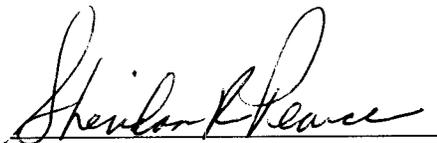


MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE DEPENDENTS SCHOOLS AND
FEDERAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

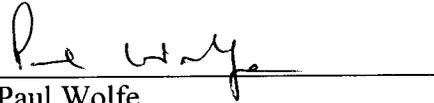
SOS...Signs of Suicide Prevention Program

The Department of Defense Dependents Schools (DoDDS) and the Federal Education Association (FEA) hereby agree to the following guidance for the use of the SOS...Signs of Suicide Prevention Program in DoDDS:

1. Management-directed training associated with the SOS...Signs of Suicide Prevention Program will normally be held during the duty day. If training cannot be accomplished during the duty day, the parties agree that management and the FEA representative at the appropriate level will consult about the time, place and length of the training. Educators will be compensated for the time spent outside of the duty day in accordance with established practice.
2. The method for providing training related to the use of the SOS...Signs of Suicide Prevention Program will be determined collaboratively by the Agency and the Association at the local level.
3. In attempting to resolve any disputes that arise, the parties agree to make every effort to resolve such disputes at the organizational level where they arise prior to forwarding them to the next level.



Sheridan R. Pearce
FEA President
January 19, 2007



Paul Wolfe
Human Resources Director, DoDEA
January 19, 2007

Priority Union Issues

Topic: SOS...Signs of Suicide Prevention Program

Date Decision Needed: January, 2007

Background: The DoD formed the "Department of Defense Task Force on Mental Health" in May, 2006, to meet the requirements of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006, Section 723. DoD, through the OSD, has contracted with a non-profit organization to provide a separate suicide prevention program for middle and high school students. The program that OSD has selected is called "*SOS...Signs of Suicide Prevention Program*." In order to address the mental health needs of children of active duty service members, especially those from deployed families, "*SOS...Signs of Suicide Prevention Program*" is being offered at no cost to DoDEA middle and high schools.

Description: The SOS program is an additional resource available to school personnel, parents and students to assure everything possible is done to provide education in the area of mental health and safety to all DoDEA students. The primary objectives of the program are to educate youth that depression is a treatable illness and to equip them to respond to a potential suicide of a friend or family member using the SOS technique.

- *SOS...Signs of Suicide Prevention Program for grades 8 through 12* contains a video and is the only program shown to reduce suicide attempts in a randomized controlled study (AJPH, 3/04). The program, in addition to the video, includes a guide for group discussions, educational materials, and voluntary screening forms for students. Parent and staff education materials are available, including a version of the screening form for parents to complete to help them assess their child's symptoms.
- *SOS...Signs of Suicide Prevention Program for grades 6 and 7* is a middle school program that addresses depression and suicide as well as self-injury. It is currently being implemented in 1100 middle schools. Educational materials include a program guide, student and parent newsletters, and resources.

Process: Both the high school and middle school programs include ready-to-use templates and tools that school staff could easily incorporate into their curricula and daily routines. A total of 80 high school and 50 middle school kits are available. OSD and the Screening for Mental Health, Inc, the contracting agency, are willing to collaborate with DoDEA. The OSD SOS Program Coordinator will be responsible for explaining the program and sending the materials to the schools.

- 1) The program is designed to be presented in one class period by a school staff member such as the school psychologist, school counselor, administrator or designee, school nurse, or health education teacher. The school administrator should seek volunteers from these areas before determining who will work with the students in this area.
- 2) Two teleconference or web-based training sessions will be made available for school personnel. The training will share information on the use of the program and materials.

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Best practices will also be presented by school professionals who have used the program in the past. The OSD contracted SOS Program Coordinator will be available to assist via telephone and email and will provide real-time conferences as needed to meet the needs of the DoDEA schools.

- 3) After being trained, the selected professional should arrange to provide the program to parents. Parents should be offered several opportunities to view the program. Opportunities will be provided through large and small group parent meetings, individual meetings or by making the kits available through the parent centers or media centers for parents unable to attend a planned meeting. Some parents will have already seen this program through the military and may choose to review it online. Online options are available to all parents, including parents who are deployed at: <http://www.mentalhealthscreening.org/middleschool/index.aspx> (middle school) or <http://www.mentalhealthscreening.org/highschool/index.aspx> (high school). Information about the program will be posted on the DoDEA website. These websites may be published in the school newsletter or other school publications.

Scope: The *SOS...Signs of Suicide Prevention Program* is in two parts made available for middle schools and for high schools. It is recommended that the program be presented at the 7th and 10th grades. Schools should make the decision to present it at other levels as well if deemed necessary. The program is voluntary for student and parents but must be made available in all DoDEA schools.

Time Frame: Kits will be shipped to each school during the month of February.

Requirement: There is no requirement to use the SOS Program. There is, however, as OSD mandated requirement to provide a suicide prevention program in all DoDEA middle and high schools. DoDEA currently has *The Jason Foundation...A Youth Suicide Prevention Program*. The SOS Program will be available to supplement or replace the Jason Program.

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