



## **Military Child Education Coalition**

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## **Leaders Focus on Best Practices**

Over 275 persons gathered in San Diego July 19-21 to attend the Military Child Education Coalition's (MCEC) 2nd annual "Supporting the Military Child Conference." The theme of this conference was "Follow the Light" and focused on learning about and sharing promising practices happening in schools which educate our military children. Participants traveled from across the United States and the globe to attend and included active duty service members, educators, military parents, and others concerned about the educational needs of military children.

Highlights of the conference included special workshops with over 40 topics including: scheduling, forming partnerships, using technology to connect schools, communities, and families; mentoring programs, elementary and middle school innovative programs, innovations in orientation, reading and self-concept development for the elementary school child, developing a local action plan, good ideas for public relations, the role of the high school counselor, grades and grading, high school credit options, non-public schools, communication with local school boards, and much more.

Conference speakers included The Honorable Alphonso Maldon, Jr., Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Management Policy, Admiral Dennis C. Blair, Commander in Chief for the U.S. Pacific Command, Dr. Charles Patterson, Superintendent of Schools for the Killeen Independent School District, Dr. Uri Treisman, Treisman math professor and Director of the Charles A. Dana Center at the University of Texas, The Honorable Mary Lou Keener, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Force Management and Personnel, and General (Retired) Dennis J. Reimer.

Maldon spoke about supporting the military child and said that MCEC had made extraordinary strides in addressing the needs of military children. Blair addressed the military culture as an exemplar of American qualities. Patterson presented issues related to a National Diploma. Treisman is a juror for SETS and said that the use of knowledge to benefit the lives of the children is the strength of the study. Keener spoke about meeting the needs of military children. Reimer thanked everyone for the tremendous work they were doing on behalf of the children.

Patty Shinseki, wife of the Chief of Staff of the Army; LTG Leon J. LaPorte, Commanding General of III Corps and Fort Hood; Dr. Mary Keller, Executive Director of MCEC; Douglas S. Kelsey, Superintendent of Schools, DoDDS-Korea; presented information about the Army Secondary Education Transition Study (SETS).

The first phase of the MCEC Transition Counselors' Institute took place at the same time as the conference. Over 25 counselors from 10 different school districts came to share what is happening in their schools to help make the transition process easier for our children.

The Military Child Education Coalition is a non-profit organization which seeks partnerships and provides for networking of schools and military installations to address transition and other educational issues related to the military child. Although the commitment and dedication of our military personnel are well recognized, the sacrifices of their children often receive less attention. MCEC is working to unite installations and their supporting school districts across the nation and overseas to ensure the best education available for military students.