

OUR FIRST SCHOOL YEAR (1946-1947) A BRIEF HISTORY OF OUR SCHOOLS AND LOCATIONS



EARLY YEARS

1821s – Western Frontier

General Winfield Scott issued regulations that provided for education of children of soldiers with tax money levied against the post sutler (merchants selling supplies and services to military members).

1816 (estimate) West Point ES

<https://www.dodea.edu/WestPointES/Two-Centuries-of-Learning.cfm>

Military families have been a part of West Point since the early 1800's. One document indicates that there has been education for dependent children since at least 1816. A map from 1829 shows the location of a schoolhouse. So far, research has not provided an exact date that the first children attended school at West Point, but children and schools have been a part of West Point for a very long time. No other DoDEA school has been in existence this long.

1931 Guantanamo Bay Naval Station, Cuba

W.T. Sampson E/M/HS, at Guantanamo Bay Naval Station, Cuba opened in 1931, making this the oldest still operating overseas DoD dependents school in the world. In 1931, there was just one staff member, 5 students, and a single classroom located in an office of the base chapel. By the next year, 1932, the school had a growing enrollment of 30+ students. The newly arrived faculty of five teachers taught grammar school in the morning and high school in the afternoon.

Early Pacific Beginnings

The United States did have military personnel and their dependents overseas in the Pacific on Samoa, Guam and in the Republic of the Philippines prior to World War II. The children attended private schools or the local schools, such as the Ft. McHenry School in Manila or the Leonard Wood School and the Dean Worcester School at the then Ft. Stotsenberg. Three schools located on the Subic Bay Naval Facilities, Republic of the Philippines, that later became part of the Navy schools in the Far East Command, began at the time when the Philippines was a territory of the United States.

Establishing and Operating Dependents Schools in Foreign Occupied Countries

While a few schools on military bases within the continental United States and its territories, were operating prior to World War II, the school system we know today as the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), formally began with the establishment of dependents schools in October 1946 in the occupied countries of Germany, Austria and Japan.

At the end of the war, there was no precedent to follow for establishing and operating dependents schools in foreign occupied countries. The 1946-47 school year also marked the first time that the federal government and the military realized that a more consistent approach was needed to the establishment, operation, and resources for schools serving military families, overseas and on installations in the USA.

Since that foundational year, the DoDEA footprint has expanded across the country and around the globe to meet the educational needs of military-connected youth. Over time, we have grown, merged, consolidated, reorganized, and changed many times. In 1992, Congress unified the domestic and overseas operations under the Department of Defense Education Activity.

Post WW II -- First schools opened for SY 1947-1947

The Department of the Army established the first dependents schools - on and off military installations - in 1946 in the occupied countries of Germany, Austria and Japan. Enrollment then grew rapidly, and by the end of the 1946–1947 school year enrollment had reached 2,992. Within three years, there were nearly 100 schools which were operated separately by the Army, Navy, and Air Force, in countries around the world.

The first dependents arrived at Johnson Army Air Base (AAB), Japan, on 10 May 1946. With the arrival of dependents, discussions and planning were underway across Far East Command (FEC). As teachers arrived in September and October, schools began to operate in any space that was available with the supplies they were able to gather to support instruction.

Similar efforts were underway under various commands in Okinawa, Germany and Austria.

In the beginning each school was autonomous. The commanding officer of each military facility was given the authority to establish a school. The officers and higher enlisted personnel paid tuition for their children to attend school. The lower ranked enlisted personnel were exempt from tuition payments. Some monies were taken from the non-appropriated fund activities. Parents and the many military organizations were involved in raising funds to operate the schools. For many, it was a one room school.

By October 14, 1946 in Europe, 38 elementary schools and five high schools opened their doors to 1,297 dependent children under the supervision of 116 teachers. The size and scope of the operation grew exponentially in Europe and the Pacific from that starting point.

Note: A listing of school openings for 1946 follows for Europe and the Pacific. The Europe listing is more detailed than the Pacific because of the availability of documents from the Army. Records identified from the Pacific Army operations are limited.

Not every school today has been in operation for the 75 year span of our organizational history; however, each school and office has played a pivotal role during their tenure in telling the DoDEA story. One of the best ways schools can participate is to look at their own local history, legacy, and contributions. They can engage students and employees (past and present) in telling and preserving their stories and experiences.

Some of our current locations/communities are enduring communities – they had one of the first school operations in 1946 (Yokota, Tokyo, Kubasaki, Guantanamo Bay, West Point, Stuttgart, Garmisch, Ansbach, and Wiesbaden).

A listing of school openings for 1946 follows for Europe and the Pacific.

SCHOOL LISTING OF 1946 OPENINGS

COUNTRY

DATE OPENED/CLOSED

GERMANY (High schools highlighted)

Source: AOSHS

Amberg ES	1946	2008
Augsburg ES	1946	?
Bad Kissingen ES	1946	?
Bad Nauheim ES	1946	2006
Bad Toelz ES	1946	1991
Bamberg ES	1946	2014
Bayreuth Dependents School	1946	1957
Berlin ES (formerly Thomas A Roberts ES)	1946	1994
Berlin HS (formerly Thomas A Roberts HS)	1946	1994
Bremerhaven ES	1946	1993
Bremen HS (became Bremerhaven HS in 47)	1946	1979
Darmstadt ES (combined ES/MS in 2006)	1946	2008
Elizabethan ES, Frankfurt	1946	1953
Erding ES	1946	1992
Erlangen ES	1946	1994
Erlangen HS	1946	1947
Frankfurt HS (formerly The American Community School)	1946	1995
Frankfurt HS Dormitory	1946	1985
Fritzlar Dependent School	1946	1952
Fulda ES	1946	1994
Giessen ES	1946	2007
Heidelberg HS/Dormitory	1946	?
Hoechst ES	1946	
Illesheim ES	1946	2015
Landshut ES	1946	
Lechfeld Dependents Schools	1946	1947
Mannheim ES	1946	2011
Munich ES (formerly Perlacher Forst ES)	1946	1992
Munich HS	1946	1992
Munich HS Dormitory	1946	1974?
Murnau ES	1946	?
Nuernberg ES (formerly Nuernberg ES #1)	1946	1994
Oberpfaffenhofen Dependents School	1946	?
Plattenstrasse ES (also called Frankfurt ES #1)	1946	1995
Schweinfurt ES	1946	2014
Sonthofen ES	1946	?
Twain, Mark S ES, Heidelberg (formerly Heidelberg ES/HS and Heidelberg ES #1)	1946	2011
Weiden ES	1946	Dec 1946
Wesermuende Dependents School	1946	1947
Wuerzburg ES	1946	2008
Wuerzburg MS	1946	2007

More follows

COUNTRY**DATE OPENED/CLOSED****AUSTRIA***Source: AOSHS*

Linz Dependent School (ES/HS)	1946	1954
Salzburg ES (fact checking)	1946	1955
Salzburg HS (fact checking)	1946	1955
Vienna Dependent School (Originally Vienna Community School)	1946	1953

JAPAN*Source: AOSHS*

Johnson Dependent School (ES/HS) (later renamed Hilltop ES)	1947	1973
Yokota West ES (formerly Yokota ES)	1946	
Okinawa University School, Camp Hayward, gr 1-12 (Became Kubaski High School and Awase ES)	1946	1952
Meguro ES/HS (American School Tokyo)	1946	1952
Yokohama American School (Renamed Kinnick HS 1960)	1946 (late)	
Admiralty Heights ES, Takiyama (near Yokohama) (fact checking)	1946	1964

MIDWAY ISLAND

Midway Dependent School George Cannon 1956, K-8 until 1960)	1946	1978
--	------	------



Details on Germany Schools

Source: *3,500 Youths to Answer ET School Bells*
The Stars and Stripes Bureau, September 20, 1946

Six high schools were established along with feeder communities. The Theater school policy called for elementary schools to be set up in every community which has ten or more students.

- Berlin (Berlin area), 60 students; 1 community.
- Bremen (Grohn, Nordhoz, Wesermeunde) 35 students, 4 communities;
- Frankfurt (Bad Nauheim, Bad Wildungen, Darmstadt, Fritzlar, Fulda, Geissen, Hanau, Kassel, RheinMain, Wetzlar, Wiesbaden) 163 students, 12 communities;
- Heidelberg (Göppingen, Mannheim, Stuttgart) 75 students, 4 communities;
- Munich (Augsburg, Bad Tölz, Berchtesgaden, Erding, Fürstenfeldbruck, Garmisch, Kaufbeuren, Landsberg, Landshut, Lechfeld, Murnau, Neubiberg, Oberpfaffen-hoffen, Schleissheim, Sonthofen) 74 students, 16 communities,
- Erlangen (Amberg, Ansbach, Bad Kissingen, Bamberg, Bayreuth, Giebelstadt, Grafenwöhr, Kitzingen, Regensburg, Schweinfurt, Straubing, Wieden, Würzburg, and Nürnberg) 115 students, 15 communities.

Details on First Japan Schools to Open

Johnson Dependent School (ES/HS) (later renamed Hilltop ES 1947-1973)

September 7, 1946 (Saturday)

Johnson Army Base, Irumagawa, Japan (Central Tokyo), Army installation.

- First school in an occupied country
- ES Principal: Alice Daniels (Supervisor and head instructor)
- HS Principal: Captain William V. Hagin assisted by Captain Daniel Sorrels
- Superintendent for 114 Composite Wing: Major Frank Forchner
- <https://aoshs.org/collections/school-histories/as/jp/495/>
- <https://aoshs.org/collections/school-histories/as/jp/496/>

About Johnson Air Base

On 30 December 1960, the American facilities on the site of Johnson Air Base were redesignated as "Johnson Air Station". In June 1961, Japan-US joint use agreement was established at Johnson. In June 1962, the USAF ended its use of the air base, when the 41st Air Division headquarters moved to Yokota AB.

Yokota ES , Now Yokota West ES

September 12, 1946

Johnson Air Base

- Yokota Elementary opened its doors on September 12, 1946 in Yokota's housing area on Johnson Air Base with just two teachers and twelve students in a room behind the chapel lounge.
- In the spring of 1946, qualified teachers and administrators were recruited.
- Mr. Roland Pennypacker was the first principal/teacher. Chiyo Araki was the other teacher.
- Japanese nationals, military personnel, and their dependents ran the school until October of 1947 when the first civil service employees arrived.
- <https://aoshs.org/collections/school-histories/as/jp/506/>

About Yokota AB

The Imperial Japanese Government transformed the cornfields and pine groves of Tama

Prefecture into a military base called Tama Army Airfield in 1940. The area was used primarily as a test flight center during World War II, and the base remained fully operational until the end of the war. United States intelligence sources that viewed the base from the air, unfamiliar with the actual name, called the base Yokota after nearby Yokota Village. When US forces began operations on September 4, 1945 the name remained. American dependents began to arrive at Yokota Air Base shortly thereafter, on May 10, 1946.

Okinawa University Dependents School, now Kubasaki HS

September 15, 1946

Camp Hayward overlooking Buckner Bay (Okinawa)

- Okinawa University School, Camp Hayward, gr 1-12 (1946-1952) became Kubasaki High School and Awase ES
- Dr. Theodore Koob, Principal.
- This original site was located on Route 30, Camp Hayward overlooking Buckner Bay. The buildings comprising Okinawa University School served as a school during the day for the 25 students in grades 1-12 and as an education center for American military personnel at night, which was how the name was derived.
- Dependents arriving on Okinawa in 1946 were warned that there were no schools planned for children, but by September the principal, nine teachers and a Quonset hut were ready for school to begin.
- The teachers, mostly dependent wives and a few military personnel, had multiple assignments. The first students rode to school in weapons carriers.
- Later, when the enrollment reached seventy-five students, students rode in two yellow school busses driven by GIs, one each for the Awase and Buckerville housing areas. The busses resembled paddy wagons with bars on the windows and a single door in the back.
- The first teachers recruited from the United States arrived in 1947.
- Herbert Wildman was superintendent .
- <https://aoshs.org/collections/school-histories/as/jp/538/>

Meguro School (aka Tokyo School for Dependents, Tokyo American School - Meguro)

September 30, 1946

Located in the Meguro-ku district, it was known as Meguro High School. It served dependents living within the metropolitan Tokyo area.

- The former American School in Japan had ceased to operate during the war years. The U.S. Forces took over ASIJ's campus and opened it for use as a high school for dependent children of Allied Forces, civilians and certain qualified foreigners. Renamed Meguro ES/HS) 1946-1952
- Moved to grant Heights Housing Area and named Narimasu
- First principal was Major Herbert S. Ingraham *Note: Major Herbert Ingraham was the first school liaison officer of the Far East Command under General Douglas McArthur*
- Meguro opened its doors in 1946 for grades seven through twelve.
- Teachers were drawn from the ranks of Occupation Force spouses and through recruitment in the U.S., from civilian schools.
- An Army operated school bus fleet picked up students from all over the Tokyo area every day. Students attending Meguro were drawn largely from the very large housing area known as Washington Heights, located about 5 miles distant.
- <http://www.pehoushek.com/NOSTALGIA/MeguroHS.htm>
- <https://aoshs.org/collections/school-histories/as/jp/489/>

Yokohama American School (HS) -- now Niles C. Kinnick HS (Yokosuka)

September 1946 (late opening for some grades)

Yokohama (lies on Tokyo Bay)

- In 1946 the Eighth Army, realizing the need for an American High School in Yokohama, took over the college and started a high school with eighteen students and two teachers. Months later in September 1947, there were 150 students and ten teachers. The school was accredited for the 1948-49 and had a full curriculum. In June 1948 the first class of twenty-four students was graduated.
- Niles C. Kinnick High School was originally Yokohama High School. It was originally an Army school and the name was changed when the school came under Navy supervision in 1959. The high school moved to Yokosuka Navy Base in 1971. It was then housed in a refurbished Marine Corps Barracks. Prior to that, the building was a Japanese Imperial Navy basic training camp.
- The current school was officially named after Nile C. Kinnick in 1990, an outstanding scholar and athlete; he was the winner of the Heisman Trophy and a graduate of the University of Iowa pursuing a law degree. Nile C. Kinnick was killed during a training mission off the USS Lexington in the Caribbean during WWII.
- <https://aoshs.org/collections/school-histories/as/jp/521/>

Admiralty Heights ES,

1946- 1964

Takiyama (near Yokohama)

- (fact checking)

Midway Islands Dependents School later named the George Cannon School

September 1946

Midway Islands

- In September 1946, the Midway Island Dependents' School was formed for grades one through eight.
- The original name of the school was changed to George Cannon School in 1956.
- The Navy closed the island to dependents and the school officially closed its doors on June 15, 1978.
- <https://aoshs.org/collections/school-histories/as/um/594/>

Sources

The Stars and Stripes

3,500 Youths to Answer ET School Bells

September 20, 1946

American Overseas Schools Historical Society.

<https://aoshs.org/collections/school-histories/>

From DSS to DoDDS

Alan Dale Olson

DoDDS Pacific Region 1946-1986 (40th Anniversary Yearbook)

