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**Groundbreaking Report Calls for State-Funded Pre-k for All Military Children**  
*Frequent transitions, stress of deployment mitigated by high-quality early education*

Kansas City, MO) – Pre-K Now and the Military Child Education Coalition™ (MCEC™) today joined forces in calling for states to support America’s military personnel by providing high-quality pre-kindergarten to their children. The joint report released at the MCEC™’s annual conference examines the unique challenges faced by today’s military-connected children and makes policy recommendations to states.

“Research shows that all 3- and 4- year-old children benefit from high-quality pre-k, and for children of the Armed Forces, pre-k provides an essential element of stability,” said Libby Doggett, Ph.D., executive director of Pre-K Now, a public education and advocacy organization in Washington, D.C. “A good pre-k program can help these children cope with frequent moves, and the stress of parental deployment by giving them continuity in a difficult time so they can develop the social, emotional and educational skills needed for success in school.”

Though states across the country are making impressive progress toward providing pre-k for all 3-and 4-year-olds, many families still lack access to high-quality programs. Because eligibility for pre-k varies widely from state to state, a military-connected child may be able to attend in one state, but upon moving to another, would lose the opportunity, thus creating more stress and disruption in their young lives.

Currently, Florida, Georgia and Oklahoma are the only states to provide pre-k for all 4- year-olds. Remarkable advocacy efforts at the local level in Kansas and Texas, however, have led both states to recently enact legislation ensuring military children are eligible for pre-k programs in their states. The report released today – titled *Pre-K for Military Families: Honoring Service, Educating Children* – includes case studies on these recent developments.

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“Access to high-quality pre-k programs is imperative for military children and their families,” said Dr. Mary Keller, executive director of the MCEC™. “In this time of extended deployments, pre-k programs can provide military children with the education and caring attention they need to cope with life’s uncertainties.”

#### **About Pre-K Now**

Pre-K Now collaborates with state advocates and policymakers to lead a movement for high-quality pre-kindergarten for all three and four year olds. The following funders contribute to making this important work possible: The Pew Charitable Trusts, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the McCormick Tribune Foundation, RGK Foundation, the Foundation for Child Development, CityBridge Foundation, and the Schumann Fund for New Jersey.

#### **About MCEC™**

The Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC™) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, world-wide organization that identifies the challenges facing the highly mobile military-connected child, increases awareness of these challenges in military and educational communities, and initiates and implements programs to meet these challenges. Their focus is on all military-connected children, including those in Active Duty, National Guard, and Reserves families. For more information, please visit [www.militarychild.org](http://www.militarychild.org).

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