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Fate of “Smart” LES Could Be Decided Soon

FEA’s legal battle to compel management to provide a “Smart” Leave and Earnings Statement for employees may soon be drawing to a close.

A case currently being reviewed by the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA) could finally force DoDEA and DFAS to make the Smart LES a reality, or risk being taken to Federal court, where the officials in charge could be held liable.

The Smart LES FEA has fought for would replace the current LES you receive every two weeks with one that is much easier to read and decipher. Such a document would clearly spell out all details of your paycheck, including how your allowances were computed and how any debts charged to you were calculated.

The Smart LES would significantly reduce confusion and uncertainty in how you are paid, and make it much easier to spot and correct mistakes as soon as they happen.

“It would do away with at least half the pay problems we’re seeing,” FEA UniServ Attorney Bill Freeman says. “If teachers can see every two weeks exactly what is going on with their

pay and how things are figured, they can file a pay inquiry right away and get things fixed. The longer it takes to identify a problem, the harder it is to get it corrected.”

Freeman has won multiple arbitrations, going back to 2003, that called for DoDEA to provide the information in a Smart LES to all employees. DoDEA management has repeatedly tried to convince an arbitrator it was either unable to have DFAS create the Smart LES or it has already provided the information to employees via other sources.

DoDEA’s claims and excuses have repeatedly been rejected by arbitrators and, most recently, by an administrative law judge for the FLRA. DoDEA then appealed that latest ruling to the full FLRA, which will decide whether to uphold its own judge’s decision against DoDEA or rule against FEA.

If DoDEA wins this latest appeal, the fight for a Smart LEA will effectively be over. If, however, the FLRA sides with FEA, DoDEA management will be compelled to sign and issue a statement saying, among other things, that it will provide the Smart LEA to employees – and

DoDEA officials will be ordered to make sure it really happens this time.

Were DoDEA officials to refuse to sign that notice, or if the system were not created as ordered by the FLRA, Freeman says the next step would be to take the case to the U.S. Court of Appeals in Washington DC, which could find DoDEA officials to be in contempt of court.

Because DoDEA management has repeatedly claimed it could not force DFAS to provide the Smart LES, Freeman believes the threat of a contempt charges against DoDEA officials could force DFAS and the Pentagon to make the Smart LES a reality.

DoDEA’s appeal has been before the FLRA for more than a year and, as of the time the FEA Journal went to press, a ruling was expected at any time.

“The bottom line,” says Freeman, “is that FEA has been doing everything in its power to fix the pay system and DoDEA has been doing everything in its power to stonewall us.”

A favorable ruling by the FLRA could put an end to that.

FEA President's Corner

Chuck McCarter



The FEA President's Report is sent out twice each month to Association members at their personal (non DoDEA) e-mail address.

If you are not receiving the FEA President's Report in your e-mail, please notify us at fea@feonline.org

In Spite Of It All

I love the chance to visit our DoDEA schools and especially the opportunities I have to see our members at work in their classrooms and offices. Though I know how much hard work goes into every lesson, sometimes it seems our teachers, counselors, nurses and others are working magic with their students...touching lives and opening minds, supporting our military connected students and preparing them for the future. It is truly inspiring to see DoDEA educators at work. And our educators have given our system a record and a reputation of which to be proud.

Unfortunately, all too often, our members are doing this great work despite the lack of support and respect from the system for which we work. I have seen our teachers working together in collaborative groups, trying to make sense of the Elementary math curriculum in the face of the inadequate training they have received. I have seen teachers leave mandated collaboration and then go to find the other educators they really need to collaborate with. I have witnessed our veteran educators sit through hours of professional development where they are spoken down to, and trained on strategies they have already used for years. I have seen teachers in beautiful new 21st century buildings trying to figure out on their own how to work in these new spaces since no

training was provided. And I can't count the number of teachers I have seen do a great job in front of their classroom while privately worrying about the threatening (and erroneous) debt letter they have just received.

Despite promises, Restructuring for Student Achievement has not provided additional support to all schools. And we certainly do not have adequate HR services in place. There is still not adequate staff devoted to resolving pay problems and preventing new ones. We still have too many vacant positions, especially ESP's and substitutes. We still have policies implemented over the objections of the classroom practitioners who work with students every day.

I recently visited our school in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and saw our members working hard to provide the best possible education for the students in that very isolated community. Unfortunately, DoDEA has not provided proper logistical or HR support for these employees because DoDEA insists on administering them out of DoDEA Americas, where the HR department has no knowledge of RAT, EVT, LQA and countless other acronyms necessary for working in an overseas environment. The same is true, but in reverse, for our members in Guam,

who work under the DDESS Master Labor Agreement, but are now under the administration of DoDEA Pacific where they have no knowledge of the MLA, their pay processes, etc. FEA has continually made the case that ISS and curricular support could come from any region since we are all using the same standards, but that HR and logistical support need to fit the employees' needs. Unfortunately, like so many practical suggestions we have made, this has fallen on deaf ears.

Our challenge as educators is to KEEP doing the great job we have always done for our students; to support them in spite of the lack of support DoDEA provides; to differentiate for them in the face of the "one size fits all" mentality that too often comes out of the Mark Center; and to continue to provide an outstanding education for them. I know we can do it.

My promise to you is that FEA will continue to fight for the support you need and that you deserve, that we will fight for the best possible working conditions for you so that you can provide the best possible education for your students. We won't settle for less.



Association Business

H.T. Nguyen
FEA Executive Director

Workers' Pay, Benefits and Rights Being Targeted

Federal employees may be in for a very rough year in 2018.

The recently enacted tax cuts and two-year spending agreement, which are expected to balloon the federal deficit to well over \$1 trillion per year, will likely be used as excuses to try inflicting pain on feds through cuts to pay and benefits.

The White House's recently-released budget calls for a freeze on federal salaries and a return to the failed "pay for performance" policies attempted more than 10 years ago under the National Security Personnel System. Such policies were shown to result in discriminatory pay practices before NSPS was gutted by Congress. Of course, Congress is not obligated to follow the president's budget recommendations – in fact they rarely do – but the opportunity to turn the screws on federal employees may be something anti-worker politicians find impossible to resist.

Those same forces tried to enact punitive cuts on federal employees' benefits during the past fiscal year. Among the negative proposals passed in the House of Representatives this past year were attempts to change how feds' retirement pensions were computed (basing them on the high 5 years instead of the current high 3 years), increasing employees' contributions towards

those pensions, reducing or eliminating cost of living adjustments for retirees, and reducing the government's share of retirees' health care premiums.

Fortunately, none of those changes made it through the Senate, and House members decided they would rather fight for tax cuts this year than cuts to employees' pay and benefits.

The coming year, however, may be quite different, as those same decision-makers who enlarged the deficit may feel the need to show the folks back home they are being "fiscally responsible" by taking something away from the very employees charged with making government work.

Should this happen, FEA and NEA will make sure those on Capitol Hill remember that federal employees are working Americans, too. We will remind decision makers that we did not create the deficit and it is dishonest and cowardly to take well-earned pay and retirement benefits away from hard-working employees.

Besides pay and benefits, we are also on guard against attempts by the current administration to impose "fire at will" policies throughout the federal government.

Last year, with approval from Congress, the Department of Veterans Affairs was granted more leniencies in firing employees

it deemed to be poor performers. Due process rights were dangerously reduced, allowing the VA to fire employees with very little evidence of wrongdoing and denying some employees the right to appeal adverse decisions to neutral bodies.

In his January State of the Union address, the president called on Congress to extend those same policies across all federal agencies.

To do so would amount to a politicalization of the federal workforce. Employees considered to be "disloyal" to an administration or otherwise found to be "troublemakers" (such as those who speak out for workers' rights) would be forced out. It would be a return to the spoils system, which the civil service was designed to put an end to 135 years ago. In short, it would be a disaster.

Although 2017 was a relatively quiet year for FEA members, we must not think we have nothing to fear. Those that seek to scapegoat federal employees for political gain are still out there and are more anxious than ever to revive that playbook.

Together, we will continue to fight for our rights to decent pay and benefits and for a workplace that is free from coercion and loyalty tests.

As always, unity is our strength!

Get all the latest news on issues affecting FEA members by regularly visiting FEA's Web site at feaonline.org

You can also follow FEA on Facebook or Twitter @FedEdAssoc

Lejuene Member Named Finalist For National Teacher of the Year Award

Kara Ball has wanted to be a teacher since she was seven years old.

“My grandmother was a teacher and I wanted to be just like her,” says the teacher and STEM coordinator for DeLalio Elementary School at Camp Lejuene.

Ball would teach classes every summer to her sister, brother and father in the family’s basement, covering whatever she had learned the previous school year.

“I continued to host school every summer until middle school, when my siblings finally realized they did not have to attend my school,” she says.

All that practice paid off.

Ball, the 2018 DoDEA Teacher of the Year, has been named one of four finalists for the National Teacher of the Year Award. The winner will be named this spring.

Ball says she is humbled and honored by the recognition and she considers herself privileged to teach DoDEA students.

If selected as the 2018 National Teacher of the Year, Ball says she would promote the importance of persevering through challenges on the path to success. She draws inspiration for that lesson from the students she teachers, many of whom will relocate and attend multiple schools throughout their academic careers.

“These students are adaptable since they relocate every few years,” Ball says. “Teaching my students strategies how to persevere and be resourceful will benefit them beyond the classroom.”

Encouraging educators to take risks now and then is another message she would promote.

“I recommend that all teachers should be willing to take risks with their students and not be afraid to tell them when they do not know something,” Ball says. “If we want our students to be risk takers and not fear failure, then we need our educators to do the same.”

Ball loves science and technology and shares that joy with her students.

Among the activities she coordinates each school year is having second graders dissect sharks in order to learn more about the animals.

“As a shark advocate, I have found that most people fear sharks because they don’t understand them,” Ball says. “The information the students gained from this project-based learning activity not only influences their thoughts about sharks, but it shifts their thinking towards wanting to learn about the unknown.”

Another project Ball has spearheaded is DeLalio’s annual cardboard arcade, which sees students

designing, building and operating games made from discarded cardboard boxes they collect throughout the community.

“Our students have become excellent divergent thinkers, who can look at a cardboard box and see its potential to become a claw machine or a mini golf course,” Ball says.

The event is held each February, after the second busiest moving season on the base. Ball says it’s been an excellent way to conquer new students’ fears and welcome new families to the community by inviting them to donate their used moving boxes and play a part in the arcade event.

“This event brings the school and community together,” Ball says. It also empowers students to use their imaginations and see themselves in a variety of roles, such as inventor, engineer or innovator.

“My goal as a STEM educator is to empower my students to empower themselves, and this activity is a great way of doing that.”



DeLalio Elementary School Educator Kara Ball was the DoDEA 2018 Teacher of the Year and has now been named as one of four finalists for the national Teacher of the Year award. She is only the second DoDEA teacher ever to be named a finalist for the national award. The winner will be announced this spring.

Congratulations to the following FEA members who were named Teacher of the Year in their respective districts for 2018.

- **Kimberly Deverick, Arnn Elementary School - Pacific East**
- **Rebecca Lentz, Daegu American School - Pacific West**
- **Tricia Surinak, Ansbach Middle/High School - Europe East**
- **Erika Wooton, Kubasaki High School - Pacific South**

FUNDS FOR READING FUN

With help from an NEA Read Across America grant, FEA was able to provide funds to support reading activities at nine schools for this year's reading celebration. At most schools, local FEA affiliates teamed up with Parent/Teacher organizations or other community groups to stage events. In addition to those shown below, funds were distributed to support events at Amelia Earhart Intermediate, Pierce Terrace Elementary, Pinckney Elementary, and Stuttgart High schools.



Patch Elementary School



Vogelweh Elementary School



Stuttgart Elementary School



Hohenfels Elementary School



Dexter Elementary School

Guam Support Employees Vote To Join FEA-Stateside Region Bargaining Unit

FEA officially welcomes our newest local: the Education Support Professionals at DoDEA's Guam schools.

Although FEA-SR has long represented certified employees (teachers, counselors, psychologists, etc.) at the four DoDEA schools on Guam, ESPs were not a part of our bargaining unit.

That all changed in December, after the ESPs at Guam voted to organize into a local bargaining unit and affiliate themselves with FEA's Stateside Region (FEA-SR).

The ESPs at Guam first expressed an interest in joining FEA-SR during the 2016-2017 school year. To get the process underway, FEA-SR collected official "Showing of Interest" cards from a majority of the ESPs and submitted them to the Federal Labor Relations Authority. That process took place spring and summer of 2017.

By fall of 2017, the FLRA had confirmed that the required percentage of the Guam ESPs were interested in voting on the question of whether to organize themselves, clearing the way for a vote to be held on that question. The vote was conducted in November and December and the results were unanimously in favor of organizing and joining FEA-SR.

"We're very honored and excited to be welcoming the ESPs at Guam into our organization," says FEA Director for DDESS Jane Loggins, whose Stateside Area includes the schools at Guam since it is a U.S. territory.

As this issue of the FEA Journal went to press, Loggins and FEA-SR General Counsel Ben Hunter were planning a trip to Guam in late February, to meet with the new bargaining unit members and to begin the process of building the new local association.

Local officers and building representatives will have to be elected for the Guam ESP local, but before that can happen, members will have to be signed up for the new local association so that they can run for office and vote in the election of their representatives.

The months and years ahead will be spent incorporating the Guam ESPs into the existing bargaining unit and Master Labor Agreement between FEA-SR and management.

"We'll be working with the ESPs at Guam to figure out what they like and what they want to change in regards to their current working conditions," Loggins says.

FEA-SR surveyed the new Guam members soon after the results of their affiliation vote were finalized to learn more about what issues and concerns were important to them. Those survey results showed employees concerned with their treatment by management and seeking more input into the policies and practices that govern their workplaces.

"We'll have plenty of things to work on," Loggins says. "We're glad to have the opportunity to work with the ESPs at Guam on making improvements and seeing that they are treated like the professionals they are."

NEA's ESP Professional Growth Continuum Provides Support Personnel With A Map For Career Improvement

The ESP Professional Growth Continuum (PGC) consists of eight Universal Standards within three Levels of Practice. The three Levels of Practice begin with Foundational, moving to Proficient, and working toward an Advanced/Mastery level of professional practice. These three Levels of Practice span across all nine ESP career families (clerical services, custodian and maintenance services, food services, health and student services, paraeducators, security services, skilled trades, technical services, and transportation services) with opportunities for ESP to enhance their professional standing by being a role model, mentor, and/or leader at each level.

The PGC serves as a map of how ESP can grow professionally; however, professional growth is not meant to be linear or hierarchical. An individual can be proficient for one ESP Universal Standard of practice, but also advanced for another. The model is fluid so that ESP can build their professional capacity in one or more standards by participating in professional learning opportunities aligned with each Level of Practice to complement on-the-job experiences and training.

Learn more about the PGC and download the growth continuum documents for each career family by going to nea.org/esppgc

Lejeune ESP President Gains Skills Through NEA Leadership Program

When Donelle Pistorino was elected president of the Lejeune Education Support Association (LESA), she realized she could use some training and guidance in order to be the best possible advocate and leader for her local members.

Fortunately, NEA had just the type of training she was hoping to find: the ESP Leaders for Tomorrow Program.

The program takes 15 to 20 Education Support Professional (ESP) members each year from throughout NEA's state affiliates and trains them in leadership skills.

"I wanted to be a part of this program so I could grow as a leader," Pistorino explains. FEA has approximately 125 members in five existing ESP locals and is currently recruiting the first group of members at a newly organized ESP local in Guam (see story, page 6).

As a participant, Pistorino agreed to attend three training sessions between summer 2017 and spring 2018. The sessions taught skills ranging from running meetings using Roberts Rules of Order to engaging members in solving problems by learning to ask better questions. Other topics included communications, the history of trade unionism and lots of opportunities for self-reflection and self-assessment.

"I'm focusing on what I've learned about myself and using that to be a better advocate for ESPs," Pistorino says. "This training has definitely taken me out of my comfort zone. But, by being out of my comfort zone, I am becoming more confident in myself and growing in my role as an ESP leader."

In addition to learning about her own abilities, Pistorino says one of the true highlights of the

Leaders for Tomorrow program has been getting to know the 15 other ESPs in her program class from other NEA state affiliates. The participants first met at a session last July and again in November. They will hold their final gathering in late March.

As the ESPs shared their stories and experiences, Pistorino says she has picked up great ideas and advice for things such as membership recruitment and retention.



Among the highlights of the NEA Leaders for Tomorrow program for FEA's Donelle Pistorino (right) has been meeting and learning from Association leaders such as NEA President Lily Eskelsen-Garcia.

"By learning what has worked for others, I can try new ideas locally," she says. "It's also helpful to know that other ESPs are facing some of the same challenges and that we are not alone."

Pistorino calls the Leaders for Tomorrow program a fantastic opportunity that she hopes other ESPs within FEA will apply for.

"I am grateful that NEA is focusing on ESPs and offering us this opportunity," she says. "It's important to work together and help ESPs across the states make a voice for themselves to be recognized and valued as equal partners in education."

The NEA Leaders For Tomorrow program was created to train future ESP leaders in leadership attitudes, skills, and knowledge. The overarching goal is to develop skilled ESP leaders across the 50 states.

The 15 to 20 participants selected each year must attend three sessions, held in July, November, and March (which includes attendance at the National ESP Conference).

The program consists of 12 different modules with 91 hours of class time. In between class sessions the participants engage in online networking and mentoring.

Criteria for participants:

- **Must be current NEA ESP member.**
- **Must have been NEA member in good standing for the past three years.**
- **Must complete application form and submit by the deadline.**
- **Must commit to participate fully in all three sessions.**
- **Must commit to utilize new skills in the Association.**

To learn more or to apply for the ESP Leaders for Tomorrow program, go to nea.org/home/37956.htm

NEA's Blended Learning Offers Members More Ways To Train

Chad Jimison and Denise Sheedy live and work 2,000 miles apart, but that didn't stop them from working together to teach a group of 30 educators.

Jimison, an ET at Seoul American Middle School in Korea, and Sheedy, a teacher at Andersen Elementary School on Guam, utilized several NEA-provided tools to lead a group of Guam educators through a class on LGBTQ issues.

The two received training from NEA to be facilitators in the Association's Blended Learning program. Blended Learning combines in-person meetings, virtual meetings and other technologies to present information in ways that allow greater flexibility and accessibility for participants.

Using a curriculum Jimison helped to create for NEA, the 30 participants began with an in-person meeting in Guam, locally arranged and facilitated by Sheedy.

From there, the participants were organized into smaller cadres that would continue to meet (both virtually and in-person) throughout the duration of the course.

As the local facilitator on Guam, Sheedy met with cadres online or face to face each week, assisting them in the process of working through their assignments and posting discussion items to NEA's edCommunities platform (mynea360.org).

The different cadres could view each other's postings and discuss the issues raised

amongst themselves. Then, once a week, the entire group would hold an online meeting with Jimison and Sheedy to review that week's lessons, introduce new topics and hold discussions about the current topic, then go over their next assignments.

"The conversations, questions and support are really all happening throughout the course in a blended environment," Jimison explains. He says the format is well suited to the widespread world of DoDEA.

"Of course, I like the classroom environment and the in-person training," Jimison says, "but this allows us to really get to members in remote areas and a flexibility to work on a schedule that fits with the majority of the participants."

Sheedy says the feedback from participants on Guam has been positive, though the format does take some getting used to.

"Some really like the online model of learning and some would rather have face to face," she says. "It really depends on their learning style and comfort with technology.

"Many people do like the idea of being able to meet from the comfort of their own homes and not have to drive in somewhere."

While the first Blending Learning class wrapped up in early February, Jimison and Sheedy will be offering another round of the class, this time including educators from Korea, and also a follow-up class for those who completed the first one.

The course covered issues affecting LGBTQ students, such as identifying barriers to creating safe schools for all students and raising awareness of bias and other challenges LGBTQ students face.

Other FEA local associations interested in participating in the Blended Learning LGBTQ course are encouraged to contact Jimison for information. A member willing to be local coordinator would be needed to help run the program at any participating locations.

Create Your Own Blended Learning Experience With These NEA Tools

Below are a few of the online resources NEA provides to help members access professional learning materials.

NEA's edCommunities – mynea360.org – is the Association's premium online professional practice and learning area where educators can connect, collaborate, share and engage with thousands of other education professionals.

learn.nea.org – NEA's online Learning Management System, which was recently launched. The searchable catalog of materials for professional practices and other topics will be added to significantly in the months ahead.

Works4Me - A biweekly newsletter sending tips, resources and best practices to your inbox, available at nea.org/works4me

DODDS Pay Will Now Count Professional Development Credits

Employees in FEA's overseas bargaining unit can now claim academic credit for a wider range of professional development coursework, thanks to a recent settlement with DoDEA.

In the past, DoDEA has only recognized credits for coursework specifically labeled as being graduate level. This excluded other types of coursework, such as those in states like California and

Alaska, that are labeled as being professional development (PD) credits.

Now, under the settlement between FEA and DoDEA, any professional development credit not specifically identified as being undergraduate credit will be counted towards overseas employees' pay lanes, so long as it is Department of Education accredited.

As a result, employees in

Europe and the Pacific on the Masters Lane or higher will now be able to count such PD credits when their salary lanes are being determined.

Employees will have to submit applications to DoDEA in order to receive such professional development credits. The process, however, should be relatively simple: the registrar at the university from which you've received the credits will have to

certify that the coursework was not for undergraduate credit. Anything else taken for credit as a DOE accredited professional development course should automatically be counted towards an employee's graduate credits.

The settlement arose because of an association grievance involving 11 members who had not had their professional development credits properly recognized. As a result, those 11 members will receive back pay and in some cases adjustments to their pensions. Some of those individuals will receive as much as \$35,000 to \$40,000.

DoDEA is to recognize all such PD credits prospectively from the time of the settlement. Overseas members who have earned such credits in the past and have not had them recognized by management should contact FEA UniServ Attorney Bill Freeman at bfreeman@nea.org.

FEA LAWYER THINKS MORE MA+ BENEFICIARIES MAY BE UNCOVERED IN YEARS AHEAD

FEA has identified hundreds of DODDS employees owed back pay under the "Masters-Plus" case, but more are probably still out there, according to FEA UniServ Attorney Bill Freeman.

FEA has won cases for 342 people so far who were not properly paid for graduate credits they had earned going back to June 4, 2001.

Although the arbitrator in the case tasked DoDEA with identifying all those owed money as a result of the 2012 ruling, that work has largely fallen upon Freeman and FEA.

Now, however, Freeman is working with management to see that DoDEA meets its obligations under the arbitrator's ruling and takes on responsibility for finding anyone else who is owed. FEA would still confirm DoDEA's findings, however.

Under the ruling, graduate credit is to count towards overseas pay, regardless whether that

credit was earned before or after the graduate degree was awarded. The ruling applies only to DODDS employees but FEA-SR is pursuing a similar case for DDESS employees.

Because FEA does not have access to employees' personnel records, it would be impossible for the Association to conduct the audits necessary to find every individual owed money. All those helped thus far by Freeman contacted him in the wake of the 2012 arbitration victory.

Freeman estimates that DoDEA's audits could uncover another 100 or more individuals still owed money for credits they earned as far back as June 4, 2001.

Current or former DODDS employees who think they are owed should email bfreeman@nea.org

Pre-Retired Membership A Great Gift for Yourself or Colleagues

With one low payment now, you can assure yourself or one of your fellow FEA members a lifetime of access to the many benefits of association membership.

FEA/NEA Pre-Retired Membership is open to any current member of FEA/NEA, regardless of the person's retirement date. This membership allows an individual to enroll in the FEA/NEA retirement program, prior to actual retirement, for a one-time-only payment.

The current payment amount is \$358.50. That amount will increase after August 31, 2018.

Once you have paid your one-time dues fee for Pre-Retired membership, you are automatically a retired member for life of both FEA and NEA. Your retired membership will take effect once you have retired from DoDEA. Members must continue to pay annual FEA/NEA Active Member dues until the time of their retirement.

The Pre-Retired dues amount increases each year in proportion to the overall FEA dues, so by pre-paying for your retired membership now you can save significantly. If you are not retiring for another 5, 10 or 20 years, the cost of retired membership will have risen significantly above today's level by the time you do retire.

As an FEA/NEA retired member, you will be able to retain access in your retirement to the many Member Benefits programs for retired members, including various financial, insurance and investment programs. You will also continue to receive FEA and NEA publications. And, if you decide to substitute teach after your retirement from DoDEA, you will continue to be covered by NEA's liability insurance.

Completing your Pre-Retired Membership is easy. Go to feasonline.org/join/form.htm and follow the link for Pre-Retired Membership. You can purchase the membership for yourself or any other FEA/NEA Member.

Welcome to Your
Retirement Planning Center



The Retirement Planning Center at NEA Member Benefits is a one-stop shop for information on planning for and enjoying your retirement.

Whether you are just starting out in your career, building your nest egg, approaching retirement, or already enjoying it, the Retirement Planning Center can help you get where you want to be.

Tools include a retirement income calculator, a retirement newsletter provided by Kiplinger's, a glossary of common terms relating to retirement and information about the NEA retirement program.

It's never too early to start planning your retirement and there's never a bad time to find new ways of enjoying it.

neamb.com/retirement-center.htm

CHECK OUT THE DODDS REUNION

Retirees are also encouraged to participate in the DODDS Reunion that takes place each summer. The 2018 meeting will be July 18-22 in Buffalo, NY. The annual gathering of teachers, administrators and support staff from overseas and stateside schools presents retirees a chance to reconnect with old friends and develop new friendships. Although not directly affiliated with FEA, many of our Retired Members make the DODDS Reunion a part of their summer each year. You can learn more about this gathering by going to mydoddsreunion.com



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Questions About NEA Member Benefits? Call or Go Online!

The NEA Member Benefits program provides many programs and services to FEA members. Please contact Member Benefits with questions about any of their services using the following toll-free numbers in applicable areas:

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1-800-637-4636

Overseas

First dial the AT&T Direct Access Code

In **Germany** and **UK**
0800-2255288

In **Japan**
00539-111

Then dial Member Benefits at

800-893-0396

And don't forget the Member Benefits Web site. You can access information on all of NEA-MB's programs, get current rates on CDs and investment funds, and sign up for other services.

www.neamb.com



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Calendar of Events

MARCH

2 NEA's Read Across America Day

APRIL

19-21 FEA Stateside Area Council
Arlington, VA

MAY

5-7 FEA Pacific Area Leadership Council
Seoul, Korea

6-12 Teacher Appreciation Week

8 National Teacher Day

9 National School Nurses Day

Congratulations!



Michael Pope, a science teacher at Zama Middle School in Japan, is flanked by FEA Director for NEA Anita Lang and FEA President Chuck McCarter at the recent NEA Foundation Awards Gala. Michael was FEA's nominee for the Foundation's 2018 Award for Teaching Excellence. Congratulations Michael!