

ARMY EUROPE
SCHOOL SUPPORT
SERVICES

INSIDE

Back to School!	1
School Contacts	2
Get Ready!	3
Busy Parents' Guide	4/5
EFMP Back to School	6
So you're a freshman?	7
Parent/Teacher	8/9
Common Core	10
School Advisory Comm.	11
March2Success	12
Improve attitude	13
Youth Sponsorship	14
Parent Central	15
Scholarships & Freebies	16



Find YOUR School Liaison
Officer!



FALL 2015



BACK TO
SCHOOL
SPECIAL
EDITION

Yes, it's that time of year again! Children and parents alike approach that first day of school with a mix of excitement and anxiety. The start of a new school year is an opportunity to start over with a clean slate. For some it is not only just a new grade, but an entirely new school perhaps in an entirely new country! Lots of adjustments and preparation will be needed to get things going in the right direction for a successful year. Packed in this edition are some great tips to get your child on the right track from day one as well as some local insider tips and information that we hope you find helpful. As always, contact your local School Liaison Officer for information and assistance as you and your child prepare for a successful school year.

[Find your SLO:](#)

DoDDS EUROPE LEADERSHIP & CONTACTS



DoDDS Europe
Director
Dr. Dell McMullen
[Email Area Office](#)



[Bavaria District](#)
Superintendent
Dr. Elizabeth Dunham
[Email District Office](#)



[Kaiserslautern District](#)
Superintendent
Mr. Frank Simone
[Email District Office](#)



[Isles District](#)
Superintendent
Mr. Frank Roehl
[Email District Office](#)



[Mediterranean District](#)
Superintendent
Mr. Kent Worford
[Email District Office](#)



[Calendars](#)

(Stuttgart schools start 2 Sept)



EMAILING TEACHERS

Typical emails:

First name. last name @eu.dodea.edu

(Some teachers may include a middle initial or a hyphenated last name.)



Links to all the School Websites can be found on the district websites to the left.



DoDDS Europe school districts will undergo some changes in the near future. Find out more about the [“Restructuring for Student Achievement” District Consolidation](#)



School Supplies

[DoDEA official school supply guidelines](#) list what may be required of students. Each school also provides more grade specific guidance which is available through the school or at most AAFES Exchanges.

[Contact your SLO](#) for more assistance.

New Student Orientation



Meet school administration and get information to help you and your child have a smooth start. Learn procedures and get your questions answered before the school year begins. Check out the school's layout to make your child comfortable on day one. Your school main office or School Liaison Officer can provide your school's dates.

[Contact your SLO](#) for more assistance.



BUS TRANSPORTATION

[DoDDS Europe Student Transportation](#) school bus stop information and school bus passes are mailed to your APO address prior to the start of school. If you do not receive a bus pass contact your local transportation office.

If you are new to Europe contact your bus transportation office for information about bus transportation and to request a bus pass.

[Transportation Offices](#) [Bus behavior](#)



SCHOOL LUNCH

[The Exchange Student Meal Program](#) provides wholesome, nutritious meals to eligible students in participating DOD OCONUS schools.

[Online payment program](#) is available.

[A Free and Reduced Lunch program](#) is available to eligible families. One application per family is made annually typically starting in July.

[See your SLO for more information.](#)

Free and Reduced Lunch Application is available on your SLO's website.

[Eligibility Guidelines](#)

The Busy Parent's Guide to Keeping Up with Your Child's Schoolwork



Are you a parent who works long hours? A single parent? A parent with several children? Or just one of the many busy parents trying to keep up with the demands of every day life? Busy or not, a child's schooling is important to every parent. Educational research documents an undeniable connection between parental involvement and a child's academic achievement. We all start out with the best of intentions to keep on top of what our kids do at school, but life just seems to come crashing in and we can easily fall behind.

No matter our child's age, keeping informed about how and what they are doing in school is our duty as parents. But how can a parent keep up? Luckily, technology has provided tools to help us. Here are a few tips that can help make staying in in the loop much easier and less time consuming.

*Many school websites now post the weekly newsletter. Save the link to favorites on your computer and take two minutes to check it out once a week. Most newsletters go out on Fridays. Mark your calendar to remind you to check it. Or better yet, put the link on your computer calendar as a repeating item and you will automatically go to it once a week. Make note on your calendar of any upcoming events or requirements found in the newsletter.

*Some teachers use a homework hotline or a class website, save it to favorites and make it a repeating "meeting" item so you will be prompted to check it weekly

*Some schools also use a program called "Blackboard" this program allows students to access assignments, take quizzes and get immediate feedback. A parent can be given a password to access this as well. These are most often available in middle and high schools. Ask your child's school if this is available

* Consider volunteering at your kid's school. You can learn a lot from just one day at your child's school. When your child tells you something about his school day, you will better understand him if you have experienced a day there. Time spent now will save you time later.

*DoDEA schools use an internet based program called "[Gradespeed](#)". This program provides parents with a password they can use to pull up their children's grades anytime. Attendance can also be pulled up daily. You can even set it to email you if your child's grades dip below a certain point allowing time for intervention at home before dipping grades become a trend. Some teachers also post assignment information here. Save the link as a favorite on your computer for easy access. Or better yet, post the link as a repeating item on your computer calendar so you only need click on the link and you won't forget to check it.

* Have your child pack his/her backpack in the evenings. You can verbally "check off" with him/her what he/she has done. Bonus is a faster morning departure since the pack is ready to go!

* Place a special bin or basket in your home for your children to place notices or forms sent home from school. This way, they are less likely to be found crumbled a week later and can be quickly located when needed.

* Every elementary kid will need a parent to help them work on learning basic math facts. Instead of flash cards, consider having musical CDs of facts in your car. That way you can get that review done with your child while running errands!

* Luckily, the on post Child Youth & School Services Youth Clubs and School Age Care centers offer homework help. CYS Services has dedicated staff available to assist the children with homework. To register contact **Parent Central**. You can also sign up for youth sports and instructional programs at Parent Central.

* Access a FREE online tutor 24/7. Two kids BOTH with homework troubles at the same time? No worries! Online live human one-on-one tutor support is available to students through **Tutor. Com**

* You can request a conference at the school with your child's teacher at any time . Contact the school guidance office to set this up if you feel you are falling behind in understanding what and how your child is doing in school. This is especially helpful if your child has multiple teachers, because you can get the scoop from all of them at one meeting.

We can't all be "super parents". (Do they really exist?) However, with a little planning and the use of some great tools, we all can be connected to our children and their schools. Your child will thank you for it (in about 20 years).

Even the busiest parent can keep up **with their child's schoolwork if they plan ahead.**



Back to school TIPS for special kids



Helpful links:

- ◆ [Exceptional Family Member Program](#)
- ◆ [Army Med. Com. EFMP](#)
- ◆ [Parent Rights for Special Education](#)
- ◆ [EDIS](#)
- ◆ [Special Needs Toolkit](#)
- ◆ [DoDEA support directory](#)
- ◆ [DoDEA SPED Procedural Guide.](#)
- ◆ [Free online special ed. courses for parents and teachers](#)
- ◆ [Respite Care](#)



The new school year will be starting very soon. Most children will experience some excitement or anxiety about what this year will be like. Kids who have special needs are going to need some extra preparations in order to have a successful first week of school. Now is the time to start preparing your child for his or her first day. This [“4 Week Back to School Countdown”](#) calendar will help you take steps to assist your child with transitioning back to school. Some tips:

- Talk to your child about the transition in a positive manner and chances are he/she will begin to share in the excitement you are modeling
- Make time to read your child stories about going to school. This provides a wonderful opportunity to open conversation lines about any anxieties the he/she might be experiencing
- Raise enthusiasm by taking your child shopping for school supplies, new shoes, and back to school clothing. Let him/her be involved in choosing an item such as a backpack
- Before school starts, take your child to tour the school and if possible visit the classroom.
- In advance of the first day, discuss and plan the change in daily routines. Practice the schedule if necessary. Begin implementing school night bed times at least a week in advance
- For walkers, map out the route to school and do a practice run.
- Locker combinations are going to be difficult for kids with certain kinds of special needs (including dyslexia) to master. Consider practicing the steps on a lock at home.
- Discuss with your child the challenges or difficulties anticipated and create a plan of action together
- Discuss what additional items might need to be purchased or any ideas that could be implemented to help your child be successful. Sometimes kids have great ideas about what will help them!
- Be sure to explain your child what services and accommodations he/she is entitled to receive so that he/she can develop self advocacy skills

With a little bit of planning, your child can have a positive start to the school year!

So You're a Freshman Now?



The first day: Here it is!! The big day. You may be really excited about this or really nervous. Just remember – **there is a whole group of new people, not just you, so you don't need to feel like they are all staring at you. If you don't know anyone, try speaking to someone from your class** – imagine how much you would appreciate it if someone spoke to you. This could ease the tension and give you someone to share the new experiences with.

Changes at high school Probably the most significant change is that when you were in middle school you were at the top of the school and probably felt very valued and important – you may even have been given special responsibilities – but in your first year at high school it all changes. All of a sudden you have become one of the youngest students at the school. Some of the older students may even tease you about this - or at least let you know that you are the youngest.

New stresses Although all of these new challenges can be exciting and a lot of fun, you may feel a little stressed at times. Here are some of the things you may be feeling:

- lost and confused, until you are familiar with the new situation.
- sad that you are not with your old friends, and missing hanging out with them.
- lonely and unhappy, waiting to make new friends.
- anxious or afraid that you will not be able to cope with the new lessons and stuff you are learning.
- worried that you will not fit into any group to hang around with.
- **concerned that your parents will have expectations that you can't meet.**
- ♦ a bit tired and worn out from all this energy involved with starting a new school.

How to cope **Don't panic! Remember that you are not the only person who is starting high school**, and that nearly every student starting high school is feeling like you. Even some of the upperclassmen are new! Here are some ideas that may help to ease the stress!

- **Stay in contact with your "old" school friends, particularly while you haven't made close friends at high school.**
- Give it time. Everybody starts off with no friends but soon you will have a new group of friends that you hang out with and have fun with.
- **Introduce yourself to someone you don't know** - they will probably appreciate it and then you will know someone.
- Ask a student counselor or one of the teachers to help you if you are struggling with school in any way – **maybe you can't manage the workload to start with, or can't find your way around the new school.** Help will be there if you ask.
- Get involved in school activities (music, sport, debating), and you will meet new people with the same interests.
- Look at the positives of being at high school: new school facilities, more independence, more variety in classes, some choice in what you want to study, and more activities.

If you feel like you are being harassed by anyone at your new school, go to an adult you trust and talk about it. Many schools also have online reporting tools for bullying incidents.

Of all the students who go to high school each year, a few may have problems settling down, getting themselves organized, or making friends; but most take full advantage of everything their school has to offer. **With a positive attitude, you'll be okay too and on your way to graduation before you know it!**

[Graduation Standards](#)



Guidelines for Successful Communication with Your Child's Teacher

One of the challenges every parent faces is how to talk to teachers and school administrators about a concern and come away with a positive resolution. By following a few basic communication rules, you can play a positive role in your child's education experience.

Establish a good relationship early in the school year. Getting to know your child's teacher, other school staff, and administrators early on makes difficult conversations easier later. Today's wide range of communication methods makes it easier than ever to keep open lines of communication between you and your child's school.

Be proactive. Voicing a concern means you care. Consider speaking up to be touching base or checking in versus complaining or questioning the school. Make contact early before a situation escalates.

Follow the chain of command. You automatically create a barrier between yourself and a teacher by going to the principal before you talk with the teacher. The same goes for calling the central office before you speak with school staff or administrators. Those "next levels" are available if the situation cannot be resolved at the source.

Abide by The Golden Rule. One of the five rules of my classroom was "Give others the respect you expect." The same rule applies to us all. If you expect a teacher to keep you informed, communicate with the teacher regularly about matters large and small that affect your child. If you believe teachers should refrain from telling you how to parent, then resist the temptation to tell them how to teach.

Calm down. Wait until you are calm and rational before firing off an e-mail, calling the school, or going in person to confront staff. What is the real goal—to vent or to help solve a problem? Sometimes it helps to talk it over with another parent who can give you an honest, objective point of view before you make contact with the school.

Little things make a big difference. Body language, tone of voice or email, and choice of words are crucial pieces of the communication puzzle. Again, follow The Golden Rule in communicating in a manner you would want others to communicate with you. Voice your concern calmly and reasonably.

Guidelines for Successful Communication... (continued)

Stay focused. It can be tempting to bring everything that has troubled you all year long into a conversation or parent conference. But you'll get better results if you concentrate on the issue at hand and finding a shared resolution.

Consider the big picture. There are at least two sides to every story. Ask questions before jumping to conclusions. In addition to voicing your concerns, take time to listen carefully.

Be part of the solution. Ask the simple question, "What can I do to help?" You will be amazed at how quickly a difficult conversation becomes a productive interaction. There is a difference between siding with your child and being an advocate for your child. Your role is to advocate for your child.

Believe it or not, your input is wanted. Ask any educator; one of the greatest challenges they face is lack of parental involvement. A good relationship with your child's teacher is like any other relationship; it takes some work. However, it is well worth the investment of time and effort. Make it a priority to form a partnership with the school in paving the way for your child to have the best possible experience at school.

WHAT IS GRADESPEED? Gradespeed is a web based grading system that provides parents of 4th–12th grade students with grade and attendance information at the click of a mouse! Parents can not only check grades, they can also request to receive email notification if grades fall! Teachers can place assignment information on this site as well. Parents must register to establish a personal GradeSpeed account. Access Gradespeed at:



dodea.gradespeed.net

Interested in High School Sports?

You'll need an up to date physical!

[DoDEA Europe Student Athletics](#)

[2015-2016 Athletic Start Dates](#)

[Video](#)



Learning Links Support Students



Kids love computers. They are better with them than many adults. Admit it, **you've asked your kid to help you find** how to do something on your laptop! If they are going to live on their computers, at least give them some options that feed their brains. Your Army School **Liaison Officer's website has a section**

packed with learning links on numerous school subjects for kids of all ages. There is even a foreign language learning section! Help your kids learn new things, exercise their brains and reinforce what is going on in the school.

Go to the Learning Links tab on your [post's SLO page](#)

Check out Learning Links for a fun way to learn new skills and reinforce old ones!

Curriculum Standards in DoDEA

A great way to be a help and support to your children is to know what they are studying in schools. You can access grade by grade [curriculum standards](#) for DoDEA schools online. Starting with this school year, DoDEA will be phasing in College and Career Readiness Standards which include Common Core State Standards. The change begins with elementary math for this year and adds in math and language arts for all grades over the next few years. DoDEA has a well structured and phased approach to making this change. Special trainings for teachers and administrators are part of the planning and preparation process.

Moving to Common Core standards for all US students benefits our military children who with each PCS, move in and out of various curriculum standards sometimes resulting in academic or promotion difficulties. Common standards are in part designed to make those school transitions easier for our kids.

[Information on the DoDEA change to College and Career Readiness standards](#)

[Information on Common Core State Standards the and impacts on military children](#)

[DoDEA College and Career Ready E-Book](#)

School Advisory Committees Impact Schools



Interested in having an impact on your school? Wondering where to voice those concerns or great suggestions? The School Advisory Committee (SAC) might be what you are looking for. The SAC is an elected body of parents and teachers which meets throughout the school year to discuss ways to make the school a better place for students. The SAC is established under Public Law 95-651 and is mandated by the Department of Defense to exist in all DoD Schools. Meetings generally occur once a quarter with a transition meeting for the next school year.

The School Advisory Committee [SAC] advises the principal on the following:

- ◆ Policies toward students and parents, school activities, and administrative procedures affecting students
- ◆ Instructional programs and educational resources within the school
- ◆ Allocation of resources within the school to achieve educational goals
- ◆ Pupil personnel services such as health, special education testing evaluation, counseling, and extra-curricular activities
- ◆ Student standards of conduct and discipline

Training for SAC board members is typically held at the beginning of each school year. Parents may wish to serve on the SAC board or simply attend meetings and provide input. Talk to your School Liaison Officer or principal to find out more about the SAC at your school as well as other higher level advisory committees within DoDEA.

[DoD instruction regarding the SAC](#)

For more ideas on how to get involved in your child's education check out the **Parent Involvement** tab on your [post's SLO website](#).

MARCH 2 SUCCESS Support for MS/HS Students



You can "March2Success"
with this online program!

March 2 Success is a program developed by the Army which offers free academic help for middle and high school students. For high school students planning on taking the ASVAB, SAT, or ACT there are online activities to enhance and track student performance. For middle and high school students the HS prep program provides review of 7-9 grade math English and science skills. March2Success also provides standardized test prep for middle through high school as well as **customized lesson plans based on assessments. If all that isn't** enough, students can also access information on understanding college admissions and financing.

March2Success will point students in the direction of academic success! Go to

www.march2success.com

HOW TO OPEN A LOCKER

1. Spin the dial on your lock 3 times to clear it out
2. Turn the dial on your lock to the right until you get to the first number in your combination
3. Turn the lock to the left until you pass the second number in the combination, stop on the number the second time around.
4. Rotate the dial on your lock to the right and stop on the final number in your combination.
5. Pull & remove lock OR Pull firmly on the handle to open locker

[VIDEO INSTRUCTION](#)



9 Ways to boost your child's attitude before school

Help your child get their school day off to a positive start with these tips.

1. Plan Ahead

Do your children lag behind in the morning because they can't find matching socks or their homework? Start preparing the night before. Lay out clothing (including socks and shoes), sign all papers, pack lunches, and put everything by the door. This may sound simple but it really does cut down on morning stress and anxiety. If your child takes medication, use a pill organizer so you know if the child has already taken the morning meds. A hectic morning could result in double-dosing. Avoid this at all costs.

2. Get a Good Night's Sleep

A good night's sleep can never be underestimated. Parents, this goes for you too. Lack of sleep causes health problems, job performance problems and stress at home. Be firm. Set a reasonable bedtime. Consider allowing a half hour of quiet reading time tacked onto bedtime. This **turns reading into something that let's them "stay up later"**. It also is a great way to help your child relax.

4. Rise and Shine

Consider HOW you wake up your children. A positive **tone of voice and a cheerful "good morning" start the day off on a positive note.**

5. Time to Get a Grip

Even kids need time to adjust to a new day. Don't wake them up with only 15 minutes to spare! This is a recipe for disaster. As parents, we usually make some time for ourselves - even during our drive to work. Remember: Kids need time to prepare for the day too.

6. Talk to Them

Use the extra time you saved by preparing ahead to talk to your children before they leave for school. Ask what they will be doing at school that day, or if any tests are coming up. Get to know their schedule and their morning rituals. This will help to keep the channels of communication open between you.



7. Laugh with Them

Laughter is something we all can indulge in -- and it doesn't cost us a thing. Tell your children something funny before they leave for school. Even if it is something silly like reading the comics on the cereal box, in the paper, or telling them something that happened to you on the previous day - - let them know that you can laugh. It is a great stress reducer.

8. Feed Them

Remember: garbage in = garbage out. Breakfast is the most important meal of your day. Don't skimp or skip. Your child needs nutrients in order to learn. Make a hot breakfast. Read the ingredients on cereal boxes and make healthful choices.

9. Hug Them

As your children get older, they may be less affectionate and **"touchy-feely."** **Don't let that stop you! Never** let your child leave your home without some type of physical interaction with you. Hug your child for a few seconds longer each morning. Tell your child that you love them. A hand on the shoulder, a high-five, a kiss and smile - - use whatever works for you and your child. Make that important contact. You never know what the school day will bring.

Student Ambassador & Youth Sponsorship programs welcome new students

Imagine if you will your first day in a new school. You know not a soul. You search the crowded halls for a smiling face or even eye contact. You aren't sure where you are supposed to go or if you even brought the right things. All you can think of is how much you miss your friends at your "old school".

This is the reality for many a new student. Military connected kids go through adjusting to a new school far more often than their civilian counterparts; six to nine school transitions on average during their K-12 school years.

However, with the help of their peers many students are finding their first day can be smooth, and transitioning to a new community and school can be a positive experience. School Liaison Officers work with schools and CYS Services programs to support connecting incoming students to their peers who are trained to welcome and assist new students. Families can make an online request for a youth sponsor on their post's School Liaison Officer website. Contact your SLO if you are interested as serving as a youth sponsor.



Make an online request for a Youth Sponsor through your post [Army Europe School Liaison Officer](#)

Helpful Links:



Start an adventure for your child. Take them to your local [Army Europe MWR Library](#)

Website provides a cornucopia of educational information for parents

Wonder what some of that jargon you hear thrown around by teachers means? Want to learn some tips to make homework go more smoothly at home? Or how about how to reduce test anxiety for your child? Maybe you need to know how to help your child deal with a bully. This and more information is available on a fabulous website designed to assist parents on a host of school related issues. Expert insight, information, and resources help provide parents the tools to support their child's K-12 education. Printable worksheets, games, and more!

Go to www.schoolfamily.com



PCS'ing before the end of the school year?



You may qualify for the DoDEA Acceleration program which will allow your child to withdrawal from school with full semester credit before the end of the first or second semester. You must provide PCS orders and contact the school at least 30 days prior to departure date. The school may require completion of some schoolwork before providing final grades. Acceleration is permitted starting 20 days prior to the end of a semester. Contact your school guidance office for details .

Parent Central Services is your gateway to good stuff for babies through teens!

Within Army Child Youth and School Services you will find something to meet your child's needs. Choose from: Fulltime/part time/hourly care, before/after school care, camps, middle school and teen youth programs, instructional classes, workforce preparation opportunities, sports and fitness activities. Registration and information for all these programs is available at [Parent Central Services](#).





[Access your School Liaison Officer](#) for information, assistance, and referral on school issues to include: school transition, youth sponsorship, deployment support, home schooling, special needs, college and career planning, and more.



SCHOLARSHIPS, CONTESTS, & FREEBIES:

SCHOLARSHIPS: ([see SLO page](#) for more scholarship info under College & Career Planning!)

[DOD Community Relations Scholarships for Military Children](#)
(links to numerous scholarships)
Commissary Scholarships
www.militaryscholar.org

[Bernard Curtis Brown Space Camp Scholarship](#) Grades 6-9
[Military Officers Association of America](#) MOAA provides a search engine to find military dependent scholarships.

CONTESTS:

[eCYBERMISSION](#) is a free, web-based Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics competition for students in grades six through nine. Compete for regional and national awards while working to solve problems in your community.



Worth
Checking
Out!!

FREEBIES:

[Tutor.com](#)—free online one on one tutoring 24/7!

[Book Adventure](#) is a FREE reading motivation program for children grades K-8. Children create their own book lists from over 7,000 recommended titles, take multiple choice quizzes on the books they've read, and earn points and prizes for their literary success.

[The 2015 Military Children's Scholarship handbook](#)