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INFORMATION MEMO

PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

FOR: DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (MILITARY COMMUNITY AND
FAMILY POLICY)

FROM: Noel Koch, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Wounded Warrior Care and Transition
Policy)

SUBJECT: Department of Defense Dependent Schools (DoDDS) Parent Forum in Naples, Italy

- During a recent site visit to Navy Region Europe and the U.S. Naval Hospital in Naples, DUSD Koch and several staff members were invited to attend a DoDDS Parents Forum held at the base high school.
- During the forum, one parent expressed frustration and concern about reports from her children that other students were having sex in the school bathrooms. The parent emphasized that these instances had happened before and no action was being taken. Another parent reported repeated drug use on school buses.
- The principal of the school denied the parents accusation. One parent insisted that sex was happening because she had witnessed it, and threatened to post photos of students having sex on the school's Facebook page.
- The exchange between the parent, the DoDDS Superintendent of the Mediterranean District, and the principal was heated and was not resolved as of the time we left the meeting.
- While WWCTP does not oversee policies or programs for the DoDDS system, trip reports capture over-arching observations that may require follow-up from DoD leadership. The reporting of this exchange reflects an observation and it was not our purpose to attempt to substantiate the accusations made by the parents.
- TAB A provides a full report outlining WWCTP observations and rationale for inclusion into the trip report.

COORDINATION: None

Attachment:
As stated

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(b)(2)

**Europe Trip Report
Recommendations Matrix
12 April 2010**



OFFICE OF
**WOUNDED WARRIOR
CARE & TRANSITION POLICY**

SERVE > SUPPORT > EMPOWER

Observation	DoD Oversight	Full Text	Rationale for Inclusion
<p>Length of stay in Warrior Transition Units</p>	<p>Office of Wounded Warrior Care and Transition Policy (WWCTP)</p> <p>While the Army Warrior Transition Command oversees policies and programs for Warriors in Transition, the WWCTP mission is to ensure that Wounded, Ill, Injured and transitioning Warriors receive high-quality care and seamless transition support.</p>	<p>There are currently three Warriors in Transition in WTB-Europe who have been in the WTU for over 800 days. Discussions with Command and Cadre emphasize the need to keep WTs moving on the road to recovery rather than becoming dependent on the system for a long period of time. The lengthy MEB process contributes to the sometimes lengthy stay in a WTU. Rather than focusing on the MEB, WTs should stay active, pursue educational and employment opportunities and engage in goal-setting on a daily basis.</p>	<p>The issue of WTs residing in Warrior Transition Units is a recurring theme observed during site visits to Forts Bragg, Drum, Riley, Schofield Barracks, BAMC and Germany .</p>
<p>Veterans Affairs presence to assist Service members and families with Transition Assistance in Southern Europe</p>	<p>Office of Wounded Warrior Care and Transition Policy</p> <p>WWCTP, in collaboration with the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Labor, oversees policy and programs for transitioning Service members through the Transition Assistance Program.</p>	<p>Discussions with leadership and representatives from various installations in Europe reveal a significant lack of Veterans Affairs presence in Southern Europe. Service members and families have a unique set of challenges while living OCONUS. Access to benefits information from the VA is essential. Currently there is one VA "circuit rider" who provides briefings in conjunction with TAP but there is little to no room for individualized counseling. The VA representative has very limited knowledge of application procedures for post-military education benefits under Post 9-11 GI Bill.</p>	<p>WWCTP oversees all policy and programs related to transitioning Service members. Delivery of VA Benefits and Disabled TAP counseling is accomplished in accordance with a Memorandum of Understanding between Departments of Defense, Labor, Veterans Affairs, and the Department of Homeland Security.</p> <p>Access to VA counseling services is an essential part of WWCTP services particularly for those who are geographically dispersed in OCONUS.</p>

Observation	DoD Oversight	Full Text	Rationale for Inclusion
<p>Elimination of Army Education Counselor billets located in Soldier and Family Assistance Centers throughout Germany</p>	<p>Army Installation Management Command (IMCOM)</p> <p>While Army IMCOM oversees facilities and infrastructure services for Soldiers and their families, the WWCTP mission is to ensure that Wounded, Ill, Injured and transitioning Warriors receive high-quality care and seamless transition support.</p>	<p>The Education Counselor billets are being eliminated in Germany. The WTU Cadre strongly disagreed with the elimination of these billets, specifically the billet serving the Baumholder, Kleber Kaserne WTU. In 2009, over 300 Soldiers and family members were served by this education counselor. The elimination of this education counselor billet may detract from WTU efforts to keep WT's engaged in meaningful activities throughout the duration of their stay in the WTU.</p>	<p>Several members of the WTU Cadre expressed frustration that their local education counselor billet was being eliminated. Cadre and Service members emphasized the importance of having a resource that helps Soldiers understand their educational options.</p> <p>WWCTP is responsible for providing seamless transition support for all Warriors.</p>
<p>Low attendance by spouses at TAP workshops</p>	<p>Office of Wounded Warrior Care and Transition Policy</p> <p>WWCTP, in collaboration with the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Labor, oversees policy and programs for transitioning Service members through the Transition Assistance Program.</p>	<p>Spouse participation in TAP workshops remain low, despite the extensive marketing efforts described by transition staff. At several locations, local efforts included the extension of child care services during scheduled workshops, but participation rates remain unchanged. The spouse involvement in the education and decision making process relating to benefits and services following separation or retirement remains extremely important. Local leadership was encouraged to use additional venues beyond the typical marketing outlets to reach the potential audience. Inclusion of topical information relating to TAP at Family Readiness Groups, Ombudsman Councils, social networking sites, and family newsletters were among several of the recommendations provided.</p>	<p>Spouse participation in TAP is an essential component to successful transitions particularly when returning Stateside after being OCONUS.</p> <p>WWCTP plans to incorporate revised marketing strategies to boost spouse attendance at TAP classes.</p>

Observation	DoD Oversight	Full Text of Observation	Rationale for Inclusion
Cadre Training and "Compassion Fatigue"	<p>Office of Wounded Warrior Care and Transition Policy</p> <p>While the Army Warrior Transition Command oversees policies and programs for Warriors in Transition, the WWCTP mission is to ensure that Wounded, Ill, Injured and transitioning Warriors receive high-quality care and seamless transition support.</p>	<p>It is imperative that Cadre receive both initial and augmented training as well as time away from high-stress and complex duties. To address this issue, the Commander of WTB-Europe has developed the "Fighter Management Program" which allows members of the Cadre to go "off the grid" to unwind and relax. They do not have access to blackberries or cell phones during this time. This is a needed break for members of the Cadre. WTUs in other locations may find this beneficial for staff morale and health.</p> <p>WTU WTs did not believe that Cadre members were trained to assist the WTs. WTs feel the Cadre members are overwhelmed and not able to meet the demands of the job. This issue continues to surface during visits to WTUs.</p>	<p>Members of the Cadre support WTs who present a variety of physical and behavioral health risks.</p> <p>WWCTP site visits reveal that Cadre may need additional training as well as formal programs in place to allow Cadre time away from the work environment.</p>
Creating Cadre Military Occupational Specialty (MOS)	<p>Senior Mission Commander</p> <p>WWCTP does not have oversight responsibilities for the hiring of Cadre.</p>	<p>Several members of the Cadre discussed a perceived stigma associated with being assigned as WTU Cadre. Some staff even thought it might be detrimental to career advancement. Options to add the Cadre position as a MOS, add promotion points for serving in the Cadre, or requiring all Soldiers to serve in a Cadre during their career, were discussed.</p>	<p>WWCTP site visits have revealed the recurring theme that while Cadre are fully dedicated to their positions, it is not necessarily viewed as part of career advancement.</p> <p>A Cadre MOS could be considered particularly as the population of WTs continues to rise.</p>

Observation	DoD Oversight	Full Text of Observation	Rationale for Inclusion
Drug use in Department of Defense Dependent Schools (DoDDS) in Naples	Office of Military Community and Family Policy	WWCTP staff attended DoDDS (Naples) Parent Forum. During the forum, one parent expressed outrage about reports from her children that other students were having sex in the school bathrooms. Another parent reported drug use on the school busses. The school administration denied both allegations, however parents were insistent that they take more action immediately.	During a site visit to Naples, WWCTP staff was invited to attend a Parents Forum at the DoDDS school. While WWCTP does not oversee policies and programs related to DoDDS system, observations that may require follow up from DoD leadership are included in trip reports.
Limited knowledge of contacts in Office of Military Community and Family Policy	Office of Military Community and Family Policy	Representatives from European installations, who briefed WWCTP on the services they provide for transitioning Service members and families, did not know their points of contact within the DoD Office of Military Community and Family Policy. This office provides policy and oversight for: Family Support, Morale, Welfare, and Recreation, Relocation, Child and Youth Programs and the Department of Defense Dependent Schools.	During TAP roundtable, Service staff stated they did not know their respective MC&FP program managers. This observation was included in the trip report to highlight potential action by DoD leadership.