



**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE EDUCATION ACTIVITY  
PACIFIC WEST DISTRICT  
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT  
UNIT 15006  
APO AP 96271-5006**

March 13, 2020

Dear Parents, Students and DoDEA Employees,

As promised, I am following up on my message sent last week to provide you with an update on how we will move forward in the coming days and weeks with regard to the closure of our schools in Korea.

Since the first day that students were dismissed, USFK command and health officials have worked closely with us on a process to determine when we could have students safely return to schools. With the virus being so prevalent in our host nation communities, closing our schools was the prudent thing to do when we are considering the health of our students and staff as well as our entire community. Commanders share our belief that the safety and well-being of our students and employees are of paramount concern.

After meeting with USFK officials this week, a decision was made to delay the start of school to safeguard the health of students. All Korea schools (Humphreys, Osan, and Daegu) will remain closed through Friday, March 20<sup>th</sup>. Teachers will continue their efforts in the coming week to provide ongoing learning experiences for all students.

The decision was made thoughtfully and deliberately, after conducting an analysis of the mitigation measures developed with the USFK medical community and others to create a safe zone in schools and to slow the possible spread of the virus that has impacted the communities surrounding our installations.

Factored into the decision were the recommendations of the Installation Commanders, and the results of a poll conducted among families indicating some reservations to reopening schools at this point in time. We believe robust communication with parents and teachers needs to occur, to help build their confidence. We also think it is important we not communicate this as being solely tied to the resumption of Korean schools, in case the decision is made to further delay their opening.

Be assured that we are working in conjunction with the command to return and welcome students back to school as soon as possible. The safety and well-being of our students drives every decision we make in our DoDEA schools. We understand and share everyone's concerns and desires about schools reopening. We appreciate your patience and support as we wait a little bit longer to ensure we have all of the mitigations in place.

Throughout the coming week, you can expect to see some communications from our principals regarding the various lines of effort underway to achieve the benchmarks we have set with the command for the safe return of students to school. Look for more information on our website and social media pages, as well as the command pages, throughout the week.

As always, we appreciate your patience in this unusual time. Your assistance in working with our teachers to create the routines and support needed at home to continue learning are commendable in every regard.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Arrington', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr. Jeff Arrington  
District Superintendent  
DoDEA Pacific West