



MILITARY CHILD EDUCATION COALITION

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...for the sake of the child

November 18, 2008

Mr. Daniel M. Sprague
Executive Director
The Council of State Governments
2760 Research Park Drive
Lexington, Kentucky 40578-1910

Dear Mr. Sprague:

The Military Child Education Coalition applauds the Council of State Governments for its work on the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunities for the military children. With membership from the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Department of Defense Schools, public school systems, organizations, and supporting individuals, the Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) serves the military child from birth through age 21. On behalf of the almost two million children whose parents serve our nation, the MCEC's services and advocacy touch families through our research-based tools, practical professional development, and community-based partnership support. The MCEC's effort addresses directly the challenges faced by the military child, increases awareness of and response to the challenges in military and supporting communities, and initiates and implements quality, sustainable programs to meet these challenges.

We are excited about the progress of the Compact and deeply appreciative of the thoughtful willingness demonstrated by state and national policy makers to ease the challenges faced by America's military children. Sensitivity to the complexities of school transitions is especially important during these times of increased deployments and extended family separations. Of the almost two million U.S. military connected children, about 800,000 of these are school-aged children with a parent serving on Active Duty. On average these children will move six to nine times over the course of their K-12 experience. These frequent transitions, punctuated by the stress of separations from a deployed parent, translate into a confusing range of opportunities and complex challenges. Inconsistencies in state standards and assessments, requirements to access programs, extracurricular activities, and social emotional factors, can make a military child's path to college and work readiness difficult. It is our sincere hope that the state and local lessons learned and the policies and practices developed first make a difference for the highly mobile military child and, also point to important implications and structures for serving other students who experience frequent school transitions.

The Military Child Education Coalition is honored to have participated in the Advisory Group and the Drafting Team that resulted in the Compact. We are proud to continue to lend our support to this on-going and exciting effort as the Commission is organized and the work continues.

Sincerely,

Mary M. Keller, Ed.D.
Executive Director

Cc:

General (Ret) Thomas (Tom) A. Schwartz, MCEC Chairman of the Board
Dr. William (Bill) Harrison, MCEC Vice Chairman of the Board

THE CONGRESSIONAL CLUB CHARITY OF THE YEAR - 2004