



1201 16th St, N.W. | Washington, DC 20036 | Phone: (202) 833-4000

Rebecca S. Pringle
President

Princess R. Moss
Vice President

Noel Candelaria
Secretary-Treasurer

Kim A. Anderson
Executive Director

December 15, 2025

U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the 3 million members of the National Education Association, including educators who support and teach students at Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) schools, we submit these comments for your consideration regarding the expected vote on the Fiscal Year 2026 National Defense Authorization Act (S. 1071).

Six thousand DoDEA educators are represented by the Federal Education Association (FEA), an NEA affiliate union. These educators are passionate about ensuring that military-connected students have access to an education that nurtures their desire to learn and sets them up for success. We want to ensure that the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) consistently contains provisions that give educators the tools to cultivate student achievement.

We strongly support the following provisions in the FY 2026 NDAA because they will improve the academic environment for DoDEA students and educators:

- **Section 585, Restrictions on Certain Actions Relating to DoDEA Schools and Military Child Development Centers:** Prohibits the Secretary of Defense from closing a school, reducing curriculum offerings or special education services, or taking similar actions without providing written notice to Senate and House Committees on Armed Services and assurances that the Director of the DoDEA has solicited feedback from students, parents, educators, military installation leadership, and the local community.
- **Section 589B, Regulations on the Use of Portable Electronic Mobile Devices in DoDEA Schools:** Requires updating regulations on mobile devices to prohibit their use “to the greatest extent practicable” in order to minimize disruption of learning.
- **Section 589V, Management of Special Education in Schools Operated by DoDEA:** Requires the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Director of the DoDEA, to implement measures to improve staffing of special education teachers and staff in DoDEA schools.

In addition, we support **Section 582**, Enrollment of Children of Certain American Red Cross Employees in Schools Operated by DoDEA; **Section 584**, Authorization of Dual or Concurrent Enrollment Programs for Students of Defense Dependent Schools; **Section 589**, Certain Assistance to Local Education Agencies that Benefit Dependents of Military and Civilian Personnel; and **Section 589A**, Verification of Reporting of Eligible Federally Connected Children for Purposes of Federal Impact Aid Programs.

However, we are extremely disappointed that S. 1071 does not contain a provision restoring collective bargaining rights to DoDEA educators. As you know, the president’s March 27, 2025 executive order,

“Exclusions from Federal Labor-Management Relations Programs,” stripped away collective bargaining rights from 1 million federal workers, including staff members in DoDEA schools.

Teachers and education support professionals in these schools serve students facing the challenges of parental deployments and frequent moves. The educators’ professional expertise is coupled with a unique understanding of how disruptive military life can be and how it impacts student learning. Collective bargaining allows educators to advocate for the learning conditions in which students can thrive, such as class sizes that make one-to-one attention possible. Several measures show how successful DoDEA educators are, including the 2024 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the nation’s report card. Fourth and eighth-grade students in DoDEA schools once again excelled.

Ending collective bargaining for DoDEA educators would also affect the schools’ ability to attract and keep professionals. This, in turn, could negatively affect the recruitment, retention, and readiness of service members and our military at large, many of whom are parents. They make untold sacrifices to keep our nation safe, and their children deserve the best education we can provide.

In addition, we oppose **Section 901, Prohibited Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Practices**, which prohibits practices such as offering any DEI-related training programs or developing any reports on topics that are related to—or perceived to be related to—DEI. “Diversity, equity, and inclusion” recognizes the diversity of our nation. In DoDEA schools, DEI centers on creating and sustaining environments that ensure all students and educators, regardless of race, ethnicity, background, disability, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identity, or other factors, are welcome, safe, and fairly treated. A sense of belonging is particularly crucial in DoDEA schools, given the upheaval of military life.

Military-connected students face many challenges, as do the educators who are dedicated to supporting them. Given military families’ commitment to our nation, we appreciate your consideration and ask that you ensure that the NDAA provides DoDEA students and educators with the resources and tools they need to be successful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Kimberly Johnson Trinca', written in a cursive style.

Kimberly Johnson Trinca
Director of Government Relations
National Education Association