

Education activity asks parents, kids for input

Samantha L. Quigley, American Forces Press Service

Education activity asks parents, students for feedback

WASHINGTON, Feb. 3, 2009 - The Defense Department Education Activity is asking parents and students to share their thoughts about what works and what doesn't in its schools through a customer-satisfaction survey.

"DoDEA is firmly committed to continuous improvement and highest student achievement," said Sandra D. Embler, chief of research and evaluation for the activity. "The input of the students and parents is an essential component in identifying strengths and weaknesses in the system." Officials administer the survey every two years.

Parents and students in the fourth through 12th grades can expect to answer the same questions on the survey, Embler said. They'll have a chance to express their opinions on the schools and instruction, the level of emphasis on assessments, the use of technology for learning, and how their school's administrators communicate. They'll also be able to comment on student-support matters such as counseling, college planning and transition issues.

Embler said she and her team will work quickly to make the results of the survey public.

"The survey ends Feb. 28," she said. "Results will be available online the first week of March on the DoDEA Web site." Visitors to the site will find a link to the results from DoDEA's home page, she said.

Once the results have been analyzed, Embler said, it's just a matter of what level of action is involved to implement suggestions. Individual schools often take immediate action when they receive the results, she explained, while actions that involve DoDEA as a whole often take longer.

"For example," she said, "based on previous customer satisfaction survey results, DoDEA established a task group related to high school counseling. This task group spent last year researching and discussing issues and making recommendations."

Some of those recommendations are being implemented now, she added.

Traditionally, teachers, administrators and educational support staff also have participated in this survey. This year, Embler said, they will take a separate employee survey in March.

"While many surveys are administered and the results are never incorporated into actions, all levels of DoDEA – schools, districts and systemwide will use the results to make improvements," she emphasized.

While the survey is voluntary, participation is encouraged, Embler said. DoDEA officials estimate it will take about 20 minutes to complete the survey, which can be found by clicking on the "2008 Customer Satisfaction Survey" link on the right side of DoDEA's home page.

Related Sites:

Department of Defense Education Activity <<http://www.dodea.edu>>

U.S. Army War College Archives - News Article - 03 February 2009