



STRUCTURING FOR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

DoDEA's VISION FOR CHANGE

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INTRODUCTION

In August, after completing my first 100 days as the DoDEA Director, I shared with you my key impressions and the steps we would be taking to immediately narrow our strategic focus to two priority areas.

These two priorities are:

1. Strengthening DoDEA's standards-based educational system by transitioning to: college- and career-ready standards that are infused with rigor and relevancy; and a common standards-aligned curriculum, instructional framework and assessment system.
2. Establishing the organizational capacity to uniformly improve student achievement and school operations.

Our strategic priorities were not shaped solely by my observations and experiences during my first 100 days as the DoDEA Director. **FIRST**, they were also informed by the development and implementation of DoDEA's Community Strategic Plan (CSP) that outlined goals in five areas of excellence: Student, School, Talent, Organizational, and Outreach. More specifically, the goal of Organizational Excellence placed emphasis on improving DoDEA's above-school level organization to support delivery of our core mission and functions.

SECONDLY, our strategic priorities were also informed by a comprehensive, thorough and all-encompassing 18-month long study conducted by Booz Allen Hamilton and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) who assessed our organizational structure. This analysis provided recommendations that would enhance our above-school-level educational and operational support to school-level staff and students around the world. The study identified the need for DoDEA to improve our performance of key educational functions and recommended organizational structure designs based on leading practices of State and Local Education Agencies (SEA/LEA).

We recently convened a working group of area leaders, district superintendents, and members of DoDEA's Headquarters Staff at Southbridge, Massachusetts. We met on a variety of topics and our discussions and decisions have helped shaped and direct an immediate way forward on our journey to achieving our top two priorities. I want to share the results of this meeting and what I shared with our leaders as we move toward our vision of the future.

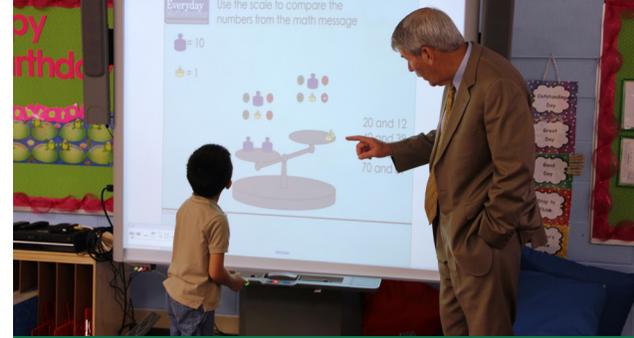
FOCUS: STUDENTS AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

DoDEA's students deserve the consistency and high expectations for achievement provided by a standards-based school system, which includes aligned standards, curriculum, assessments and professional development. In order to implement this system, DoDEA must reorganize the above-school level structure to improve performance of key educational functions.

As we begin the journey to instill these priorities in our organization, it's critical to have a common foundation to build upon. The following imperatives for change are essential for establishing common understanding and perspective as we move forward.

IMPERATIVES FOR CHANGE

1. All changes are student focused.
2. Restructuring is not about economies of scale- it is about improving student achievement.
3. Change will not occur overnight- it will be a thoughtful and phased approach.
4. The Strategic Rebalancing Study is behind us- we are moving forward with STRUCTURING FOR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT – the action.
5. We will become ONE SCHOOL SYSTEM rather than a system of schools.
6. Leaders across the organization have a role in shaping our future. There is a lot of talent and expertise in the field that we will capitalize on.
7. We ARE NOT reducing the number of full-time employees. We ARE reallocating the number of full-time employees to meet the vision and mission.
8. Everyone has a place in the organization. There will be many new and exciting opportunities available. Some positions may have different functions in our future organizational state.
9. Restructuring is not just about moving boxes and lines. The restructuring effort will include:
 - a. Clearly defined roles and responsibilities
 - b. Identifying gaps and inconsistencies in policies
 - c. Creating new and/or revising policies and procedures
 - d. Leadership training and team building



CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE:

The concept and mission of the Center of Excellence is grounded in research and is a leading practice in many states. It is predicated on building local capacity to improve student learning and performance. The Center of Excellence model itself will provide DoDEA with a mechanism to:

Target and transform instructional practices at all levels within the district in a way that is tangible to all students, teachers, and families;

Implement a robust, differentiated, imbedded professional development component which includes leadership capacity building; Emphasize performance more than processes to determine whether activities are improving teaching and learning, and making a difference for students;

Facilitate the alignment and coherence of activities to help maximize effort and resources, and focus the district/school on key priorities;

Ensure consistency and fidelity of reform initiatives being implemented.

What is a Center of Excellence?

Centers of Excellence are specialized teams to help districts and their schools strategically access and use professional development and targeted assistance to improve instruction and raise achievement for all students.

Centers of Excellence are a function of the State Education Agency (SEA) in states that are using this concept/model. States use a regional approach that leverages the knowledge, skills, and expertise of local educators to address shared needs through an emphasis on expanding district and school capacity for sustained improvement.

What a Center of Excellence is NOT

Centers of Excellence are NOT used for accountability (assessing/evaluating superintendents). Their purpose is to provide assistance to schools and districts by engaging them in a continuous cycle of improvement.



GETTING TO THE FUTURE STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION

In my first 100 Days Report, I outlined some of the next steps we will take to improve our ability to operate globally as a high-performing, unified school system. Establishing organizational capacity to improve student achievement and school operations will require collaboration, cooperation, integrating efforts, making decisions and taking action. Decisions will be critical to building capacity. They become the springboard for taking action. Our decisions will be based on focusing our all of our efforts on improving student achievement; maximizing resources; providing targeted assistance to schools; and establishing a framework and culture of accountability.

We need everyone's help and input to take those next steps, so we've identified groups of action agents – a program manager, Leadership Advisory Task Force and Tiger Teams - to move this process along.

PROGRAM MANAGER - We have assigned a program manager to coordinate activities related to our reorganization efforts. While our senior leaders are the decision makers and final authority for our efforts, the program manager will have the responsibilities for integrating all aspects of the reorganization efforts and managing the day-to-day activities to implement the change

LEADERSHIP ADVISORY TASK FORCE - The program manager has established a governance structure which includes a Leadership Advisory Task Force comprised of a representative sample of Headquarters, Area, and District Leaders. They will provide input into the major components of the reorganization process and their recommendations will be provided to the DoDEA Director for consideration.

TIGER TEAMS – A headquarters Education Directorate Tiger Team has been established to provide the opportunity for employee input into the roles, responsibilities and functions under the new Headquarters Education Directorate structure. Similar Tiger Teams will be established for all change components. I value everyone's input and experiences and I look to the workforce to play an active role in these teams to help shape our future.

Strategic Rebalancing Study Findings

The Booz Allen Hamilton Strategic Rebalancing Study resulted in recommendations that provide DoDEA with opportunities to build on existing strengths to improve the school system and offered insight into leading practices from State and Local Education Agencies (SEA/LEA) to consider when designing an organizational structure.



Organizational Strengths

- ◆ Dedicated employees
- ◆ Dedicated teachers
- ◆ Commitment to education
- ◆ Sufficient resources
- ◆ Strong collaboration within teams

Organizational Challenges

- ◆ Unclear roles and responsibilities
- ◆ Inconsistent and ineffective policy
- ◆ Multiple layers across the organization
- ◆ Limited organizational accountability
- ◆ Limited educational accountability
- ◆ Slow and inconsistent communication across the organization
- ◆ Limited professional development opportunities

SEA/LEA Leading Practices

- ◆ Let strategy drive organization structure
- ◆ Dedicate offices for key educational functions
- ◆ Ensure operational accountability through performance management best practices
- ◆ Identify and support low-performing schools
- ◆ Provide instructional support close to schools
- ◆ Streamline operations to improve communications and enhance decision-making

VIEW OF THE FUTURE DoDEA ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

HEADQUARTERS EDUCATION DIRECTORATE

As I shared with you in my First 100 Days Report, we will begin reorganizing DoDEA's above-school-level structure with the Headquarters Education Directorate. I expect that effort to take approximately 12 months to implement. The resulting structure will have two divisions – Academics and Performance & Accountability – with supporting branches. DoDEA will be better able to implement an aligned instructional system with a curriculum, assessments, and professional development package that is aligned to college- and career-ready standards.

Branches dedicated to Academics and Performance & Accountability will enable DoDEA to execute key educational functions at the headquarters level; provide educational services to support student achievement; establish clear and consistent system-wide policies and processes; establish content standards and develop aligned assessments; adopt and develop curriculum and monitor district and student accountability.

HUMAN RESOURCES REENGINEERING

Building the capacity to achieve our number one priority of college- and career-readiness for our students requires a talent management system that has the procedures, policies and resources in place to allow our Human Resources staff to support our workforce efficiently and effectively.

In the coming months, we will take a series of steps designed to increase efficiency and performance; align processes with strategic priorities; and emphasize customer service to recruit, hire and retain the best and the brightest. As a first step, Human Resources will be moved under the Financial and Business Operations within the current HQ structure. We will initiate a third-party analysis of the business unit and processes that will include examining and refining human capital forecasting; recruitment and retention; on-boarding and off-boarding; teacher licensure; and customer services. We will also partner with and seek advice from Human Resources industry leaders such as the Society for Human Resource Management, the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, and the Partnership for Public Service.

AREA OFFICE MISSION REFOCUSED

The Area Offices in the Pacific, Europe and the Americas will evolve and be refocused on Performance and Accountability. They will provide robust, imbedded professional development and instructional leadership for Superintendents,



Changing structure is only one part of the change initiative; however, the structural change is the crucial piece that will help to make other changes, specifically changes that will help DoDEA address Priority #1.

Key functions structural changes will help us achieve include:

- ◆ Establish content standards
- ◆ Adopt/Develop Curriculum and Implementation
- ◆ Establish district and school accountability
- ◆ Provide assistance to build the capacity of districts and schools
- ◆ Provide robust and imbedded professional development
- ◆ Provide educational services to support student achievement
- ◆ Establish policy and processes
- ◆ Manage business processes

Principals, Instructional Support Specialists (ISSs) and other instructional leaders as well as provide targeted assistance to districts and schools to improve student achievement.

As part of their new mission, Area Offices will also oversee Centers of Excellence in their geographic regions. The Centers of Excellence will have specialized staffs to assist in analyzing school performance, identifying trends, analyzing systems and structures and the districts, providing data the Area Director can use to develop superintendents and provide imbedded professional growth, providing targeted support to districts and schools as well as professional development for school-level and district employees.

The exact structure of the Area level and the structure and placement of the Centers of Excellence is being shaped with input from field leadership.

REDISTRICTING:

DoDEA's 14 districts will undergo a redistricting process which will help promote consistent implementation of the new standards, curriculum, instructional framework and assessments and realize full-time employee positions to provide more effective, efficient and robust support to improve student achievement. Exact configurations have not yet been determined. Discussions between Headquarters, Area and District leaders to shape this concept are ongoing and consolidations are under consideration.

PARTICIPATE – BE A PART OF THE PROCESS TO SUPPORT STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

There's a lot of information to assimilate. The restructuring process is fluid and will evolve. Change will not happen overnight -- it is up to all of us to get involved and become active participants in shaping DoDEA's future. Opportunities abound for DoDEA to organize for success to properly support student achievement. Get involved in a Tiger Team or encourage someone you feel would add value to get involved in a Tiger Team. Be positive change agents.

If you have a question or want additional information, you can ask questions and provide feedback by contacting GettheFacts@hq.dodea.edu. Information will also be posted to the DoDEA Director's website that explains the changes and outcomes we hope to achieve by making those changes. The journey has begun. Look forward to the future and know that you have a role in helping our students achieve and succeed.

