

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

Algebra Coaches – Phase II

The Department of Defense Dependents Schools (DoDDS) and the Federal Education Association (FEA) hereby agree to implement Algebra Coaches – Phase II in DoDDS in accordance with the attached guidance beginning in school year 2005-2006.

The parties will review the Algebra Coaches Program after SY 2005-2006. After the reassessment, the FEA may request bargaining on additional implementation of the Algebra Coaches Program.



Sheridan R. Pearce  
FEA President  
July 14, 2005



Paul Wolfe  
Human Resources Director, DoDEA  
July 14, 2005

## **Topic:** Algebra Initiative – Algebra Coaches

**Purpose:** During SY 04-05, five algebra coaches worked in 17 selected schools as part of the ongoing DoDEA High School Initiative. The goal of the Algebra Initiative and the coaching program is to improve the achievement of DoDEA students in Algebra I. Initial efforts involved professional development for all algebra teachers and the implementation of Algebra Lab classes in all DoDEA high schools. The algebra coaches have continued the professional development component, using a professional collaboration model.

**Process:** Algebra coaches have served 17 high schools during SY 04-05. The coaches received extensive training in algebra curriculum, technology tools, coaching techniques, providing professional development, and, in particular, collaborative teaching and learning. The central focus for student achievement centers on looking for evidence of student thinking and learning.

**Algebra Coach Activities:** During SY 04-05 coaches were assigned from two to four schools, allocating their time across the assignment. In each school setting the coach sought to support teachers in their efforts to improve student achievement. They offered staff development in questioning and the use of classroom assessments to analyze the level of student knowledge and skills, and the progress students were making. The focus remained on looking for evidence of student thinking and learning. Strategies introduced included:

- Observation of students during class activities
- Student interviews about their ways of problem solving
- Student writing about their thinking when solving problems
- Use of student dialogue and presentations
- Analyzing student work on quarterly assessments

Coaches were trained in the use of Lesson Study to facilitate professional development for the second semester. The collaborative technique engages groups of teachers in developing, planning, conducting, observing, and revising a lesson. The lesson study approach was used voluntarily with teachers. At times the coach taught the lesson and at other times a teacher volunteered. Feedback from the participants was very positive as they recognized that the time it takes for the process is significant but worthwhile.

Overall, very positive results have been reported from the field related to the algebra coaching program. Teachers' comments recorded as part of their staff development training session evaluations were highly supportive of the collaborative, reflective environment for looking at student learning in the classroom.



## Coaching SY 05-06

Thirteen coaches will be assigned to high schools in DoDEA in SY 2005-2006. Coaches will be assigned to the schools by the areas who will schedule coaches to meet the varying needs of their schools. Several different scheduling models will be used, depending on those needs. Coaches will service from one to four schools each.

Coaches will continue to assist teachers as professional peers, facilitating collaborative learning communities. Activities will continue to focus on looking for evidence of student thinking and learning, and adjusting instruction in support of student achievement. The use of classroom assessment strategies and lesson study will continue to be the primary vehicles for this process. In addition, coaches will continue to support teachers in the use of the new Algebra I Curriculum Guide, the use of technology and other resources in the classroom, and the connections between the Algebra I and Algebra Lab instructional program.

The fundamental role of the coaches is to support program improvement through collaboration with classroom teachers. Coaches do not serve in any evaluative capacity in their work in schools, nor do they provide supervisory information to administrators. Coaches work directly with teachers and are guided by the specific needs of each school staff. The agenda for each coaching visit and professional development activity is established by the group of teachers at each school.

