OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

1000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

OCT 7 2003

The Honorable Duncan Hunter
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-6035

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The Report of the Senate Committee on Appropriations (S.106-290), accompanying the 2001 Military Construction Appropriations Bill, requested the Department of Defense provide a report on deficiencies in DoD schools in Puerto Rico. The report focused on four major areas: dilapidated buildings, inadequate supplies, inconsistent teaching quality, and lack of curriculum standards. With exception of the roofs, all facility problems discussed in the report have been corrected. The replacement of the roofs in the Antilles schools is on hold pending final analysis of the effect on enrollment of the military downsizing in that community; however, minor repairs continue to ensure student safety.

With respect to educational programs and materials, the transition from local curriculum, standards, and materials Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) was completed two years ago. The purchase of curricular materials is now accomplished at the DoDEA Headquarters level with funds provided by the Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools (DDESS). In the past 12 months, the schools have standardized their course titles and content to align with the DoDEA Course Directory. Not only are the three high schools in the Antilles adopting the same graduation requirements, they will all adopt the DoDEA graduation requirements with the entering ninth grade class of School Year 2004-05. Professional development for all staff members has continued to focus on system-wide initiatives and implementations the past 2 years. District and building administrators continue to monitor classrooms to ensure instruction is consistent with system-wide expectations.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a closure report on this matter.

Sincerely,

Charles S. Abell
Principal Deputy

cc:
The Honorable Ike Skeleton
Ranking Member

FEDERAL RECYCLING PROGRAM PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER