



Biography

Elizabeth A. Dunham, PhD.

Assistant Superintendent
Kaiserslautern District



Department of Defense Dependents Schools

Dr. Liz Dunham was raised in Onawa, Iowa, and she has been involved in education throughout her entire life. She taught junior high school and senior high school for ten years in Iowa and Washington State before joining DoDDS in 1987. At that time, she was hired as a staff developer, and for the next 11 years, she worked with K-12 teachers and administrators on school improvement and effective teaching practices. Throughout her work as a staff developer, she also taught graduate courses for Seattle Pacific University, the Cambridge Institute of Education in Cambridge, England, and the University of Maryland. She spent one year as the School Improvement Liaison for the UK District before becoming an Assistant Principal at Lakenheath Middle School in England. After two years, Dr. Dunham was promoted to Principal at Darmstadt Middle School, where she served for seven years. She was the principal of Landstuhl ES/MS for school year 2007/2008.

Dr. Dunham earned her B.A. from the University of Iowa. She completed her M.Ed. at Seattle Pacific University. In 1995, she earned her Ph.D. from the Cambridge Institute of Education in Cambridge, England. Dr. Dunham was the first American to earn the degree in this British program that was a joint venture between Cambridge University and the University of East Anglia.

At Darmstadt, Dr. Dunham worked with grade level teams and the school staff as a whole to apply the best practices from the research on effective schools. Each teacher designated “focus students” who receive extra support as they work to improve their learning. Dr. Dunham is also proud of the school’s efforts on behalf of the highest performing students whom she believes must be equally challenged. Over several years, the staff adopted a “Zeros Aren’t Permitted” policy and teachers guaranteed that each student would complete each and every assignment given. Student achievement soared and student failure decreased dramatically. Dr. Dunham is known for her enthusiasm and high-energy approach to the education of students. She has an open door policy for parents and encourages parent involvement in every aspect of school.

For 10 years, Dr. Dunham was a staff member of the Mt. St. Helens Student Leadership Workshop, sponsored by the Washington State Principals Association. At this summer leadership camp, she joined other staff members in training large groups of high school students in leadership skills. Dr. Dunham continued student leadership training for elementary and secondary students in the United Kingdom and Germany.

Dr. Dunham has earned several honors and distinctions. She is a member of Pi Lambda Theta Honor Society and Phi Beta Kappa. She served as the president of UK-ASCD, an educational organization for six years. She has made presentations at several national conferences, including the Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development Conference as well as the National Middle School Conference in 2006 in Nashville. Her publications include an article “Why Zeros Should Not Be Permitted!” in *Principal* magazine and two short articles in educational textbooks: “New Student Welcome Folders” in *Managing to Teach, Revised Edition*, 1992, by Dr. Carol Cummings and “Inferences: Valid and Valued” in *Modern Educational Measurement, Practical Guidelines for Educational Leaders, 3rd Edition*, 2000, by Dr. James Popham. As a result of her outstanding leadership skills, Dr. Dunham was recognized as the National Distinguished Principal for 2006 for the Department of Defense Education Activity. This award, sponsored by the National Association of Elementary School Principals, recognizes principals who have demonstrated a commitment to excellence; high standards and expectations for students and staff; and evidence of support by colleagues, parents, and community. She looks forward to supporting the vision of the Kaiserslautern District in her new role.

Dr. Dunham is married to Blan Palmer who is a retired DoDDS high school principal. She enjoys travel, reading, sports, and students of all ages!