



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE EDUCATION ACTIVITY

Shortly after the end of World War II, the United States military established schools for the children of its service men and women stationed in Europe and the Pacific. Schools for children of military members stationed at various bases in the United States were already well-established. These overseas and domestic schools were originally administered by the individual services, but as the number of schools grew, their administration was transferred to civilian managers. The schools were organized in two distinct but similar systems: the Department of Defense Dependents Schools (DoDDS) overseas, and the Department of Defense Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools (DDESS) in the United States. In 1994 the two systems united under the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA).

DoDEA operates 223 public schools in 16 districts located in seven states, Puerto Rico, Guam, and 13 foreign countries to serve the children of military service members and Department of Defense civilian employees. Approximately 104,935 students are enrolled in DoDEA schools, with approximately 73,200 students in the DoDDS system, and approximately 31,700 students in the DDESS system. DoDDS has approximately 12,060 employees and DDESS approximately 5,700 employees.

Demographics

Children of enlisted military personnel represent 87 percent of the total enrollment in DoDEA schools; minority students account for 54 percent of the total enrollment. Because military assignments often result in frequent moves, the transient rate for DoDEA schools is 35 percent.

In the DDESS system, the parents/guardians of the majority of the students (65 percent) are affiliated with the Army. In the DoDDS system, approximately 37 percent of students have parents/guardians in the Army, and 29 percent have parents/guardians in the Air Force.

Assessment Systems

DoDEA students take the Terra Nova Achievement Test, a norm-referenced test for students in grades 3 through 11, which rates their performance on whether students are learning what they are being taught. DoDEA students also take the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the "Nation's Report Card," which is the only continuing assessment of the nation's students in various subject areas. NAEP provides state/jurisdiction comparisons of student achievement in reading, writing, math, and science. In addition to the Terra Nova and NAEP, DoDEA students take a variety of standards based assessments.

DoDEA students continue to perform at a high achievement level on all of these tests. DoDEA students as a whole performed above the national average on the 2003 NAEP in Reading and Math. DoDEA Black and Hispanic students in both the domestic and overseas schools scored at or near the top of the scoring scale for both the 2003 Reading and Math assessments when compared to their minority peers in other participating states and jurisdictions.

