



**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
DEPENDENTS SCHOOLS  
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT  
MEDITERRANEAN DISTRICT  
Unit 31401, Box 11  
APO AE 09630-3141**

19 October 2006

MEMORANDUM FOR DISTRICT ADVISORY COUNCIL PARTICIPANTS

SUBJECT: Minutes of the Meeting, 12 October 2006

Attendees included:

Mr. Carl Albrecht, Assistant Superintendent (Mediterranean DSO)  
Dr. Archie W. Bates, Superintendent of Schools (Mediterranean DSO)  
Ms. R C, Area Office School Improvement Liaison (Mediterranean DSO)  
CDR M D, PTSO President (Sigonella)  
Lt Col T D, MSG Deputy Commander (Lajes)  
Dr. Barbara Ferg-Carter, Chief-of-Staff (Mediterranean DSO)  
CDR J H, CDR Public Works (Naples)  
Dr. N H, Education Generalist (Mediterranean DSO)  
MSgt K H, School Advisory Board Rep (Aviano)  
Mr. M K, SAC President (Ankara)  
Dr. N M, Educational Technologist (Mediterranean DSO)  
Ms. N M, Schools' Liaison Officer (Vicenza)  
Mr. Sam Menniti, Assistant Superintendent (Mediterranean DSO)  
Mr. D M, Educational Technologist (Mediterranean DSO)  
Ms. V O, Mediterranean District Teacher of the Year (Livorno)  
Mr. S O, OFT European Director (Naples)  
Ms. Martha Parsons, Elementary School Principal (Vicenza)  
Ms. Beth Pond, Business Manager (Mediterranean DSO)  
Mr. P S, Budget Analyst (Mediterranean DSO)  
Mr. B T, 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Student (Livorno)  
CDR E T, Base Command Representative (Rota)  
Ms. M W, SAC Representative (Incirlik)

The DAC began at 1005. Introductions of and greetings to all were followed by a Welcome from the Mediterranean District Superintendent, Dr. Archie W. Bates.

Special recognition was given to the DoDDS Mediterranean District Teacher-of-the-Year, Ms. V O, from Livorno ES/HS.

Dr. Bates announced that Mr. K would be the Mediterranean District representative at the Area Advisory Council. The first meeting will be held later in October. Issues that come from the SAC to the DAC may be elevated to the AAC and eventually reach the C-CAC.

Dr. Bates, Mr. Albrecht, and Mr. Menniti gave a Mediterranean District overview, to include comments concerning closing schools, draw-down areas, and the chain-of-command for bringing issues to the DAC. Dr. Bates clarified that any issues from school or community personnel should go first to the SAC for consideration. If there is no resolution at that level, these issues can be elevated to the SAB (School Advisory Board)—if they apply to more than just one school. From there, the issues can be elevated to the DAC and, if needed, to the AAC (Area Advisory Council) and C-CAC (Component Command Advisory Council)

The overview of the Mediterranean District included:

- The business of education.
- Breakdown of authority and assignments.
- DoDDS vs national averages in achievement.
- Demographics with locations.
- Budget and cost estimates.
- Student activities enhancing the curriculum.
- Emphasis on athletics at high schools.
- On-going facilities projects.
- School profiles and School Improvement.
- Community Strategic Plan:
  - Highest student achievement.
  - Performance-driven results.
  - Diversity and motivation.
  - Partnerships.
- Vision and Mission = Communities committed to success for all students.
- DSO M'Vision = Supporting schools for success of all students.
- DSO focus:
  - Educational leadership.
  - Standard-based instruction.
  - Reading and Math literacy.
  - Accountability.
  - Middle School Initiative.
  - Assessments.
  - Data-based decision-making.
  - Tools to help teachers teach and students learn: *textbooks, software, equipment, etc., are only tools to enhance the curriculum.*
  - Use and abuse of all resources.
  - Need to focus more on maths and sciences so the assessment results are as high as they ought to be.
- Strong focus on Assessments – used to develop 2 goals for school improvement and to develop good instructional practices.
- Need for accurate data and ethical practices re assessments.
- DoDDS students scoring well above national percentiles.
  - Must disaggregate data so we find students who aren't achieving where they should be.
  - Must look at gender gap: *Are males performing lower than females?*

- Because of quality teachers, our DoDDS students are doing better in all ways—race, gender, etc.
- Students do well, in spite of deployments.
- Challenges:
  - Extra Duty Compensation – not enough money.
  - Geographical distances.
  - 4 Rs: Relationship, Rigor, Relevance, Results.
- Relevance of lessons, curriculum coming alive, all students being engaged.

Two questions were raised in regards to the district overview:

- Does one branch of the military perform better than another? Dr. Bates: *The Air Force children seem to do better because of the Air Force requirements for entry into this branch of the military, and due to its mission. Therefore, the socio-economic status has an impact on student achievement.*
- Is Gaeta going to close? *The DoDDS position is that it is not cost effective to operate a school the size of Gaeta. Therefore, the school will close at the end of this SY.*

Dr. Bates presented the newest *SHOWCASE* Anthology to Lt Col D because his child's creative efforts were included in this edition.

Dr. Bates also congratulated Mr. K for his son's accomplishments ref the U.S. Senate activities at Ankara.

Dr. N H discussed how teachers and administrators, in order to work together well, need to be aware of one another's manner of working and decision-making. She took all DAC members through the *North-South-East-West* activity so we could better recognize our own styles and those of our colleagues.

Dr. N M discussed technology in the schools, Technology Committees' need to focus on how technology is used and that it must be more than just receiving information. She emphasized that technology helps us become problem-solvers by allowing us to see the Big Picture. She underscored that our students live in a totally different world from what we knew as students, and that our DoDDS students' world is completely alien to most of us. Dr. M showed a presentation called *Did You Know?*—all about trends, what our students will encounter in the next 10-20 years. She concluded by saying that trends, important for all educators, are reviewed and analyzed by the Mediterranean DSO to assess where we are going and what we can do to prepare the students for their futures, not ours.

Ms. R C discussed School Improvement and that our jobs are to prepare students for *tomorrow*. Use of data; perceptions vs analyses; deployments and demographic shifts; mindsets; and a myriad of other factors influence school improvement. Every professional in each school must be involved in the school improvement process, which must focus on all students—from those *at risk* to the high achievers.

The Safety and Security Officers for the Mediterranean DSO were not available to give reports. However, Dr. Bates, Mr. Albrecht, and Mr. Menniti, along with Dr. Ferg-Carter provided current information. The hand-out discussing lock-down procedures and what to do when there are simultaneous fire-drills was reviewed. Thanks to Mr. Y and Mr. G, it was made clear that lock-downs take precedence over fire-drills *unless* there is an identified, actual fire in the near vicinity of the lock-down area.

Mr. P S spoke about the budget and what it takes to support the schools and the DSO. He referred to rising costs in such areas as transportation and fuel, fluctuating € rates, the DFAS budget rates, the Extra Duty Compensation (EDC) difficulties, and the Continuing Resolution Authority (CRA). He discussed the fact that the new money for FY 07 will require some creative thinking since it is now divided into two pots, one of which is for Sustainment, and these funds can no longer be co-mingled.

Ms. Beth Pond discussed how the budget was *scrubbed* to arrive at unused money, which could pay for schools' Unfinanced Requirements (UFRs). She explained that these UFRs included Computers-on-Wheels (COWs), printers, Smartboards, projectors, etc.. She also re-emphasized the EDC challenges.

Dr. Ferg-Carter reviewed the following items:

- 2.0 GPA Graduation Requirement – handout provided. Dr. Ferg-Carter discussed what schools are doing to ensure that students with low GPAs are getting the help needed so they can graduate.
- Discipline Regulation changes – handout provided. Dr. Ferg-Carter reviewed the major changes, emphasizing that this regulation now covers discipline of students wherever they are—even when it's outside the school day and, especially, if the student's action has had an impact on the school, the students, the teachers, and the community itself.
- Attendance Policy adjustment – handout provided. Dr. Ferg-Carter discussed the new policy in reference to DoDDS and the military commands. Discussion ensued about SMS, now SIS, and the difficulties last year in keeping track of attendance. This year, there are very clear guidelines from the Area Office as to expectations for schools in reference to student attendance and absences.
- No Zeroes Policy – handout provided. Dr. Ferg-Carter reviewed the background involving the inequity of the current grading scale. Dr. Bates rounded out the discussion by explaining the rationale for a *No Zeroes Policy* and what this means for school administrators and teachers. He emphasized that communication with parents is a key factor.
- DoDDS-E Winter Recess Calendar Dates – calendar provided. Dr. Ferg-Carter reviewed this and gave the rationale as to why these dates were selected. Discussion ensued from several DAC members. This issue will go forward from CDR D to Mr. K to be submitted to the Area Advisory Council.

Open Forum

## WINTER RECESS BREAK SCHEDULE

- CDR D opened this discussion by airing the difficulties inherent in such a schedule—military concern, parents not being able to take advantage of the recess because it doesn't coincide with the military leave plans, sub usage, force protection, etc.
- CDR H emphasized the problem in the Naples area by explaining that base commands won't allow military or civilian workers to take leave when school is in session. Mr. Albrecht queried whether or not this mandate was actually in writing and who it was who actually stated it. Further clarification needs to be forthcoming from the Naples contingency.
- Mr. O stated that there would be serious difficulty in changing the calendar now because too many people would be adversely affected. CDR D reiterated that she is not in favor of changing it now, but she wants to ensure that such late winter recess dates are not scheduled in the future.

Since this issue seemed to affect many areas represented at the DAC, it will be elevated to the AAC through Mr. K.

## EDC FUNDING

- Ms. Parsons asked for clarification ref the EDC funding. Ms. Pond and Mr. S clarified that the schools did not yet have their budgets for this program. They concurred that this made things difficult at the school levels as they tried to begin their student activities.
- The general consensus from the DAC members was that this should not occur again and that the EDC should be well established for the next year prior to the previous school year ending.

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## HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

- CDR T asked about a definitive guideline concerning high school sports. What about the students who don't play football? Shouldn't there be other sports, which would appeal to them? He stated that Rota HS, for example, is not treated equitably where the athletic program is concerned. Dr. Bates emphasized that every principal has to ensure that there are sufficient school activities, which will be funded equitably, to meet the needs of all interested students. Mr. O that the system needs to look at possible inequity between Academics and Athletics. Dr. Bates also clarified that the DoDDS-E Athletic Coordinator, K S, has a limited budget, which has to be used very carefully. Schools in remote areas always cost a great deal more when attempting to bring them into the sports mainstream. However, this is an important issue, which the Mediterranean District continues to address.

- Ms. W presented an Issue Paper in which she asked about the size of teams by division, which are sent to the European Championships. She said that, no matter the size of the school, teams still have the same configurations.
- Ms. W, in the same Issue Paper, queried why some schools of lower populations were placed in lower divisions for some sports. It was explained that this also had been an issue in last year's DAC and was sent forward for consideration. Dr. Ferg-Carter will contact K S to see if there was any resolution to this issue.

#### INCIRLIK ES AND HS BEING MADE INTO A UNIT SCHOOL

- Ms. W queried how two Incirlik schools were made into one Unit School. What criteria were used?
- Dr. Bates explained that nearly two years ago it had been proposed that Incirlik schools be converted to a unit school because of dwindling population. He further explained that the reason it actually occurred this year was because the Incirlik ES Principal, was transferred to Aviano Elementary School, leaving a vacancy at Incirlik. This—and the fact that the DoD schools in Europe would be faced with decreasing Staffing Authorization Documents—was the perfect opportunity to initiate such a change in school configuration.
- Ms. M emphasized that the military command was extremely grateful to Dr. Bates for agreeing to do as Major General Helmick requested so that the military families would have time together once the deployed parents returned.
- Ms. W said that the Incirlik HS hours are longer than those at Incirlik ES, and, therefore, would need some adjusting. Dr. Bates and Mr. Menniti said that they would review this.
- Ms. W also stated that 1 nurse and 1 Information Specialist would not be sufficient for the Incirlik Unit School. She said that this change won't make people happy. She emphasized that there should be guidelines set and proper notification ahead of time.
- Dr. Bates responded by saying that we need to be very judicious in our use of resources when we are faced with declining enrollments. We cannot continue to keep things as they are without adjusting to match changes. This was not a decision made irrationally. We will continue to maintain quality educational programs at all levels.
- Mr. Menniti explained how last year we had created a K-8 section at Incirlik (from K-6) in order to accommodate the lower enrollments. He explained further that staffing standards don't allow for so many additional teaching slots, and at this point Incirlik Unit School is stable.
- Dr. Bates emphasized, again, that for this year there would be no change in the staffing, but that next year some positions would be deleted and people would be moved to other locations.

- It also was mentioned that Incirlik would like the JROTC program, currently at London Central High School, which also is closing, to be transferred to Incirlik instead. This will be taken under consideration by Mr. Menniti.

Since this issue seemed to affect many areas represented at the DAC, it will be elevated to the AAC through Mr. K.

#### MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES BROUGHT UP BY MR. KADIOGLU

- Are we compromising student identity and security? The DSO will investigate.
- SIS: Is information flowing to parents the way it should? Are teachers using the *CHALK* program (Pilot Program at Menwith Hill) so students can access homework assignments, etc.?

Mr. M explained that we are now implementing Extranet, where parents can log-in to get homework assignments and to see grades. There was a meeting being held on 12 October with Diana Ohman to finalize Extranet plans. In January 2007, there will be pilot program in each district. This will facilitate communication with parents—operating under Web Page guidelines (no teacher's name to be published on line). The Extranet program will be secure, even if it means putting SAC minutes, for example, on a Blog site, since e-mail addresses cannot be included. Mr. M also mentioned that we are currently trying to implement K-12 Planet, looking at it as a possible pilot program in various schools.

- Need for Middle School Writing Programs. Dr. Bates explained that his is a local issue and should be brought to the attention of the principal, the School Improvement Leadership Team (SILT), and SAC for further consideration.
- Request that 8<sup>th</sup> graders be allowed to participate in the high school sports. Dr. Ferg-Carter explained that the regulations are very clear about this. Research says that 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders, because their bones and muscles are still forming and growing, cannot participate in high school sports, particularly contact sports. They are permitted, though, to participate in non-contact sports such as Cross Country, Track & Field, Tennis, and Golf. In these cases, the middle-schoolers will be exhibition competition only, and they will not travel to away sites.

The DAC was adjourned at 1615 hours.

The next DAC will be on Thursday, 22 February 2007. The Vicenza site will be determined at a later date.