



Military Child Education Coalition™

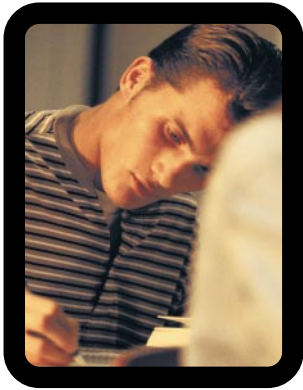
For the Sake of the Child

s t r a t e g i c **plan**

MCEC™
SERVING AMERICA'S CHILDREN
WHILE THEIR PARENTS
SERVE AMERICA



s t r a t e g i c p l a n



Organizational Background

The Military Child Education Coalition was chartered as a nonprofit 501c(3) corporation in 1998. The organization grew out of a national conference held in 1997 that discussed ways to support military children. One of the main goals established at the conference was the formation of an alliance among school systems, military installations and national organizations. Thus, the Military Child Education Coalition was born. Now with more than 400 members worldwide, MCEC serves the 800,000 military-connected children through a network of school systems and military installations. MCEC's expertise, energy and resources are solely focused on improving predictability as these children transition from six to nine times in their kindergarten through graduation experience.

Rationale For The Military Child Education Coalition

The challenge of meeting the needs of America's children has been broadly constructed, and policy and program efforts have considered some highly mobile populations, specifically migrant students. However, the unique educational needs of children in military families are not notably included in these discussions. While the sacrifices of military personnel are typically acknowledged and appreciated in our society, the sacrifices of the families — and particularly their children — are not. Moving from school to school raises a number of issues for these students, and it only becomes more complicated when the moves are to different states or even different countries.

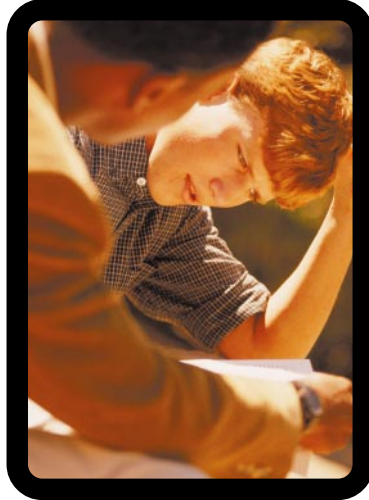
Indicative Challenges Associated With K-12 School Transitions

- Challenges related to the transfer and interpretation of school records.
- Disparity as to the ways that schools and school systems organize time: the year-school calendars, and the school day-schedules.
- Challenges related to: graduation requirements, prerequisite requirements, grading variations, tiered diplomas, and state "high stakes" testing.
- Access and opportunity to participate in extracurricular and enrichment programs.
- Eligibility for special education programs and variations in program availability and content.
- Consistent elementary and middle school opportunities for students to develop necessary academic concepts and skills.
- Understanding by adults of the social and emotional needs of the student in transition or the military-connected student coping with separation from or deployment of a parent(s).
- The reliable presence of a child-centered climate of understanding and acceptance supported by a strong and meaningful partnership between the installation and the supporting school system(s).

Evolution Of MCEC Leadership

MCEC's leadership began in 1997 with a local steering committee that soon evolved into a sixteen-member volunteer board of directors initially from the Central Texas area. After the Coalition received official status as a nonprofit 501 c (3) organization in August 1998, the first annual meeting of the Coalition's membership occurred. This took place in 1999 at the M C E C Conference at Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska. A national & international volunteer Board of Directors was elected that included a regionally diverse group from seven states and DoDDS (Department of Defense Dependent Schools) Europe. The MCEC Board represents experience in and/or service to all of the Armed Forces. Board members serve two-year terms and meet quarterly. MCEC, in accordance with the bylaws, continues to hold the annual business meeting in conjunction with the national conference. At that time Board members are elected by the voting membership (school systems and military installations).

The MCEC is also supported by a group of distinguished National Advisors invited from policy, military, and education leaders.

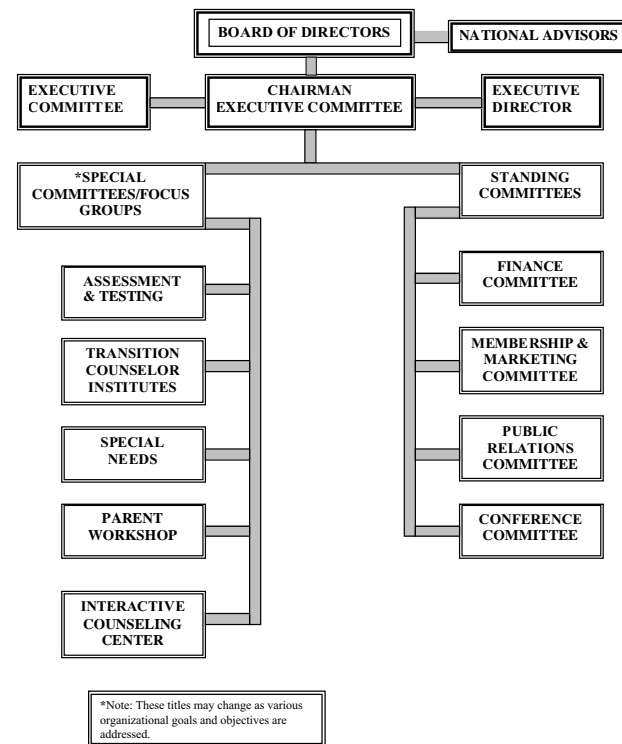


Vision

The Military Child Education Coalition will serve as a model of positive leadership and advocacy for ensuring quality educational opportunities for military children affected by mobility, family separation, and transition.

Mission

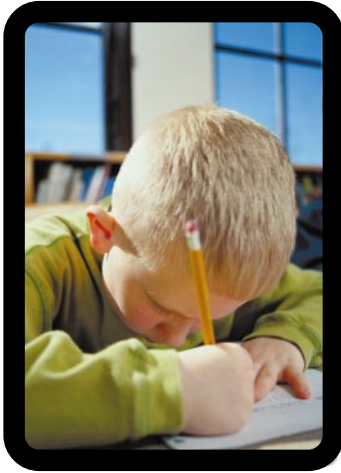
To establish partnerships and provide networking of schools and military installations for the purpose of establishing support systems and developing processes which address, and provide solutions where needed, transition and other educational issues related to the military child.



Guiding Principles

- MCEC serves as an advocate for all military-related students in public/private/parochial/host-nation and home schools.
- The military child is not a member of an underprivileged group, but is subjected to a variety of educational challenges not experienced by the general population.
- MCEC must be attentive and informed regarding changes in educational philosophies and practices, and their effect on the transition of military students.
- Professional development of staff & faculty must include training on the culture and unique challenges of the military child.
- “Best Practice” models must be developed and shared.
- It is accepted that there will be great variations in policies and practices of supporting school systems, and that the military mission will require families to be routinely moved.
- Feedback from affected constituencies (students, parents, school/military leaders) must be sought continuously.
- Emerging technologies must be explored for potential use in solving military student transition issues.
- Partnerships between military installations and their supporting school systems at the local level are essential.
- Military parents need to be provided the tools and training in order to allow them to serve as effective educational advocates for their children.

MCEC's total effort is
For the Sake of the Child



short range goals

[6 months-5 years]

Goal A.1

Develop a financial base consisting of individuals, corporations, military installations, and school systems to support the continued existence of the Coalition.

Objective A.1.1:

Develop and implement a plan for identifying and soliciting financial support from individuals, charitable foundations, and corporations.

Objective A.1.2:

Develop and implement a plan for encouraging membership and support from all military installations and supporting school systems.

Objective A.1.3:

Develop and implement a plan for sustaining current membership by encouraging renewals on a timely basis.

Goal A.2

Address the emotional needs of transitioning students.

Objective A.2.1:

Develop proven practices point papers dealing with meeting the emotional needs of transitioning students.

Objective A.2.2:

Encourage the development of a summer transition program by installations and school systems, utilizing the installation or community Youth Services program(s) to provide welcome activities.

Objective A.2.3:

Encourage and assist member school systems in the establishment of transition processes and procedures for all schools.

Objective A.2.4:

Encourage installation youth sponsorship programs to facilitate student transitions during the school year.

Objective A.2.5:

Encourage schools to match each new student with a peer mentor.

Objective A.2.6:

Encourage schools to provide student-led "new student" orientations.

Objective A.2.7:

Encourage schools to provide transition counseling.

Goal A.3

Promote the involvement of parents in their child's educational process.

Objective A.3.1:

Develop and publish materials dealing with the involvement of parents in their child's educational process.

Objective A.3.2:

Encourage the development of a unified plan by military installations and school systems, with evaluation checkpoints, to create a family-friendly environment.

Objective A.3.3:

Encourage installations to develop a plan with evaluation checkpoints, to facilitate the command support of service member participation in school activities.

Objective A.3.4:

Encourage parental responsibility for their children's education.

Objective A.3.5:

Develop and execute parent workshops to train military parents to be effective educational advocates for their children.

Goal A.4:

Assist student adjustment due to transfer/ deployment of military parent(s).

Objective A.4.1:

Promote practices and programs dealing with assisting student adjustment due to transfer/ deployment of military parent(s).

Objective A.4.2:

Promote the creation and implementation of a curriculum that addresses student coping skills specific to transition.

Objective A.4.3:

Promote the establishment of communication links between supporting schools and military installations to facilitate sponsorship programs.

Objective A.4.4:

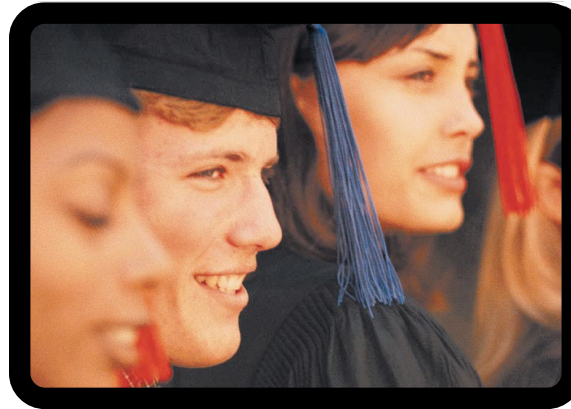
Promote practices and programs to both reinforce parental involvement in transition and encourage school-related deployment issues.

Objective A.4.5:

Encourage the expansion of existing web sites to include information on course descriptions, school calendars, campus profiles, and schedule formats.

Objective A.4.6:

Encourage schools to provide transition information in disk, print, and web based formats.



Objective A.4.7:

Encourage military installations to expand youth service programs to involve their supporting school systems, and through mutual agreements, promote the sharing of resources during and after school hours.

Goal A.5:

Improve the availability of information for all transitioning students.

Objective A.5.1:

Conduct research and publish materials dealing with the transitioning of military-connected students.

Objective A.5.2:

Promote the development of a web site by each school system and the inclusion of a glossary of educational terms, a toll-free number, a list of contact persons, the curriculum, course descriptions, and grade level expectations for all core subjects.

Objective A.5.3:

Promote a policy of requiring out-processing service members with school aged children to obtain clearance from their respective schools, and encourage the use of a standard withdrawal document that indicates and describes special programs.

Objective A.5.4:

Promote the establishment of a proactive information program that educates and provides parents with what they need to know regarding the education of their children.

Objective A.5.5:

Encourage the expansion of military installation sponsorship programs to include providing pertinent school information to incoming families.

Goal A.6

Maintain effective partnerships between military communities and schools.

Objective A.6.1:

Spotlight the effective partnerships between military communities and schools.

Objective A.6.2:

Encourage the development of liaison positions at all levels between the installation and supporting school systems to include PTA, faculty, and school organizations.

Objective A.6.3:

Promote professional development within school systems, which addresses the needs and issues affecting military families.

Objective A.6.4:

Encourage military commanders to promote the attendance of military service members at parent-teacher conferences.



Objective A.6.5:
Promote military installation coordination with supporting school systems in providing deployment information to enhance faculty awareness and preparation.

Objective A.6.6:

Encourage installations to provide means of communication/points of contact between the command support of deployed units and the school systems.

Objective A.6.7:

Encourage the development of education-related “frequently asked questions” (FAQ’s) and their distribution through all available means, including web sites, sponsorship packets, and installation relocation offices.

Goal A.7:

Promote consistency in the exchange of educational information.

Objective A.7.1:

Promote the establishment of formal school related orientations for incoming families by military installations and school systems.

Objective A.7.2:

Encourage parents and, where possible, installations to provide early notification to sending and receiving schools of pending student transfers.

Objective A.7.3:

Promote the establishment of transitional processes, special programs, and plans for students’ entering/leaving the school system during active school terms and vacation periods.

Objective A.7.4:

Encourage the development and implementation of peer support programs to cultivate solutions to the social and emotional needs of transitioning students.

Objective A.7.5:

Train and encourage school registrars and other guidance professionals to be flexible and creative when evaluating transcripts, with a view towards minimizing student anxiety and loss of academic credit.

Objective A.7.6:

Exhibit MCEC products and initiatives at annual conferences.

Objective A.7.7:

Inform all constituencies regarding educational transition issues through MCEC publications and web site www.MilitaryChild.org.

Goal A.8:

Facilitate the transfer of student records.

Objective A.8.1:

Identify barriers dealing with the effective transfer of student records.

Objective A.8.2:

Facilitate the establishment of procedures to out-process student records upon withdrawal.

Objective A.8.3:

Educate families on their parental responsibility to request and transfer student records.

Objective A.8.4:

Develop effective policies/procedures to request and transfer official student records using latest technologies.



Goal A.9:

Use emerging technologies to facilitate the effective transition of military-related students.

Objective A.9.1:

Develop an Interactive Counseling Center (ICC) using “off the shelf” technologies that will enable students, parents and guidance professionals in a “sending school” to link with guidance professionals in a “receiving school” in order to effectively facilitate a smooth school transition.

Objective A.9.2:

Develop and execute a plan for funding and fielding Interactive Counseling Centers in all MCEC member school districts worldwide.

Objective A.9.3:

Develop a plan for sustaining the ICC concept and upgrading it periodically to reflect the latest technological advances.



long range goals

[5-10 years]

& Objectives

Goal B.1:

Complete the interface of all service-supporting school systems (including DoDEA) through adoption and implementation of the principles outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement which originated from the research findings of the US Army Secondary Education Transition Study conducted by MCEC.

Objective B.1.1:

Actively advertise and promote adoption of the Secondary Education Transition Study (SETS) Memorandum of Agreement by supporting schools.

Objective B.1.2:

Follow up with all signatories to encourage and promote effective implementation of the SETS Memorandum of Agreement.

Goal B.2:

Establish broad-based support for educational reform initiatives, including the core, critical issues generated by MCEC.

Objective B.2.1:

Develop materials dealing with establishing all-service support for educational reform initiatives including the core, critical issues, such as reciprocity, generated by MCEC.

Objective B.2.2:

Establish all-Service points-of-contact to facilitate the promotion of MCEC initiatives.

Goal B.3:

Obtain broad-based support for and/or participation in the annual national Military Child Education Coalition conference.

Objective B.3.1:

Actively promote the annual conference to all of the Armed Forces and supporting educational institutions, and encourage their participation.

Objective B.3.2:

Rotate conference locations across the country reflecting geographic areas with significant military populations.

Goal B.4:

Gain approval to provide senior service school briefings to promulgate the Coalition's goals to the future senior leadership of the Armed Forces.

Objective B.4.1:

Actively seek approval from Senior Service Schools to provide briefings to their students and spouses regarding MCEC issues and initiatives.

Objective B.4.2:

Develop a standard briefing for presentation by selected MCEC representatives to all senior service schools of the Armed Forces.

Goal B.5:

Effect interaction with federal and state departments of education to inform government officials of reform initiatives in support of the military child.

Objective B.5.1:

Develop mechanisms and strategies regarding dealing with federal and state departments of education policy leaders about reform initiatives in support of the military child.

Objective B.5.2:

Seek out strategic alliances with other organizations with similar goals.

Goal B.6:

Expand the MCEC concept as an umbrella, research-based organization to include all transitioning students, military and civilian.

Objective B.6.1:

Develop a plan for expanding the MCEC concept as an umbrella organization to include all transitioning students, military and civilian.

Objective B.6.2:

Promote dissemination of MCEC "products" and transition information to states and corporations with high civilian student turnover.