



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

Parent Newsletter Article # 2 for January 2004

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**Principals: Please include the following article in your next parent newsletter.**

### REINTEGRATION BLOCK LEAVE

Upon completion of their tour in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, service members will be given "block leave" beginning in late winter - early spring. This leave could last 30 days, and will be staggered so that all of the troops do not depart on leave at the same time. However, we know that many service members may want to take their leave with their families in the United States. This may result in an academic impact on some students due to an extended absence.

As parents and educators, our focus must be on student achievement. Can a student, especially at the high school level, make up the course-work missed while they are absent? If students cannot make-up the work or enroll in and regularly attend another school during the period of absence, then they will not pass the course(s).

It is strongly recommended that if children are going to be gone for 30 days that they be enrolled at the stateside location. Forty-five days equals 25% of the school year in the DoDDS system. Generally, if students are not in school at least 21 days, they do not receive grades for that marking period. In order to lessen the impact on academic progress, yet enable our students to take leave with their families during this period of reintegration, the following guidelines have been developed:

- Parents are expected to notify the school, in writing, that the family will be on reintegration block leave and include the dates the students will be absent.
- Parents are expected to request assignments from teachers prior to departing on leave. It is suggested they give as much lead time to teachers as possible in order for the teachers to provide assignments for the entire period of absence. The completed assignments must be turned in within two weeks of the student's return to school to be considered for a grade.
- Although there is no maximum number of days that students may be absent while accompanying their families on block leave, it is highly recommended that if children are going to be gone for 30 days that they be enrolled in school at the stateside location.
- If students will be gone for an extended period of time, they should not be disenrolled at their DoDDS-E school unless they will not be returning to the school. Keeping the children enrolled will allow the students to retain their schedule and class assignment.
- Grade reports or transcripts are to be presented from the stateside school upon return to the DoDDS-E school.

Parents are highly encouraged to discuss with the school principal the timing of the absence and any conflicts that may impact negatively on a student's success. It is incumbent upon all of us to carefully consider the educational impact when making vacation plans for families.

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