



March 2024 Newsletter

★ **Director's Desk** — March has been another busy month, encompassing two weeks of MLA bargaining, meetings at the DoDEA Americas and HQ levels, a visit to Fort Moore Schools, and my day-to-day responsibilities of working with presidents, attorneys, and members. I am constantly reminded of the importance of communication within FEA-SR. Our Association has the freedom to raise various topics of concern with the Agency, topics that impact our schools, students, staff, and working conditions; however, we depend on you, our members, to tell us what

matters most—what needs fighting for or advocating. Please continue reaching out to your building representatives(s) and local president with issues or concerns so we can address them, and in some cases, meet the MLA timelines for raising those concerns with the Agency. Presidents do an excellent job of informing me when we need to address questions and concerns with either DoDEA Americas or HQ. Thank you for communicating with your Association representatives so we can best support our members! It takes all of us working together!

★ **Area Council Meeting Minutes** — “Area Council” refers to FEA-SR’s governing body but also the biannual meeting/conference that brings together FEA-SR leadership and DoDEA management officials to discuss issues and concerns impacting our students, schools, and members. The most recent Area Council took place on February 1-3, 2024, in Herndon, Virginia. FEA-SR leaders had a wide-ranging discussion with Dr. Minor, Mr. Woods, Mr. Worford, Mr. Bull, and Mr. Brady. [The draft meeting minutes \(37 pages\) are available for your review on the FEA-SR Website.](#) If you have a question about something in the minutes, please ask your local president who was in attendance.

★ **Recent Meetings with DoDEA Americas** — Due to the number of agenda items and DoDEA officials needing to leave Area Council a bit earlier than expected, I am currently in the process of discussing the “leftover” agenda items and other topics with Dr. Minor and Mr. Woods. In our meeting last week, we discussed Serious Incident Reports (SIRs), technology availability, probationary periods, substitute teacher shortages, co-teaching expectations, duties and responsibilities of CSC chairs, learning walkthroughs, training/professional development, recognition for ESPs, reassignments, and grievances. In our recent meeting, I conveyed FEA-SR’s perception of a communication gap between higher organizational levels and the field. She acknowledged our concerns, and we can hope there will be additional communications from her office to the field to help resolve some of the issues we

discussed with her recently.

★ **Certified MLA Bargaining** — Bargaining on a successor Certified MLA continued on March 4-8 (in-person bargaining at the DoDEA Americas Regional Office) and March 18-22 (virtual bargaining). The FEA-SR Certified Bargaining Team has been working to develop counterproposals to the Agency. So far, DoDEA's Chief Negotiator and I have signed off on eight (8) articles. We will return to the bargaining table on April 8-12 for the fourth week of negotiations.

★ **ESP/Classified MLA Bargaining** — The FEA-SR ESP Bargaining Team is heading to mediation to resolve the remaining contract articles that FEA-SR and DoDEA were unable to agree to during the initial six (6) weeks of bargaining. FEA-SR has reached out to the Federal Mediation Conciliation Service (FMCS) to schedule mediation. An update regarding the bargaining progress thus far can be found in the [February 2024 Newsletter](#).

★ **Impact and Implementation Bargaining** — I am continuing to engage DoDEA HQ in impact and implementation bargaining over changes in working conditions. I started working to negotiate the implementation of the DoDEA Assessment for Learning Platform (DAFLP) but agreed to hold in abeyance until the Agency issues a revised Information Paper. Then, bargaining will resume. And alongside Fort Liberty President Annitra Smith-Lincoln, we are bargaining the implementation of the Secondary MTSS Pilot Program at Fort Liberty's middle schools. I have also been in contact with HQ to ensure our MOU on Math curriculum materials/training is being implemented correctly.

★ **Visit to Fort Moore Schools** — This week, I had the privilege of visiting Fort Moore in Columbus, Georgia. I toured Dexter ES, Faith MS, McBride ES, Stowers ES, and White ES; met with building administrators and the community superintendent; provided training to the elected officials of the Fort Moore Education

Association (FMEA); and attended an afterschool membership meeting to share updates. A special thank you to FMEA President Penny Wilson and FMEA Vice President Shenese Fraser for a wonderful visit!

★ **Monthly Grievance Report** — FEA-SR attempts to resolve violations at the lowest level, but when DoDEA refuses to collaborate, we take action through grievances and unfair labor practices (ULPs) to uphold our members' rights. This month, FEA-SR filed Association grievances including a grievance over the Agency's failure to notify and consult with the Association before announcing the "Mid-Atlantic Secondary Math Performance Task 2 (CFA) Analyze and Adjust Professional Learning" for all secondary Math teachers in the Mid-Atlantic District; a grievance over an unwarranted Letter of Reprimand that was issued to an educator; a grievance over the Agency's unilateral implementation of a Secondary Math Indicator to the Learning Walkthrough Tool (second grievance filed over walkthrough tools this year); a grievance seeking reimbursement for the denial of expenses that an educator incurred in connection with an EDA; a grievance challenging longstanding pay issues and seeking back pay for an ESP member; and a grievance seeking reimbursement, plus interest, for certified educators who had money unlawfully garnished from their pay.

★ **District-Level Association Meetings** — I want to recognize and thank local presidents for the important work they do to represent members. For example, presidents meet with their district leadership at least monthly. In March, presidents from the Southeast met with leadership to discuss vacancy announcements, Math curriculum materials and unit frameworks, staffing and logistics related to Universal PreK, hiring additional ESPs, back-to-school supply lists, and members' emotional well-being. Presidents from the Mid-Atlantic met with leadership to discuss notification of upcoming trainings, MDR/reassignment letters, Math training and curriculum materials, PSCD staffing standards, Cognia accreditation, training for

Universal PreK, and licensure reciprocity.

★ **FEA-SR Representation on the Universal PreK Focus Group** — As FEA-SR continues waiting on DoDEA HQ to bargain the implementation of Universal PreK for SY 24-25, the Division of Curriculum and Instruction notified FEA-SR of its decision to convene a PreK Focus Group. To ensure that our educators' voices are heard by the Agency, I was proud to recommend Melody Wilson (Fort Campbell) and Letetia Kidd (Fort Knox) from the Southeast District, and Honey Saucier (Camp Lejeune) from the Mid-Atlantic District to serve as the FEA-SR representatives on the focus group and provide feedback on the draft DoDEA PreKindergarten Guide. Thank you for taking on this responsibility and for supporting our members. DoDEA should listen to PreK educators who are working in the trenches and know how to make this successful!

★ **Artificial Intelligence in DoDEA Schools** — A few weeks ago, I participated in a DoDEA HQ meeting about the current status of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in DoDEA. While technological advancements are exciting and offer promising opportunities, we must remain vigilant about the potential adverse effects of AI on bargaining unit employees, such as privacy issues. The technology, methods, and means of performing work are considered permissive subjects of bargaining, which means that AI is within FEA-SR's purview to negotiate. If you notice AI being implemented at the direction of the Agency, please email your local president and copy me (ADanahy@nea.org) so we can track any concerns.

★ **FEA-SR Election for RA Delegates** — As an active FEA-SR member, you should have received a ballot in the mail for the FEA-SR Delegate Election for the 2024 NEA Representative Assembly. Per the ballot, you are invited to vote for no more than five (5) of the listed nominees. Listed in alphabetical order by last name, the nominees are: Teresa Brown, Nona Croom, Lee Gladden, Windie Kehn, Leslie McClammy, Tracy Lopez, Tara Nye, Luis Rios, and Tammy Wright. Read the

instructions carefully and mail your completed ballot back using the enclosed postage-paid envelope by the April 5, 2024, deadline for receipt. Ballots must be received (not just postmarked) by April 5 to be counted.

★ **FEA-SR Election for the HCR Coordinator** — This spring, FEA-SR members will have the opportunity to select the FEA-SR HCR Coordinator from a list of candidates. Per the FEA-SR Bylaws, this is a three-year commitment and an active position on the FEA-SR Area Council. [The Self-Nomination Form was posted on the FEA-SR Website](#) and [distributed through the email distribution list](#) on March 25, 2024. To qualify as a candidate in the upcoming election, the completed and signed [Self-Nomination Form](#) must be emailed to Stateside.Elections@gmail.com no later than midnight EST on April 8, 2024.

★ **DoDEA Licensure Reciprocity** — DoDEA notified FEA-SR that, “Effective immediately, DoDEA will accept a valid, unencumbered professional state teaching license issued by a State Board of Education of the United States and its U.S. territories, as well as the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) in content areas, or the state’s equivalent, as fulfilling all qualifications for professional teaching education and certification in content areas for all current DoDEA educators and applicants.” However, current DoDEA Licenses will not be automatically updated. If a current DoDEA educator wishes to have the additional certifications included on their DoDEA license, they will need to follow DoDEA’s add-on request process. In the Americas, that consists of emailing the DoDEA Certification & Recertification Worksheet indicating the desired add-on certification, current and valid state teaching license, and official transcripts to americasregionallicensure@dodea.edu.

★ **Read Across America Grants** — To support NEA’s theme of “Celebrating a Nation of Diverse Readers,” Read Across America Grants were awarded to local associations at Fort Moore, Guam, Fort Jackson, and Camp Lejeune. While the bulk

of the funding was provided by NEA, as it has been in past years, a portion of the funding was provided by FEA-SR as a result of a motion passed by the Area Council on February 3, 2024. For example, at C.C. Pinckney Elementary School on Fort Jackson, the local association welcomed an author who shared his poetry and the power of positive affirmations with staff and students. At Dexter Elementary School on Fort Moore, the local association purchased children's books for the school library, brought in guest readers, purchased prizes for their "Masked Reader" contest, and purchased items for a book character parade. Congratulations to everyone who applied for and received funding.

★ **Women's History Month** — In the spirit of Women's History Month, we've celebrated the extraordinary achievements and contributions of women throughout history. From those who broke barriers to the everyday heroes, this month has been a powerful reminder of the strength and resilience of women. As educators, let's carry this inspiration forward, incorporating diverse stories into our classrooms to empower the next generation.

★ **Certified and Classified — Know Your Rights/Know Your MLA — Article 6, Section 2(a)**: "The Association shall be given the opportunity to be present at any examination of a unit employee by a representative of the Agency concerning an investigation if: (1) The employee reasonably believes that the examination may result in disciplinary action against the employee; and (2) The employee requests representation." Although this is a contractual right under both the Certified and Classified/ESP MLAs, it is also a statutory requirement often referred to as Weingarten Rights.

When called to a meeting with administration, ask for its purpose to prepare. If you reasonably believe the meeting could result in disciplinary action, assert your Weingarten Rights by requesting an Association representative (such as your FRS or Local Association President). If a meeting shifts into an investigatory interview

(i.e., the administrator is questioning you) without a representative present, politely request a pause to involve an Association representative. Remember, it is **your** responsibility to ask for representation as DoDEA management is not legally obligated to remind you. Should your request be denied, inform your Local Association President for further action. Per Article 25, Section 1 of the Certified and Classified MLAs, remember that you or your FEA-SR representative can delay the questioning/meeting for 24 hours allowing you time to consult with the Association and prepare.

★ **April Membership Meeting** — FEA-SR has scheduled our April Membership Meeting for Tuesday, April 9 at 6:30 p.m. EST via [this GoToMeeting link](#). If you have ideas for topics/issues we can discuss during the meeting, please email me at ADanahy@nea.org. We hope you can join us!

In Solidarity,
Alan

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✉ This email was sent to FEA-SR members on March 29, 2024. Please remember to [visit the Member Login page on the FEA-SR Website](#) to access all recently sent emails, information updates, and other resources for members.

FEA-SR Member Login

FEA Stateside Region ~ 1000 Hope Mills Road PO Box 41035 Fayetteville, NC 28309 [unsubscribe](#)