



September 2023 Newsletter

School Visits — September continues to be another busy month for the FEA Stateside Region. Over the past few weeks, I have been fortunate to visit schools at Fort Liberty, Camp Lejeune, Fort Stewart, and Laurel Bay. I met with members, administrators, and participated in afterschool membership meetings. Witnessing our educators in their element, I am continually inspired by the expertise and passion of both our certified and ESP members I have had the honor of meeting. The conversations I participated in highlighted not just the enthusiasm but also underscored the pressing issues that demand our attention. My heartfelt gratitude to local presidents Annitra Smith-Lincoln, Teresa Cauley-Boutall, Curtis White, Rose Wood, Marangeli Encarcion, and Tanya Melton for arranging these opportunities. I

eagerly anticipate my visit to Fort Jackson next week, which is my last stop before the Area Council. Subsequent visits are being lined up for October and November, starting with Fort Novosel on October 4. Further details about upcoming visits will be shared when my schedule is finalized.

Taking Action — Over the past few weeks, grievances have been filed over incidents involving DoDEA's failure to notify the Union of changes in working conditions, failure to bargain changes with the Union, PII breaches, and illegal debt collection practices, just to name a few. Although FEA-SR does not want to resort to grievances because more can often be accomplished through amicable communication and collaboration, it is FEA-SR's responsibility to file when necessary. Aside from grievances, FEA-SR is awaiting DoDEA management's responses to several bargaining requests concerning changes in the Southeast and Mid-Atlantic Districts that were inappropriately implemented without any union or teacher/member input. FEA-SR is diligently following up on these matters and will provide updates to members as soon as further information is available!

Upcoming Area Council Meeting — The Fall Area Council Meeting will be held on September 29-30 at the DoubleTree Oceanfront Resort in Myrtle Beach. I am collaborating with presidents and using the results of the first ever FEA-SR Membership Survey to develop the meeting agenda, which we will work through with Dr. Minor, Mr. Worford, Mr. Bull, and Mr. Woods. To promote enhanced communication and transparency, FEA-SR will be sharing updates and information following our meeting. Our meeting on Saturday, September 30 will include a special visit from Kay Stuertz, the founder of FEA-SR and the first FEA-SR Director who bargained the original MLA and set our union on a path of strength.

Bogus MLA Litigation Update and YouTube Link — Litigation has continued over DoDEA's unilateral implementation of an unsigned, bogus MLA. On Friday, September 22, Oral Arguments were heard by a three judge panel of the U.S. Court

of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit. We will certainly have more to say about the case at Area Council, but attorneys Ben Hunter and Richard Hirn believe that things went well. The Court was mostly interested in whether or not it has jurisdiction to hear the case. To appeal a case to the U.S. Court of Appeals, a petitioner (FEA-SR is the petitioner) must demonstrate why the law gives the court jurisdiction to hear the dispute. The FLRA argued that the court did not have jurisdiction, while FEA-SR argued that it did. Two of the three judges appeared to indicate (pretty strongly) that they agreed with FEA-SR that the case is of the kind that can be appealed to the Federal Court of Appeals. As for the other legal issues, the judges will be relying on the arguments submitted in FEA-SR's and the FLRA's written briefs. According to attorney Ben Hunter, it is tough to glean more about how the judges will ultimately rule, but today's arguments were a positive development. We could get a decision before January, but it depends on when the Court goes into recess. Thank you to our attorneys for an excellent job and for their hard work in preparing for today's hearing. You can listen to Oral Arguments via [this YouTube link](#). Reading FEA-SR's legal brief may also be insightful, which you can find on the FEA-SR website via [this PDF link](#).

FEA-SR members wore red on Friday, September 22 (the day of our court appearance for the bogus MLA) to show support and solidarity. Let's keep our fingers crossed that we get a favorable ruling that ends DoDEA's illegal implementation of the bogus MLA and eliminates the 24 extra hours per quarter once and for all. (Shown below: members from Fort Jackson, Camp Lejeune, Fort Campbell, West Point, Fort Stewart, Maxwell, and Fort Novosel)





Online Membership Meetings Begin on October 11 — In an effort to open up the lines of communication, I will be “going live” at least once a quarter to bring you information, share MLA reminders, hear your thoughts and concerns, and work together to strengthen our union and resolve issues impacting our working conditions! Join me on Wednesday, October 11 at 7:00 p.m. EST for FEA-SR’s first ever union-wide general membership meeting. Because this has not been done before, we appreciate your patience as we streamline the most effective format.

Online Webinars Begin on October 17 — Join FEA-SR on Tuesday, October 17 at 7:00 p.m. EST for our first in a series of webinars open to all dues-paying members. The session on the 17th will feature Michael Gavin from NEA Member Benefits who will discuss the various benefits and financial discounts that we are entitled to as union members through www.neamb.com. Access to the Member Login page on the FEA-SR website is another membership perk. Annitra Smith-Lincoln, our new webmaster, will take you through the various resources that are available to members. Keep an eye out for the upcoming link.

Violent and Aggressive Students — Ensuring the health and safety of our certified and classified members is paramount for FEA-SR. I have updated our health and safety notification template, disseminating the latest version and accompanying procedures to all local presidents. It is crucial for you to meticulously document health and safety incidents. Whenever feasible, support your documentation with pictures/evidence and maintain open communication with your FRS and local president. They can then undertake suitable measures, such as raising concerns with administration and filing health and safety notifications. A pressing concern is the manifestation of violence and aggression among students, leading to assaults on peers, teachers, and staff. Both MLAs provide provisions for support in cases of assault or threats towards employees (see below), and it is the responsibility of FEA-SR to ensure these contractual obligations are upheld. Thorough

documentation of these incidents is essential to hold DoDEA accountable for our safety.

Article 11 of the Certified MLA:

Section 7. Assistance If an Employee is Assaulted and/or Threatened.

- a. Management will make reasonable efforts to ensure the safety of its employees.
- b. Bargaining unit members shall report to their principal or other immediate supervisor incidents of physical assault and/or verbal threats suffered by them in connection with their employment.
- c. When an employee's absence arises out of assault or injury incurred in connection with his/her employment, the unit member shall be entitled to such compensation as provided for in 5 U.S.C. 8101 et seq.
- d. An employee who reasonably believes that his/her life, or the life of a student(s) is being imminently threatened, may contact the installation law enforcement officials without first contacting a school/district administrator. The school/district administrator should then be notified as soon as possible thereafter.

Article 11 of the Classified MLA:

Section 7. Assistance If an Employee is Assaulted.

- a. The Agency will make reasonable efforts to ensure the safety of its employees.
- b. Bargaining unit members shall report cases of physical assault and/or verbal threats suffered by them in connection with their employment to their principal or other immediate supervisor.
- c. When a bargaining unit member's absence arises out of assault or injury incurred in connection with his/her employment, he/she shall be entitled to such compensation as provided for in 5 U.S.C. 8101 et seq.

Pay Issues and Debt Letters — Quite a number of FEA-SR members are being plagued by pay issues and we are working hard to get these issues resolved. As a reminder, please visit the [FEA-SR website](#) to obtain the debt packet if you have

received a debt letter or a debt is being deducted from your pay and you have not agreed to the debt collection. Be sure to follow the instructions and keep your local representatives involved. Also, for those who believe they should be at the MA+30 pay lane, please gather your transcript(s) and any other relevant documents to share with me and our attorneys. The MA+30 issue remains in litigation but we can review your documentation to see if there is a quicker resolution available.

Introducing our FEA-SR Support Team — I am proud to introduce our trio of highly qualified and experienced FEA-SR staff members who are working hard to support our union and members. Laura Hastings is the new FEA-SR Executive Assistant. She is a retired teacher of 32 years from Camp Lejeune and served for 16 years as President of the Lejeune Education Association. Elizabeth Graham is the new FEA-SR Membership Processor. She is a retired teacher of 40 years from Laurel Bay and served as President of the Laurel Bay Teachers Association. Annitra Smith-Lincoln is the new FEA-SR Webmaster. President of the Fort Liberty Association of Educators, she brings an invaluable perspective to FEA-SR's communications as both a teacher and an attorney. Their combined expertise and commitment are vital to FEA-SR, especially now during our rejuvenation efforts.

Your Voice Matters — FEA-SR has sent out two surveys in the past few weeks. The first ever [FEA-SR Membership Survey](#) is still open for members to complete. Through it, we invite you to voice your perspectives on DoDEA's working and learning conditions, share what the Union does well, and suggest areas for growth and improvement to best serve our membership. Additionally, we rolled out the [ESP Bargaining Input Survey](#). This tool seeks ESP members' priorities and recommendations concerning the new classified MLA set for negotiation this school year.

National Hispanic Heritage Month — Each year, [Americans observe National Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15 to October 15](#). FEA-SR is proud to

celebrate our diversity, and we would love for you to send us activities you are doing to celebrate in your classroom/school. If you are sending pictures and a brief description, please ensure you have parent permission for FEA-SR to use student photos online and/or in our publications. Check out the excellent work being done by local HCR leaders [Teresa Brown \(Camp Lejeune\)](#) and [Jennifer Golphin \(Fort Stewart\)](#) who have developed presentations for 2023 National Hispanic Heritage Month.

Thank you,
Alan

Dr. Alan Danahy

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✉ This email was sent to FEA-SR members on September 24, 2023. 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](#)