or me (FEAPacific@gmail.com) so we may follow up to ensure you get your reimbursement.

Additionally, a number of teacher were denied reimbursement of postage due to policy changes within the agency. Efforts to reverse this are ongoing and we will hopefully know something soon.

Problems? Here is where to Start!

If you find yourself confronted with an issue pertaining to pay or entitlements, or other concerns, please start with the secretary at your school for guidance.

Also, you can inquire about your pay and allowances by following this link at a school work station: <https://globalservicedesk.ds.dodea.edu/workcenter/tmtrack.dll?shell=srp#catalog> and submit a ticket.

Or, identify your need by subject below and follow the link:

Subject:	Contact:
Pay, staffing, personnel record, Position Information Forms (PIFs), and approved Academic Salary Lane (ASL) inquiries.	usarmy.ria.chra-nc.mbx.dodea-recruitment-communications@mail.mil <i>(include last name in subject line)</i>
New hire, in-processing, and employee forms/paperwork inquiries	usarmy.ria.chra-nc.mbx.dodea-recruitment-divis@mail.mil
Overseas entitlement inquiries	usarmy.ria.chra-nc.mbx.dodea-overseas-entitlements@mail.mil

Employment Application System (EAS) applicant inquiries.	usarmy.ria.chra-nc.mbx.dodea-eas-applicant-inquiries@mail.mil
Link for USA Staffing/USAJobs announcement inquiries.	https://portal.chra.army.mil/hr_public?id=app_inq
DD Form 1164 for non-temporary storage of household goods.	NTS@dodea.edu
Travel and allowance inquiries.	TravelAllowance.PolicyRequests@dodea.edu
ABC Benefits Inquires	usarmy.riley.chra-hqs.mbx.abcc-dodea-inquiries@mail.mil
CHRA HR Phone Directory is also included with this document for your convenience.	

Additionally, you can contact the following HR Representatives for your area:

Pacific Area HR Supervisor		
Leigh Johnson, Supv.	315-634-8395	Leigh.Johnson@DODEA.EDU
Pacific East Team:		
Marilyn Avery, HR Specialist	315-225-1646	Marilyn.Avery@dodea.edu
Kaylee Digiando, HR Specialist	315-225-1644	Kaylee.Digiando@dodea.edu
Pacific West Team:		
Thalia Austin, HR Specialist	315-755-1196	Thalia.Austin@dodea.edu
Liliana Clayton, HR Specialist	315-755-1198	
Pacific South Team:		
Susan Maravich, HR Specialist	315-634-1451	susan.maravich@dodea.edu
Monique Garner, HR Specialist	315-634-7021	Monique.garner@dodea.edu

If you have tried to find solutions from the sources listed above and are not making any progress, contact your FRS. Provide to her/him a timeline of your efforts to date to resolve your concern and any correspondences you have had with DoDEA's Human Resource personnel. Your school leader will elevate your concerns to the appropriate FEA representatives.

Lastly, If you find yourself confronted with disciplinary action for conduct or performance, please see your FRS for guidance.

Respect

Don't forget to wear **RED for Respect** on Tuesdays!

Thank you for your membership!

Jamie



James Sellers
Pacific Area Director
FEAPacific@yahoo.com
DSN: 634-0632

“Strength Through Unity”