MEMORANDUM FOR ALL DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE EDUCATION ACTIVITY
EMPLOYEES

SUBJECT: Department of Defense Proposed Furlough Decision - Updated Guidance on Handling Budgetary Uncertainty in Fiscal Year 2013 - #7

This memorandum provides an update on the handling of a proposed furlough in the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA). The Secretary of Defense announced his decision today, May 14, 2013, that most Department of Defense (DoD) civilian employees will be furloughed for up to 11 days. There are very limited exceptions driven by law and the need to minimize the harm to mission execution. DoDEA employees were not exempted from a proposed furlough. However, the Secretary approved a reduced number of furlough days for our 9-month employees because of their unique school year employment schedule. In the upcoming days, we will be issuing additional and specific guidance and procedures for DoDEA employees. We continue to update the DoDEA website: www.DoDEA.edu/budget/index.cfm, and I encourage you to use this as a resource and a means of staying informed.

We remain committed to doing all that we can to limit the harm to our mission and to morale. Each of you makes a critical and significant contribution to DoDEA’s mission of educating military-connected children, and to DoD’s overall mission of meeting the Nation’s national security requirements. This proposed furlough does not diminish your contribution in any way. You are valued, appreciated and greatly admired for the work that you do in all roles throughout DoDEA on behalf of our students and families.

I promised to provide you a brief overview of how a potential furlough will affect DoDEA employees before the end of today. Rest assured that more detailed information is forthcoming.

DoD’s Planning and Implementation Schedule

- May 28-June 5: A 30-day advance notice of proposed furlough will be served to employees.
- June 4 – June 12: Employee reply periods ends 7 calendar days from when the proposal was received, unless the employee bargaining unit agreement or DoDEA regulations allows for a different reply period.
- June 5 – July 5: Furlough decision letters will be served to employees, depending on when the proposal was received and prior to the first day of furlough.
- Supervisors will communicate the dates of the proposed furlough to employees. Generally, employees will be furloughed 1 day a week. This may vary depending upon mission requirements.
- July 8: Furlough period begins no earlier than this date.
• DoDEA schools will open on time and as scheduled based on the published school calendars for School Year 2013-14.

• No employee can perform work or volunteer to perform work on furlough days. In fact, it is illegal for employees to engage in any of their responsibilities when they are furloughed.

Additional Schedule Guidance for DoDEA 9-Month Employees

• Educator labor union contracts require that covered employees be in a pay status during the 30-day furlough proposal period. Therefore, the furlough proposal period will start on May 28 and be “toggled” during the summer months when educators are in a non-pay status. The remaining days of the furlough notice period will resume when School Year 2013-2014 starts (the start date varies by location).

• Principals will advise 9-month employees of the exact dates of the proposed furlough. You can expect this information before School Year 2012-13 ends.

• Schools will be closed to students on furlough days although some employees may be on duty, e.g., local national employees in overseas areas, principals and 12-month administrative support personnel.

• Educators when furloughed cannot and must not contact students or parents about any school-related matter. We know this will be very difficult for our faculty and staff as they care deeply about the success of their students. Principals will provide parents contact information in the event of an emergency and a parent needs to contact the school.

• Fall 2013 extra and co-curricular programs may need to be adjusted in conjunction with scheduled furlough dates. However, these activities may continue on scheduled furlough days provided they start after the regular duty day ends. Educators may receive extra duty pay, but, again provided the activities start after the regular duty day ends. Educators cannot travel for any extra or co-curricular program during the duty day on any scheduled furlough dates.

I join Secretary Hagel in expressing deep regret that any furlough action is necessary. I do not underestimate the great financial and emotional strain that a furlough action may have on employees. As Secretary Hagel continues to urge our Nation’s leaders to reach an agreement to reduce the deficit and de-trigger sequestration, we will stay focused on our noble mission of educating our children. As I have said before, and I think it is worth repeating, at the end of the day, I want us all to look back on this challenging time, and say that we worked hard to do the right thing. In the face of great challenge, DoDEA employees around the globe in all positions performed magnificently. I am proud and honored to serve along with each and every one of you. We are going to get through this tough time – together—as one strong and dedicated team.

Marilee Fitzgerald
Director