



JOURNAL

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Inside

FEA ELECTION 2021

Members will vote this school year on a proposed amendment to the FEA Constitution and also conditionally vote to fill a new office on the FEA Board of Directors that would be created if the amendment passes.

Watch For Your Ballot In The Mail And Return It Quickly!

Ballots will be mailed directly to all FEA Active Members on December 18, 2020.

Completed ballots must be received by FEA no later than February 17, 2021, in order to be included in the election tally.

SEE PAGES 4-8 FOR MORE INFORMATION

Overseas Contract Remains Unsettled

Renegotiations had ended and the fate of a new Overseas negotiated agreement was still uncertain as this issue of the FEA Journal went to press in early December.

DoDEA once again has asked the Federal Service Impasses Panel (FSIP) to assert jurisdiction over the negotiations process. At press time, the jurisdictional process was still in its beginning stages. No further details about the process or estimate for a resolution were available.

In October, over 98 percent of voting members in FEA's Overseas bargaining unit – consisting of Cuba, Europe and the Pacific – rejected a tentative agreement.

Following our Overseas members' rejection by ratification vote of the tentative agreement, FEA and management began 30 days of re-

negotiations, as required by the ground rules that govern the bargaining process.

At the end of the 30 days, DoDEA sought to have FSIP assert jurisdiction over the negotiations, as it did earlier this year following an initial period of Overseas contract bargaining. During that earlier process, FSIP ruled in management's favor on a number of disputed contract issues but left others, such as management's attempt to lengthen the Overseas duty day with no additional compensation, unsettled.

FEA remains committed to bargaining a fair, equitable and lawful contract for Overseas members.

Updates will continue to be put out via e-mail, social media and feasonline.org as new developments occur.

RATIFICATION VOTE ON DoDEA'S PROPOSED TENTATIVE AGREEMENT FOR THE OVERSEAS BARGAINING UNIT

YES - I approve the contract as proposed by DoDEA	1.6%
NO - I reject the contract as proposed by DoDEA	98.4%

FEA President's Corner

Brian Chance



FEA's Washington DC office sends out frequent updates on issues of concern to Association members at their personal (non DoDEA) e-mail address.

If you are not receiving updates from FEA in your e-mail, please notify us at fea@feaonline.org

Reflecting On A Challenging Year

With signs of light at the end of the COVID-19 tunnel, now is the time for us to remain vigilant, stay strong and reflect.

This year has been unusually challenging, especially for education professionals. Teaching is already a difficult job in normal times. Teaching during a pandemic though, either in-person with safety precautions or on-line at home, is a tall task for the best of us.

Many FEA members have spent time this year bearing with the challenges of teaching children on-line, such as dealing with new platforms and technical difficulties. When returning to the classroom, many have faced inadequate cleanliness and safety supplies. Meanwhile, DoDEA's contract-related actions in both Overseas and Stateside continue to breed uncertainty, stress, and mistrust in our schools – further damaging the learning environment. Pay irregularities have become

increasingly widespread. Lastly, this year many of us have felt the lack of social connection.

There are signs of hope, however. As I help resolve pay issues for many members, I now have recurring meetings with DoDEA management regarding pay so we can fast-track resolutions. We are hopeful that a vaccine will be found that will help us return to a normal work environment and lifestyle. 2021 has several indications of being a promising year of change.

As we approach what may be a shift away from Covid-19, now is the time to stay vigilant.

Teachers and other staff should continue social distancing and taking safety precautions inside and outside the classroom. File safety notices if your classrooms are not properly cleaned or lack equipment. Check to see if you are being paid accurately and keep and print up paper copies all your LESs. Make sure you are taking care of your own

physical and mental health, and if you are able, be there to help and listen to others around you.

As we wind down a year and pandemic that has taken thousands of lives and has made for the most challenging school year in recent memory, it is important to reflect upon what we are grateful for and how we have grown. We have shown strength and reliance. We have worn masks and followed social distance guidelines for almost a year. We have shown concern for the wellbeing of others, learned new technologies, and learned how to maintain relationships remotely.

Having seen the education community come together, share best practices, and support each other this year, I am proud. I want to thank all FEA members for their continued hard work to educate the children of military families living around the world.

Happy New Year and stay healthy.





Association Business

Richard Tarr
FEA Executive Director

Advancing Equity and Inclusion In FEA

The military community we serve encompasses families from all manner of backgrounds. Having teachers from diverse backgrounds can instill in children a sense of respect and appreciation of other cultures. The Human and Civil Rights (HCR) program at all levels of FEA is an invaluable benefit to educators looking for training, resources and leadership on improving inclusion, respect and appreciation.

Too often, children from communities of color or underrepresented groups never have the experience of being taught by someone who shares their ethnicity or cultural heritage. The negative effects of this are only recently gaining the attention and intervention they deserve.

The FEA HCR program offers resources to encourage diversity regardless of age, gender, culture, gender or sexual diversity, or race. As an example of the programs

the HCR program can offer, many educators have applied to participate in NEA's grant program to host readings on books related to diversity. In addition, FEA members serving as HCR Coordinators at various locations and levels of the Association have organized or helped to stage trainings and professional development opportunities on issues of diversity and inclusion.

FEA is at its strongest when our members share, respect and are inclusive of the multitude of viewpoints and experiences of each of the educators in our membership. Our HCRs lead these efforts and provide resources and training for our members. We encourage members to engage with the HCR programs at their local, District and Area levels by participating in events, applying to serve in HCR positions, and helping the HCRs to promote and build their efforts.

We can also promote diversity and inspire our students through our

teaching. We can encourage students of all ethnicities and backgrounds to imagine themselves as educators or working within the STEM fields, or spotlight successful individuals from diverse backgrounds so students can find inspirational role models they identify with. Your HCR leaders are a valuable resource for educators here as well. In addition, the NEA HCR program and nea.org have many resources and trainings you can access to help in your efforts to promote diversity and inclusion in the classroom and in your community.

If you have recommendations on this topic or think there are additional initiatives FEA and the HCR program can improve upon, please reach out.

As we enter a new year and a new era, let's continue to build upon the success of our HCR program and work together to make it a stronger program for the benefit of our members and our students.



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

You can also follow us on Facebook or Twitter @FedEdAssoc

Constitutional Amendment, Conditional Election of New Officer To Be Voted On

NOTICE OF ELECTION

For Election of Officers and Constitutional Revisions

Winter/Spring 2021

In accordance with the provisions of the Department of Labor Rules and Regulations governing elections, notice is hereby given to all reported members that an election for the purposes of

- 1) amending the Constitution of the Federal Education Association, and
- 2) electing an Executive Officer of the Federal Education Association,

is to be conducted in a secret ballot election by the members. Balloting will be done by mail during the months of December 2020, and January-February 2021, and must be received by the FEA Washington office not later than February 17, 2021.

The Amendment will be deemed passed if the proposed change receives an affirmative majority vote of the members exercising their right to vote. The Amendment would become effective immediately and would result in votes for the Officer Election to be tallied. If the Amendment fails, the Officer Election votes will NOT be tallied.

If the Amendment is passed, the officer to be elected to the following position will begin serving May 1, 2021, and continue serving until August 1, 2022, in accordance with the FEA Constitution and Bylaws:

- **Education Support Professional (ESP) Coordinator**

The world-wide active membership of FEA will vote on the Constitutional Amendment and the Officer Election. Votes for the Officer Election will only be counted if the Amendment passes.

What issues are FEA members voting on this year?

FEA members will decide whether to amend the FEA Constitution to add language specifying the membership, election and voting rights of Area Human and Civil Rights Coordinators on FEA Area Councils and to create the position of Education Support Professional (ESP) Coordinator as an At-Large office on the FEA Board of Directors.

Members will also vote to fill the ESP Coordinator position, though the votes for that office will only be tallied if the constitutional amendment passes.

Who are the candidates?

There is a single candidate for the ESP Coordinator position. The biography of that candidate is on page 8.

Where is my ballot?

Ballots will be mailed individually to each FEA Active member on December 18, 2020.

When is my ballot due back to FEA for counting?

Ballots must be received by the close of business on February 17, 2021, to be counted.

What if my ballot never arrives?

Anytime after January 15, 2021, Local Presidents, FRSs and Area Directors may reproduce ballots for members who have not yet received theirs.

When will the count take place?

Counting will be done on February 18 and (if necessary) 19, 2021, in Washington, DC.

How do I find out who has won?

Results will be posted on the FEA Web site and in the Spring 2021 FEA Journal.

What if the amendment passes?

If the proposed amendment is approved by a majority of voting members, the changes outlined on pages 5-7 of this newsletter will be made to the FEA Constitution and votes for ESP Coordinator will be tallied.

What if the amendment fails?

If the proposed amendment is not approved by a majority of voting members, the FEA constitution will remain in its present form. In such an instance, votes cast for the ESP Coordinator position will not be tallied since that position would not exist.

ATTENTION FRSs, LOCAL PRESIDENTS AND OTHER SCHOOL LEADERS:

Please remember that FEA Election Guidelines require you to post and/or distribute all campaign materials received in the exact same manner for each and every candidate.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

**REVISING ARTICLE 5, SECTION 1 & SECTION 2;
ARTICLE 6, SECTION 1-g;
ARTICLE 9, SECTION 2, SECTION 3-f, & SECTION 5-a;
ARTICLE 15, SECTION 1-a & SECTION 7:**

ADDING ARTICLE 5, SECTION 9; ARTICLE 6, SECTION 1-h

THE PURPOSE OF THIS AMENDMENT IS

- 1.) To create a new Executive Office on the FEA Board of Directors: Education Support Professional (ESP) Coordinator.
- 2.) To add specific language to Article Nine of the Constitution regarding membership, election of and voting rights for Area Human and Civil Rights Coordinators on FEA Area Councils.

Voting on candidates for the ESP Coordinator position will be done on the same ballot as the vote for the Constitutional Amendment. The ESP Coordinator votes will only be tallied if the Constitutional Amendment passes. If approved, the ESP Coordinator elected by the worldwide membership would take office May 1, 2021 and serve until August 1, 2022.

✓ YES, in favor of the amendment.

If voted YES by a majority of those voting, language would be added to Article Nine of the FEA Constitution specifying the membership, election and voting rights of Area Human and Civil Rights Coordinators on FEA Area Councils.

If voted YES by a majority of those voting, the position of “Education Support Professional (ESP) Coordinator” would be created as an At-Large office on the FEA Board of Directors and votes cast for the ESP Coordinator position would be tallied.

The winner of that tally would begin serving on the FEA Board of Directors May 1, 2021, with a term expiring August 1, 2022. Henceforth, the ESP Coordinator position would be elected with other FEA At-Large Officers on the existing three-year election cycle, meaning the next election for ESP Coordinator would take place during School Year 2021-2022.

This abbreviated initial term of office would not count against the elected individual in the future when considering the two-term limit on FEA Executive Offices imposed by the FEA Constitution.

✓ NO, opposed to the amendment.

If voted NO by a majority of those voting, the present wording of the FEA Constitution would not change. No language would be added to Article Nine regarding Area Human and Civil Rights Coordinators. The position of “Education Support Professional (ESP) Coordinator” would not be created and the votes cast for that position would not be tallied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

CURRENT LANGUAGE

ARTICLE FIVE

Executive Officers: Powers and Duties

Section 1. Offices

The Executive Officers of the Association shall be the President, Vice-President/Secretary-Treasurer, Human and Civil Rights Coordinator, Area Directors/FEA Director for DDESS and NEA Director(s) for FEA.

Section 2. Qualifications

All candidates for the offices of President, Vice President/Secretary-Treasurer, Human and Civil Rights Coordinator, NEA Director and Area Director/FEA Director for DDESS shall be active members of the Association. No member who has been finally adjudged guilty of misappropriating money or property of the Association or a local association in accordance with procedures set forth in this Constitution, who holds membership in a labor organization that has goals, interests or objectives inimical to the goals and objectives of the Association, or who otherwise is ineligible under Federal Law to be a candidate for or to hold an Association office shall be eligible for the office of President, Vice President/Secretary-Treasurer, Human and Civil Rights Coordinator or Area Director/FEA Director for DDESS. All officers shall maintain active membership during their terms of office. The Area Directors/FEA Director for DDESS shall, during their term in office, remain in the area in which they were elected. An Area Director/FEA Director for DDESS subject to an involuntary action by management affecting his/her location will not be subject to this provision.

There is no Section 9 in the FEA Constitution currently

ARTICLE SIX

Executive Officers: Vacancies, Impeachment and Removal

Section 1. Vacancies

g. Those members appointed to fill the unexpired terms of office shall meet all the eligibility requirements of the Constitution pertaining to candidates for the office to which they are appointed.

PROPOSED LANGUAGE - new language is shown in **bold**

ARTICLE FIVE

Executive Officers: Powers and Duties

Section 1. Offices

The Executive Officers of the Association shall be the President, Vice President/Secretary-Treasurer, Human and Civil Rights Coordinator, **Education Support Professional (ESP) Coordinator**, Area Directors/FEA Director for DDESS and NEA Directors(s) for FEA.

Section 2. Qualifications

All candidates for the offices of President, Vice President/Secretary-Treasurer, Human and Civil Rights Coordinator, NEA Director, **Education Support Professional (ESP) Coordinator** and Area Director/FEA Director for DDESS shall be active members of the Association. No member who has been finally adjudged guilty of misappropriating money or property of the Association or a local association in accordance with procedures set forth in this Constitution, who holds membership in a labor organization that has goals, interests or objectives inimical to the goals and objectives of the Association, or who otherwise is ineligible under Federal Law to be a candidate for or to hold an Association office shall be eligible for the office of President, Vice President/Secretary-Treasurer, Human and Civil Rights Coordinator, **Education Support Professional (ESP) Coordinator** or Area Director/FEA Director for DDESS. All officers shall maintain active membership during their terms of office. The Area Directors/FEA Director for DDESS shall, during their term in office, remain in the area in which they were elected. An Area Director/FEA Director for DDESS subject to an involuntary action by management affecting his/her location will not be subject to this provision.

Section 9. Education Support Professional (ESP) Coordinator

The ESP Coordinator shall:

- a. Be an Active Education Support Professional (ESP) member of the Association (full or part time);**
- b. Represent Education Support Professional members' interests in the FEA;**
- c. Assist in coordinating and implementing Association policies to encourage Education Support Professional membership and leadership roles in FEA;**
- d. Present concerns of Education Support Professional members to the FEA leadership;**
- e. Hold no other executive office in the Association.**

ARTICLE SIX

Executive Officers: Vacancies, Impeachment and Removal

Section 1. Vacancies

g. If the office of Education Support Professional (ESP) Coordinator is vacant, the Board of Directors shall appoint a successor to fulfill the unexpired term of office.
h. Those members appointed to fill the unexpired terms of office shall meet all the eligibility requirements of the Constitution pertaining to candidates for the office to which they are appointed.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

CURRENT LANGUAGE

ARTICLE NINE

Area Councils

Section 2. Membership

The Area Council shall be composed of the Area Director/FEA Director for DDESS, who is the chairperson, and (a) representatives(s) from each subunit within the area. Subunit representatives may be elected directly by secret ballot among the active members within the subunit or by representatives of local associations within the subunit who themselves have been elected by secret ballot. In the event that the President of the sole local association within the subunit is to serve as the subunit representative, the ballot for President of the local association must include a statement to this effect.

Section 3. Powers and Duties

f. Provide for the election of Area Council subunit representatives, and other officers deemed necessary from the membership of the area and formulate voting procedures and rules for conducting elections, rules concerning the method for filing vacancies in the office of subunit representative and procedures, if any, for the recall or removal of subunit representatives, consonant with this Constitution and Federal Law, which shall be submitted to the President of the Association for examination and necessary revision and approval before becoming effective. Any proposed amendments, revisions, or modifications to such procedures and rules shall likewise be submitted to the President for examination and necessary revision and approval prior to becoming effective.

Section 5. Voting

a. Voting at meetings of the Area Council shall be limited to the Area Director/FEA Director for DDESS, subunit representatives, and other elected officers of the Area Council.

ARTICLE FIFTEEN

Association Elections

Section 1. Electoral Body

a. The President, Vice President/Secretary-Treasurer, Human and Civil Rights Coordinator and NEA Director shall be elected at large by the active members of the Association.

Section 7. Elections Committee

The Elections Committee shall conduct the tally of ballots in the election of the President, Vice President/Secretary-Treasurer, Human and Civil Rights Coordinator, Area Directors/FEA Director for DDESS and NEA Director(s) in accordance with specific procedures determined by the Board of Directors and such other duties as may be incumbent upon it under specific nomination and election procedures developed by the Board of Directors.

PROPOSED LANGUAGE - new language is shown in bold

ARTICLE NINE

Area Councils

Section 2. Membership

The Area Council shall be composed of the Area Director/FEA Director for DDESS, who is the chairperson, **the Area Human and Civil Rights Coordinator** and (a) representatives(s) from each subunit within the area. Subunit representatives may be elected directly by secret ballot among the active members within the subunit or by representatives of local associations within the subunit who themselves have been elected by secret ballot. In the event that the President of the sole local association within the subunit is to serve as the subunit representative, the ballot for President of the local association must include a statement to this effect.

Section 3. Powers and Duties

f. Provide for the election of Area Council subunit representatives, **the Area Human and Civil Rights Coordinator**, and other officers deemed necessary from the membership of the area and formulate voting procedures and rules for conducting elections, rules concerning the method for filing vacancies in the office of subunit representative and procedures, if any, for the recall or removal of subunit representatives, consonant with this Constitution and Federal Law, which shall be submitted to the President of the Association for examination and necessary revision and approval before becoming effective. Any proposed amendments, revisions, or modifications to such procedures and rules shall likewise be submitted to the President for examination and necessary revision and approval prior to becoming effective.

Section 5. Voting

a. Voting at meetings of the Area Council shall be limited to the Area Director/FEA Director for DDESS, subunit representatives, **Area Human and Civil Rights Coordinator**, and other elected officers of the Area Council.

ARTICLE FIFTEEN

Association Elections

Section 1. Electoral Body

a. The President, Vice President/Secretary-Treasurer, Human and Civil Rights Coordinator, **Education Support Professional (ESP) Coordinator** and NEA Director shall be elected at large by the active members of the Association.

Section 7. Elections Committee

The Elections Committee shall conduct the tally of ballots in the election of the President, Vice President/Secretary-Treasurer, Human and Civil Rights Coordinator, **Education Support Professional (ESP) Coordinator**, Area Directors/FEA Director for DDESS and NEA Director(s) in accordance with specific procedures determined by the Board of Directors and such other duties as may be incumbent upon it under specific nomination and election procedures developed by the Board of Directors.

FEA ELECTION 2021

MEET THE CANDIDATE FOR EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL (ESP) COORDINATOR

The position of Education Support Professional (ESP) Coordinator would be a new, At-Large officer position added to the FEA Board of Directors if members approve the proposed amendment to the FEA Constitution to be voted on by all FEA Active members this winter.

The ESP Coordinator would represent the concerns of ESP members, such as classroom aides, custodians and bus drivers. ESPs in DoDEA Americas schools are Active members of FEA, with their own bargaining unit.

The ballot being sent to all FEA Active members to vote on the proposed amendment to the FEA Constitution will also include a vote to elect an Education Support Professional (ESP) Coordinator.

If FEA members approve the proposed amendment, the office of ESP Coordinator will be created and the votes for the ESP Coordinator position will be counted. The candidate elected would take office on May 1, 2021, with a term expiring August 1, 2022. Subsequent ESP Coordinators would be elected to three-year terms that sync up with the terms of other FEA At-Large officers.

If members do not approve the proposed amendment, the office of ESP Coordinator will not be created and votes for the ESP Coordinator position will not be counted.

CANDIDATE

EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL (ESP) COORDINATOR

TERESA BROWN

Present Location: Heroes Elementary School,
Camp Lejeune, North Carolina

Present Assignment: LIMM/SPED Education Aide

Years in DoDEA: 20

Locations:

- Camp Lejeune, NC (20 years)

Universities, Degrees, Certificates:

- Southern New Hampshire University
- Mt. Olive University

Offices and Committee Assignments:

- Human and Civil Rights Coordinator (1 year)
- FEA-SR/ESP Representative (1 year)
- Vice President, Lejeune Education Support Association (1 year)
- CSI Committee Member (1 year)
- Safety Crisis Management Team (18 years)
- Lejeune Education Support Association Building Representative (10 years)
- Emergency AED Response Team (2 years)



FEA FIGHTS FOR YOUR PAY

Paying employees accurately and on time is one of the most basic functions of any organization, but DoDEA has been routinely failing at that responsibility in recent years. Common errors continue to affect not only pay rates, but also benefits and leave. With 8,700 educators working hard to teach some 69,000 students around the world, it is imperative that DoDEA pay their employees timely and accurately. As a result, the Association is working harder than ever to resolve pay issues for all DoDEA teachers and support staff and pressure management to permanently fix systemic errors.

RESOLVING OVERSEAS PAY PROBLEMS

FEA continues to work with DoDEA management to resolve numerous pay issues confronting Overseas members.

FEA President Brian Chance has been in constant contact with headquarters personnel about Overseas pay issues, resulting in both system-wide and individual improvements, such as:

- Following numerous pay problems being reported by FEA on behalf of Overseas members, it was realized that DoDEA's DCPS system was using an **incorrect number of spread-pay days** and was **not linking some teachers to the 2020-2021 school year**. DoDEA has stated that many of those errors reported early this year have now been corrected and some members will receive a debt notice.
- **Common Overseas pay issues** have been identified, including fluctuations in daily pay rates, incorrect benefits deductions, and accrued leave being improperly credited.
- So far this year **FEA has helped resolve dozens of pay issues for members**. FEA's legal team recently assisted a DoDEA teacher and FEA member from the Pacific with her pay issues. When she noticed that her daily rate and her allotment were zeroed out for one of her two direct deposit accounts, she brought the issue up with DoDEA but received an incoherent explanation and no resolution. She then "reached out to FEA to assist with a pay audit from 2019 to present. [FEA] requested all my LESs and were able to provide a VERY thorough explanation of the issue... After the inquiry, my allotment was corrected from zero back to the original amount I set aside to come out of my pay into my other bank account."

FEA-SR CONTINUES TO PURSUE PAY GRIEVANCES

FEA-Stateside Region has **filed several Association Grievances over a multitude of pay problems** that were caused by DoDEA's transition to an automated payroll system last school year and will be pursuing these issues to arbitration.

If your **hourly rate on your LES was reduced** as a result of an Academic Salary Lane adjustment or other personnel action, please send a copy of your most recent LES to bhunter@nea.org to ensure you are included in FEA SR's most recent Association Grievance filed over this issue.

If you receive a debt letter or if you notice collections from your LES, follow the advice for "Responding to Alleged Debts" on the FEA-SR website, www.fea-stateside.org.

These pay issues will take years to resolve. However, **FEA-SR will continue to fight** until the Agency makes all impacted bargaining unit employees whole for any money that was illegally taken out of your pay.

TIPS FOR TRACKING YOUR PAY

FEA recommends members should follow these simple guidelines to ensure you are paid correctly and your LES is accurate:

- Carefully **monitor your LES** each pay period and look for errors and inconsistencies. **Download and keep copies of your LESs** because DoDEA's MyPay site (mypay.dfas.mil) only makes them available digitally for 12 months. Several teachers have been asked to pay debts they already paid, which they were able to prove with their old LESs.
- Ensure your **daily pay rate** (block 5 of the LES) is correct, your **deductions** for health insurance are withheld properly, and your **accrued leave** is properly credited. Look for any **unusual fluctuations** in your pay rate, which should be consistent through the SY, and any deductions you are not certain are accurate.

Advice for Pacific and Europe Members:

- Overseas members are urged to **use FEA's salary organizers** to help track your pay throughout the year: feaonline.org/passport/salary/organizer.htm
- Immediately **file a pay inquiry** through DoDEA's Global Service Desk if you suspect any pay problem. Use this link to file an inquiry: <https://globalservicedesk.ds.dodea.edu/workcenter/tmtrack.dll?shell=srp#catalog> (you must use a CAC card to access the system)
- If you have submitted an inquiry, but **have not received a response after two weeks**, contact your local union representative to elevate it up the chain. Your FRS can advise you about whether to complete the pay problem packet for Overseas members created by FEA UniServ Attorney Bill Freeman.

Advice for Stateside Members:

- If you receive a debt letter or if you notice collections from your LES, follow the advice for "Responding to Alleged Debts" on the FEA-SR website, www.fea-stateside.org

Most Feds Now Eligible for Paid Parental Leave

Most DoDEA and other federal employees may now take up to 12 weeks of Paid Parental Leave (PPL) in connection with the birth or placement (for adoption or foster care) of a child that takes place after October 1, 2020.

In DoDEA, PPL is available to most employees, with the exception of intermittent employees, such as substitutes, and employees with temporary appointments less than one year.

Under the Federal Employee Paid Leave Act, up to 12 weeks of PPL may be substituted for unpaid Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave within the 12-month period that begins with the birth or placement of a child. The birth or placement must have

taken place on or after October 1, 2020, to qualify for the PPL.

There is no limit to the number of times over the course of a career a DoDEA employee may use the PPL, but the benefit can be used only once every 365 days.

In addition, DoDEA employees who take PPL must sign an agreement to return to work for at least 12 weeks after the leave period (subject to waiver).

DoDEA supervisors may not require employees to use educator or APL leave before the use of/approving PPL.

DoDEA has issued guidance on the Federal Employee Paid Leave Act and FAQs on PPL. Both documents are available on the FEA Web site at feaonline.org/ppl.htm



Tax Burden Looms Due To Payroll Tax Deferral

The latest information FEA has on this issue is that DoDEA employees should expect to see higher than normal payroll taxes deducted starting in January 2021 to make up for the tax deferral forced on them by the White House in 2020.

FEA has asked DoDEA to get additional information from DFAS regarding how employee's paychecks will be impacted, but at the time the Journal went to print, FEA had not received this information.

Individuals who have retired or separated from DoDEA since the tax deferral began in September have been given no specific instructions for how they are to repay

any taxes deferred from their paychecks prior to departure, though the IRS has said all deferred taxes will be due by April 30 in order to avoid potential tax penalties.

The tax deferral was imposed upon all federal workers by the White House last September. It was touted as an economic stimulus measure, though many tax experts advised those subject to the mandatory deferral to treat it similarly to a loan that would need to be repaid.

As with any financial situation, FEA advises members to consult with a certified tax professional if you wish to receive advice on your unique situation.

FEA Retired News

FEA-Retired & NEA Member Benefits Team Up for Retiree-Focused Webinar

By Michael Priser
FEA Retired Member

This fall, FEA-Retired worked with NEA-Member Benefits (NEA-MB) to provide a special benefit for our retired members. In September, a virtual meeting was set up by Michael Gavin from NEA-MB, to discuss the many benefits of that program for retired members. Over a dozen members from across the country tuned in to gain additional information and have their questions answered.

Mr. Gavin first explained that NEA-MB offers a number of insurance program that can supplement Medicare benefits along with such programs for dental, vision, hearing aids, life and even pet insurance. There is also a program to help with hospital costs and long term care.

We certainly did not let this pandemic dissuade us from discussing the NEA-MB Travel program. This service offers a number of discounts on car rentals, hotels, airfares and cruises. Past President Chuck McCarter noted how he was able to secure an excellent deal on an Alaskan cruise to kick-off his retirement (pre-pandemic). Hopefully we can take advantage of these services in the near future.

There are numerous shopping tools that lead to other discounts. FEA-retired member Ingrid Ahlberg noted that when she returned from

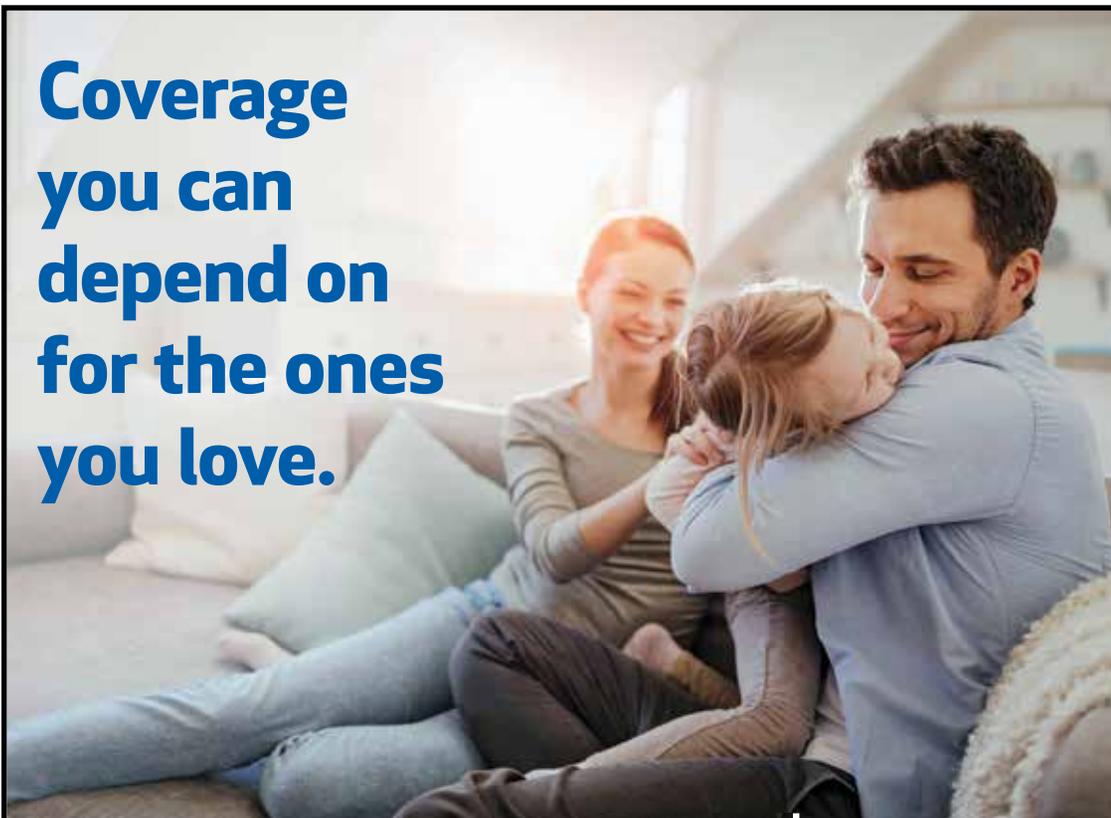
Japan to the United States, finding major household appliances for her new home was made so much easier through this program.

And when it comes to finances, there are a number of programs dealing with credit cards, home mortgages and personal loans. As these financial services generated even more interest among retirees, Mr. Gavin decided to set up another virtual meeting two months later with an expert in financial planning for retirees.

During that virtual meeting, financial planning partners from NEA-MB discussed the factors that affect and determine a proper financial plan during retirement. They highlighted the amount of income to plan for, how one's social security and federal pension fit into the monetary process, and the ever changing outside influences on one's economic well-being. All of these presentations can be found on the retirees' page of the FEA website.

There are many benefits to being a member of FEA-Retired. Active FEA members can join FEA-Retired as a pre-retired member for a one-time, life-membership fee. Information can be found at feaonline.org/join/why/retired.htm or check with your building representative.

Coverage
you can
depend on
for the ones
you love.



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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



The **JOURNAL** is a quarterly publication of the Federal Education Association. Contributions, letters, photographs and other submissions to the **JOURNAL** are welcome and should be sent to the address below.

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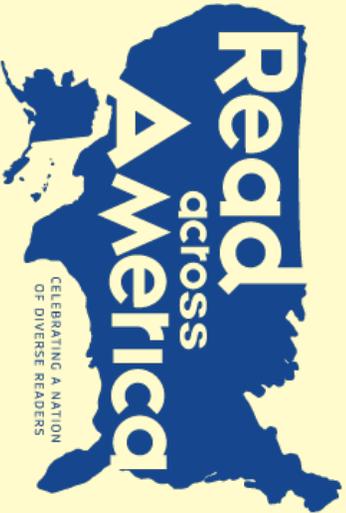


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Read Across America Day will be celebrated **March 2** by Association members in DODEA and throughout the U.S.

Members are encouraged to visit readacrossamerica.org for resources to help them plan reading events for March 2.

Ideas for socially-distanced and remote events can be found at readacrossamerica.org/virtual-read-across-america-celebrations/

NEW ADDITIONS TO THE FEA TEAM



Suzanne Summerlin joins FEA as the Deputy Executive Director and Deputy General Counsel. In this role, she will be addressing staff, leadership, and member issues as well as supporting FEA members in legal matters. Suzanne is excited to join FEA because this opportunity is the perfect marriage of two of her favorite things: representing teachers and representing federal employees. She received her J.D. from University of Florida's Levin College of Law.



Robert Forristal joins FEA as the Member Communications and Development Specialist. In this role, he will be working to educate, inform, and provide benefits to members of the Association, using digital and print media. As a former teacher, Robert understands the challenges of being an educator and is excited to support FEA members. Robert earned a Bachelors in Government and Politics from the University of Maryland.