



Office of the Director, DoDDS-Europe
Diana J. Ohman, Director

Parent Newsletter Article for September 2008

Welcome Back to School

Welcome back to school. The summer is an opportunity for everyone associated with schools to relax, re-charge and prepare for the new school year. I am certainly ready to begin the new year with renewed enthusiasm and commitment, and know that the administrators, educators, and staff across DoDDS-E feel the same.

Over the past several years DoDDS-E has closed, consolidated, and opened new schools across Europe to accommodate the ever-changing face of the Department of Defense in Europe. These changes brought many challenges and I am proud of all DoDDS-E staff members for continuing to provide a stable learning environment during these transitional years. Regardless of what comes our way this year, our teachers will continue the traditional business of teaching. Our students will continue the exciting business of learning.

Although we have been faced with shrinking resources, military base transitions, and numerous deployments within our communities, our students continue to excel. The recently released *TerraNova* scores show that DoDDS-E students score well above the national average in all subject areas, in all grade levels, and in all ethnicities. However, we cannot rest on our laurels. Curriculum specialists are developing more challenging courses to better prepare our students for the fast-changing world they will face after school. Manpower specialists are reviewing staffing needs to ensure that our schools have adequate staffing, not only for the academic areas, but in the areas of visual and performing arts, and health and physical education. Facilities specialists are working with base officials, engineers, and contractors to ensure that the school facilities are safe, secure and conducive to learning. Our teachers will participate in professional and staff development sessions to improve skills and remain up-to-date on curriculum and current educational trends.

Even with all our resources, manpower and training, we still need and want your help and involvement in your child's educational program. Involved parents can make a substantial difference in the academic life of their children and in our school and community. The entire school community has a role to play in supporting parental engagement in our schools. Please do all you can to maintain positive, regular and open communication with your child's teachers throughout the year. Together our educational community will continue to prove that ALL students can succeed.

Have a great year.

DIANA J. OHMAN
Director, DoDDS-Europe