College, Career and Life Readiness

for Military and Veteran Children

A Military and Community Leaders' Guide

Brought to you by the Military Child Education Coalition®
made possible through a generous grant from the GE Foundation.

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by
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GE Foundation

The Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) wishes to give special thanks to the GE Foundation in its long-term goal of ensuring that all of America's children are college and career ready. Their funding, through a generous grant, has allowed the MCEC to create this Guide.

www.**gefoundation**.com

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Preface

Why You Need This Guide:

As a Nation, it is our collective duty to ensure the continued recruitment and retention of the world's most highly qualified military force. Everyone plays a role in this critical effort-including you. Key to the retention of our force is the expectation that their families are safe and well-supported. **This means providing their children the opportunity to thrive academically, socially and emotionally, regardless of duty station, deployments or transition status.** Our failure to meet this expectation would impact the strength and the quality of our force, and ultimately the well-being of our country.

Military parents – those living in your own community – know how much they ask of their own children: frequent moves and separations, inequities between academic standards from state to state, reestablished routines and challenges to meet graduation requirements in multiple states. Starting over comes at a different price for each child. When support is missing, our best and brightest struggle to reach their full potential, our middle-level students struggle to graduate and our most challenged learners are often left behind.

When there is intentional and focused support, however, and when leaders, professionals and influencers take the time to ensure that processes, programs and policies are in place and well implemented, **we find children who not only survive but thrive**.

This Guide is for you. We believe you are in a unique position to have a direct and lasting impact on the success of the children within your spheres of influence. We respect that you bring much to the table from your own professional and personal experiences, and we appreciate that you are interested in learning more.

This Guide will provide background and recommendations in order to help you make well-informed decisions about issues regarding the military and veteran-connected children in grades Kindergarten through 12 within your community. Given the current complexity of educational reform with its effort at raising the bar on academic rigor, this is a well-timed aid for those involved with the process and the changing environment.

As an organization privileged to serve military and veteran-connected children and youth for nearly 20 years, we've been able to focus on the academic well-being of "our kids." We've seen and addressed the challenges that these young students face while transitioning and trying to graduate on time. We know how critical it is that they graduate from high school being college, career and life-ready and how important you are to that success.

We find encouragement that these issues are important to you. We applaud your focus and your concerns. And, most importantly, **we thank you for rising to the challenge** in your critical role of ensuring that all students – in particular, our military and veteran-connected students – thrive.

Who will benefit from this guide?

- **Military leaders** at all levels and ranks
- **Community leaders** with Active Duty, National Guard or Reserve families living in your community
- **Leaders of youth-serving organizations** who interact with military and veteran-connected children
- **Education "influencers"** including such diverse roles as School Board member, parent leader or spouse of a military or community leader
- **Professionals** whose duties and responsibilities include providing school-related services to service members and their families

A Letter from the Chairman of the MCEC Board of Directors

The academic well-being of our military and veteran children is of utmost importance to military commanders and community leaders. Certainly, during the years that I was privileged to command troops – whether at the small unit level or at a major command level – it was evident to me that the education of our youth was critically important. There are nearly 4 million children across our Nation whose parents are currently serving or are veterans, having served since September 11, 2001. Ensuring that they graduate from high school ready for college, careers and life is essential.

Given the imperative of education reform over the past few years, we believe it is important that leaders at all levels understand the academic landscape and forge three-way partnerships among the military, the community and the schools. While this isn't a new concept, it is all the more significant in an age of education turbulence, budget cuts and military downsizing.

This Guide is meant for military leaders at all levels and the community leaders who work with them. It is designed to be a quick reference, a workbook and a centralized resource listing. I believe it will be an invaluable go-to guide for all school-related questions.

We appreciate the support of the GE Foundation in their work on behalf of college and career readiness. Through their generous grant, we were able to publish this Guide in support of our military-connected children.

We urge you to make the education of those children in your military and civilian communities a priority. As always, we thank you for all you do… *for the sake of the child.*

Benjamin Griffin, GEN (USA, Ret.)
Chairman, MCEC Board of Directors

"The well-being of military children and families in the United States has far-reaching significance for the Nation as a whole, in addition to its importance for military capabilities and individual service members and their families."

Ann Masten in the Future of Children (p. 199)

Who Are We?

The Military Child Education Coalition® (MCEC®) is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to ensuring inclusive, quality educational opportunities for all military-connected children affected by mobility, family separation and transition. We represent the children of all who serve: Active Duty, National Guard, Reserves, Coast Guard and post-9/11 veterans.

Founded in 1998, the MCEC is committed to identifying the unique challenges that face the highly mobile military-connected child, increasing awareness of these challenges in military and educational communities and initiating and implementing programs to meet these challenges. Our membership includes all active and reserve components of the military services, the Coast Guard, post-9/11 veterans, school systems around the world, parents, organizations and corporations and individuals.

The MCEC serves as an incubator of innovative approaches, a conduit of promising practices and an information source for organizations, educators and parents. Toward this end, the MCEC performs research, develops resources, sponsors professional institutes, conducts conferences and publishes information for all constituencies. Our goal is to ensure that every military-connected child and youth grows and thrives through good and challenging times so that they are college, workplace and ultimately, life ready.

Introduction

"My principal was real cool. When I first walked in, I was wearing my St. Louis Cardinal stuff, and he's a Boston Red Sox fan. I could already tell we were going to be friends, and that made me comfortable because we were talking about baseball. So, it helps when the adults have some sort of interest that make sense to you."

Clayton, Grade 7[1]

"The first few days I didn't have many friends, didn't talk to anybody; just sat in class, did my work and left. If you're not in with a group, it's really hard to make friends."

Jackson, Grade 10

"The first time my dad got deployed I think I was in the 5th grade. I just remember walking into the classroom and putting my head down. I just started crying and crying. The first one, oh, I was heartbroken; I was so sad."

Brittany, Grade 7

Why Are These Stories Important?

As a military or community leader, why do you think the stories of Clayton, Jackson and Brittany (all military-connected children) are important to you? Why should you be concerned about one student and his or her successes and challenges? On a larger scale, what is important about education reform, college and career ready standards, community partnerships and the like?

For starters, you were undoubtedly selected, or you volunteered for your current position because of your leadership skills and your compassion for those you serve. There is no question that you care that the education systems in your community are high quality and that students have the opportunities to excel and thrive. You already realize that you have a shared responsibility and a need to influence the outcomes for the children in your community.

Just as important are the short-term and long-range implications of your focus on the well-being of those you influence. There are significant strategic implications, such as:

1. Retaining a high-quality all-volunteer military force and ensuring our national security is a critical imperative and **requires 360-degree attention** to all aspects of service members' well-being, including the satisfaction of their families.
2. The **satisfaction of those family members is inextricably intertwined with the quality of the educational opportunities** available to their school-age children. When queried, military parents most often list school quality at the top of their list of transition priorities.
3. Keeping military installations fully operational is the long-range goal of most regions where military installations proliferate. A **healthy partnership** between military leadership and school/community leaders **highlights the value** placed on each population and **honors the legacy** of the community.

1 Quotes are extracted from Military Child Education Coalition, Education of the Military Child in the 21st Century: Current Dimensions of Educational Experiences for Army Children, 2012. Student names have been changed.

4. On a larger scale, the quality of U.S. education has been a nationwide concern for many years. Recently, the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) scores, released in December 2013, found the United States ranked near the middle of the 65 nations whose 15 year-olds were administered tests in math, reading and science.[2] For a nation that prides itself at being on top, this has been a rude awakening. **School reform, with a focus on college and career readiness, is of vital concern.**

For all these reasons, there is no question that the academic well-being of the military child population in your community will be important to you.

Clayton, Brittany and Jackson represent the shared experiences of many military children, but with individual interpretations as unique as the child. **Your attention to their concerns is vital** to the successes they attain in their quest for college, career and life readiness.

Throughout this publication we use the terms "military and veteran-connected child, youth or student" and "military child" interchangeably and as inclusive descriptors. This Guide refers to over **2 MILLION** military-connected children/youth/students whose parents or guardians are currently serving in the Active Duty, National Guard or Reserve Forces.

In addition, approximately **2 MILLION** children have parents who are post-9/11 veterans.

(Although they are not legally "military children" and are not included in the demographics, the siblings of service members are often affected by a sister or brother's military service. The MCEC works to shine a light on these siblings' service and challenges as well.)

This Guide does not attempt to break new ground but to centralize and organize information that is important to you in your critical role as an academic advocate.

We have compiled this Guide as a reference to assist you in making positive and well-informed decisions about issues regarding military or veteran-connected children in grades Kindergarten through 12 (K-12). Each chapter addresses a separate topic and is followed by suggested:

- Questions to Ask
- Things to Do
- Resources for You

The appendices include definitions and a comprehensive list of resources.

2 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), PISA Results. http://www.oecd.org/pisa/keyfindings/pisa-2012-results.htm

CHAPTER 1

About Our Military and Veteran-Connected Children

"All Americans should be reminded that (military) kids serve too…Children grow up shaped by their experiences and their memories, as we know, meaning support we give to military-connected children today will define our nation tomorrow. Their education is a strategic investment in our future."

Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel,
MCEC National Training Seminar, July 9, 2013

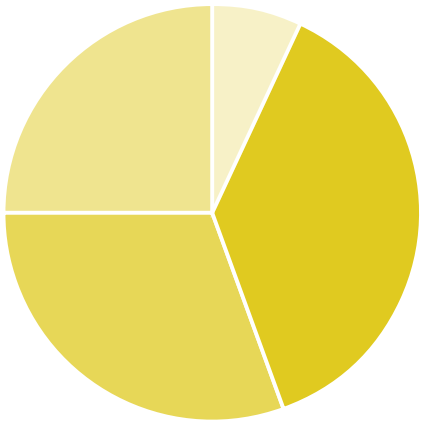
Military and veteran-connected children are simply children first. Because of their parents' service to our Nation, they have the benefit of being exposed to a culture that values and teaches personal strengths such as courage, perseverance, determination, pride and a sense of service and purpose. For many children, these values and strengths help develop a highly functional level of resilience and build a strong foundation for success in a variety of school settings and at successive levels of each child's educational journey. They also experience the importance of service and giving back, with many later making career choices that continue the legacies of service, civic responsibility and patriotism.

Still these strengths do not necessarily guarantee school success for every child, and "resilience does not mean invulnerability."[3] How any child, including those from a military family, will function in school at a specific point in time will also be determined by personality and temperament, home environment, particular situations that the family is managing at the time, and the child's age and developmental stage (Rauch).[4]

Let's see more about the demographics of the military-connected youth with parents who are serving currently.[5]

Military Children: Active Duty, National Guard & Reserves

2013 Military Demographics Report



- **Ages Birth-5** (706,764) 37.4%
- **Ages 6-11** (581,749) 30.8%
- **Ages 12-18** (465,520) 24.7%
- **Ages 19-22** (134,455) 7.1%*

* Youth over age 21 must be enrolled as full-time students in order to qualify as dependents.

3 Kenneth R. Ginsburg, M.D. "Building Resilience in Children and Teens," 2014. American Academy of Pediatrics.

4 Paula K. Rauch, M.D. and Anna C. Muriel, M.D. *Raising an Emotionally Healthy Child When a Parent is Sick*, 2006. McGraw Hill.

5 Similar demographic data do not exist currently for the children of veterans. In the broadest sense it is possible to extrapolate assumptions about the veteran-connected youth from the current DOD data; however, many veterans have children after military separation.

- Approximately 60% of all military children are school-age – almost **1.2 million children**.
- Of that number, over **700,000** are the children of **Active Duty** service members.
- **SIGNIFICANCE:** Active Duty children move 6-9 times during their K-12 education, 3 times more often than their civilian classmates.
- **MYTH:** National Guard & Reserve children don't move.

  MYTH BUSTER: The children of National Guard and Reserve members may move due to in-state and out-of-state military (and, sometimes, civilian) job changes. They may also move during a deployment to live with a different caregiver. Often, they are the only military-connected children in their schools.
- **MYTH:** The majority of military-connected children living in the U.S. are in Department of Defense schools.

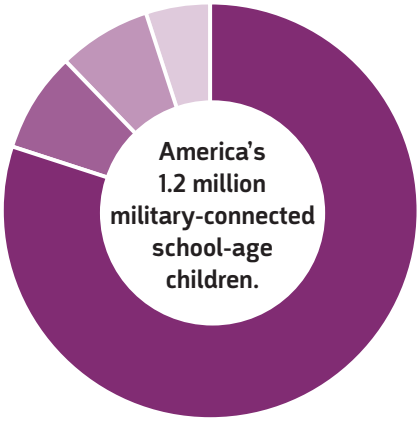
  MYTH BUSTER: Nearly 80% of military children actually attend our Nation's public schools. This number is estimated to be closer to 90% when veterans' children are included.

As of the 2013 Department of Defense Demographics, there were a total of **1,888,486 military children** (including Active Duty, National Guard and Reserve)

There are an estimated additional **2 million children** whose parent(s) served in the post-9/11 era and are considered veterans.

SIGNIFICANCE: There are **nearly 4 million children** living throughout the U.S. who have had a parent serve in the U.S. Military since 9/11. It is likely that there is a military or veteran-connected child in every school district in America.

Where Do Our Military Children (Grades K-12) Go To School?[6]



- Nearly 80% attend U. S. **public schools**, including charter, magnet and career technical schools. This reaches almost 90% when including veterans' children.
- Nearly 8% attend **private, parochial or host nation schools**
- Nearly 7% attend Department of Defense Schools (**DoDEA**) in 12 foreign countries and 7 states, Guam & Puerto Rico.
- More than 5% estimated to be **homeschooled** in the U.S. and overseas.

6 www.militarychild.org/student-identifier

Military and Veteran-Connected Children and Youth – Challenges and Implications

Challenges	Implications
Active Duty children move on average 6-9 times during their K-12 school years, three times more frequently than their civilian school peers.	• Opportunity to experience new geographic and cultural environments and a fresh start • Changes in routines and relationships • Possible differences in state standards from one school to another • Academic, graduation, extra-curricular and social/emotional challenges • Potential problems in staying on grade-level for college, career and life readiness • Extra challenge for children with special needs
National Guard and Reserve children may not move as frequently, but they are frequently the only military-connected children in their schools.	• All of the above, plus • Increased deployment of National Guard and Reserves since 2002 • Challenge of finding peers with similar circumstances and educators/youth-serving professionals who understand
Although the pace has slowed, all military-connected children face the possibility of deployment of one or more parents or significant family members. Often the cycles of pre-deployment (getting ready to go), deployment and reintegration (homecoming) overlap.	• Family changes, including short-term moves or revisions of family routines • New roles for children • New relationships with extended family • Possible feelings of uncertainty and worry
Reintegration (or the return of the service member) can be exciting and rewarding but also includes a period of readjustment as family members learn to be together again.	• Reuniting of the family • Fresh start, along with creating a "new normal" • Possible adjustments due to post-deployment stress, decompression and developmental changes in children • Possibility of a profoundly changed parent
It is estimated that almost 7,000 military-connected children have lost a service member parent since 9/11.	• Expected personal feelings of loss and grief • Additional loss of the military lifestyle • Possible unanticipated move and adjustment to a new lifestyle
All service members separate from the military at some time, either because of planned retirement, end-of-enlistment or resignation of a commission. Some service members have unplanned departures because of military downsizing or injuries/illness.	• Fresh start – new environment • Change of routines and transition away from the military lifestyle/culture • Adjustment to "civilian" lifestyle and communities. • Financial adjustments as family transitions

A Special Note: Our Veterans' Children

While the focus of so many military and community leaders since 2001 has been on the well-being of children whose parents and guardians are currently serving, it is clear that attention must equally be paid to those children living throughout this country whose parents have served and are now veterans. Whether their parents have left the military by choice or by happenstance (injury, illness, downsizing), there are often challenges in the transition to a completely civilian life and occasional lingering deployment/reintegration issues.

Military and community leaders are wise to keep this critical population in mind. The local efforts toward employing veterans are also vital to the well-being of children. It is important to include questions about the students who are veteran-connected in discussions, planning and all youth-serving activities.

A Special Note: Our National Guard and Reserve Children

The children of the National Guard and Reserves (Army, Marine, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard) are often overlooked when we discuss "military children." Because they are spread all over the country and often reside in predominately civilian communities, their needs and concerns are frequently less visible. In fact, their successes and challenges mirror those of Active Duty children, and they have the additional challenge of being geographically separated from support services and other children and youth who have similar experiences.

Educators and community leaders need to be aware of the National Guard and Reserve children and youth who live in their communities. They should also keep in mind other geographically separated service members, such as recruiters, ROTC cadre and others who normally live in Active Duty environments but are currently serving in civilian communities.

Understanding School-Related Challenges Facing Military Children

Peer-to-Peer Relationships Save the Day

Julie Coffey, Retired High School Counselor, Fort Sam Houston ISD, Texas

The look of terror in the eyes of the new student told the story every time. As a high school counselor on a military reservation, I enrolled new students almost every day. School people tend to believe that the most important element in enrolling a new student is the coursework, but I believe the first area to be addressed should be the social/emotional well-being of the student.

Establishing a Student 2 Student® (S2S) program in our school gave immediate peer contact to the new students and provided a way to "pay it forward" to our established students. "Will I fit in? Who will hang out with me at lunch? What is cool/dorky here?" Instead of having the new kid syndrome of self-doubt, new students were immediately greeted by S2S kids whose primary goal was to help all new kids find their place in this setting.

The S2S team did a variety of activities aimed at helping new kids fit in and be able to decipher local school, post and city traditions and cultures. The S2S program gave new students individual school tours, helped design a New Kid Camp, held monthly get-togethers for old and new students to mingle, introduced new students to teachers and coaches for extracurricular interests, etc.

The first two weeks of a new student's life in a new place is the critical time to engage that person's head and heart. The S2S program provided a safe, nonthreatening place for the new kids to start their journey.

The reason I know that S2S peer contact works extremely well in helping new students assimilate is that almost all of my new students wanted to join S2S to help other new kids. Wanting to pay it forward in this way is a sure sign that a person feels cared for and vital.

Questions to Ask

- How many military-connected children, birth through age 23, live in your community? Be sure to include the children of the Active Duty, as well as the National Guard/Reserve.
- What do you know about the children of veterans in this community?
- Where do your community's military-connected children attend school? Preschool? Post-secondary?
- Who are the professionals in the school system(s) who support school transitions? (See chapter 7 for more information about these roles.)
- What support programs are already in place for military-connected children?
- Who is the School Liaison Officer on the military installation?
- How does the Chamber of Commerce support military-connected children? (e.g., education committees, military affairs committees, etc.)

Things to Do

- Find out about the child and youth-serving organizations in your area. Compile a list for future partnerships and resources.
- Develop a relationship with the child, youth and school experts in your community, particularly those who work with the military population.
- Create (or continue) partnerships among military, community and education leaders in the area. (More about this in chapter 9.)
- Use public engagement techniques, such as social media, informal gatherings and "town halls," etc., to discover the successes and concerns about the school systems in the community. Listen! Act!

Resources for You[7]

From the Military Child Education Coalition – www.MilitaryChild.org
Program Descriptions can be found in Appendix B

- Professional Development Courses, In-Person & Online
- Student 2 Student® (S2S) Programs
- Junior Student 2 Student® (JS2S) Programs
- Elementary Student 2 Student™ (eS2S) Programs
- SchoolQuest™ – **www.schoolquest.org**
- Homeroom – **www.homeroom.militarychild.org**
- Parent to Parent™ Programs
- *On the Move*® magazine
- Military Student Transition Consultants™ (MSTC)
- *Research Report for the US Army: Education of the Military Child in the 21st Century* (MCEC) **www.militarychild.org/emc21-report**

School Liaison Officers (SLO) – *contact the military installation*

Future of Children: Military Children and Families
http://futureofchildren.org/futureofchildren/publications/docs/23_02_FullJournal.pdf

Serving Military Families in the 21st Century. Karen Rose Blaisure, Tara Saathoff-Wells, Angela Pereira, Shelley MacDermid Wadsworth, Amy Laura Dombro. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group: New York, 2012

7 A complete list of Resources can be found in Appendix B and D.

CHAPTER 2

College, Career and Life Readiness – Charting a Path

"If there was just a way to streamline the educational process across the board nationwide, it would sure make things a lot easier for those of us that have to move around. We truly fall in danger of our kids falling through the cracks. When they're little, they miss key concepts and we don't realize it until far down the road and all of a sudden they can't do long division because they missed multiplilcation during a move. And a way to standardize testing, too – make it the same across the board. Then we could have an honest view of how our states match up nationwide. That would make it better for everybody."

Military Parent, Interview for Education of the Military Child in the 21st Century, 2012[8]

What is College, Career and Life Readiness?

The parent above echoes most parents' "wish list" for their mobile students: the desire to find consistency in academic standards from district to district and state to state. They feel that the academic challenges of frequent moves could be eased if, as an example, standards for third grade math in California mirrored those in Texas or anywhere that military-connected families may move. More than anything, though, they want to ensure that their children are progressively and adequately prepared for post-high school studies, careers and successful lives.

Addressing those concerns in recent years, educational reform has focused on academic rigor and the nationwide implementation of academic standards that adequately prepare graduates for post-secondary education, careers and life beyond. Collectively, this is referred to as College and Career Readiness. Dr. David Conley, a respected national leader in this field, defines it as the ability for students to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing post-secondary courses that lead to degree completion, a certificate or a career pathway training program without the need for remedial or developmental course work.[9] In other words, the parent above should expect that her student will be fully ready after high school graduation to pursue whatever path he or she chooses – college, the military or the work place – no matter where that child has lived.

To be college and career ready, high school graduates must have studied a rigorous and broad curriculum, grounded in the core academic disciplines but also consisting of other subjects that are part of a well-rounded education. Academic preparation alone is not enough to ensure post-secondary readiness, but it is clear that it is an essential part of readiness for college, careers and life in the 21st century.[10]

A number of learning models look at the knowledge, skills and strategies necessary for students to successfully transition after high school. Dr. Conley's **THINK – KNOW – ACT – GO** model succinctly summarizes them:

8 Military Child Education Coalition, Education of the Military Child In The 21st Century: Current Dimensions of Educational Experiences for Army Children, 2012.

9 David T. Conley. Getting Ready for College, Careers, and the Common Core. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 2014.

10 Achieve website, http://www.achieve.org/college-and-career-readiness

Key **Cognitive Strategies**	**THINK**	Ways of thinking that are necessary for post-secondary work like formulating hypotheses, developing problem solving strategies, identifying sources, analyzing, evaluating and organizing
Key **Content Knowledge**	**KNOW**	The foundational content and big ideas that students must know well and retain including students' understanding and acknowledgement of the value of this content and of their level of mastery
Key **Learning Skills & Techniques**	**ACT**	Two broad categories: • The first is student ownership of learning, to include goal setting, persistence, self-awareness, motivation, etc. • The second is specific learning techniques and strategies, such as time management, study skills, test-taking skills, etc.
Key **Transition Knowledge & Skills**	**GO**	Attainment of the knowledge and skills necessary for students to transition to the next level including an understanding of the post-secondary admissions process, how to choose career fields, how to access resources and financial aid and an acceptance of what is expected in the post-secondary environment

As of late 2013, all 50 states, territories and the Department of Defense schools (DoDEA) have adopted individual state standards that align with college and career readiness. In most states, this is occurring simultaneously with strategic revisions in the areas of:

- Students Assessments
- Graduation Requirements
- School and Teacher Accountability
- Data Collection and Use

The good news is that states have acknowledged the need to improve outcomes through revisions to existing academic standards and policies, and each state or school district is modifying curriculum to meet those standards. Implementation, though, has been somewhat inconsistent across the Nation. Not all states have adopted or implemented the same standards or cleared the legislative hurdles necessary to make coordinated changes in their student assessments, graduation requirements and so forth. Coordination of all of these is necessary in order to begin to see improvement in students' readiness. This is acknowledged to be a lengthy process, and quick fixes and soaring assessment scores will not happen overnight.

What Happened to Common Standards?

Since the 1990s each state has had its own unique set of academic standards and its own definition of proficiency that determines when students have mastered each grade level or achieved high school graduation. This has created inequity in the perceived value of education in each state. Conceptually, a set of common standards across our wide and varied country would make sense.

Our military parent at the beginning of the chapter articulated a compelling argument in favor of common standards, particularly for our Nation's most mobile population. Because setting education policy and standards is the power of the state (per our Constitution's Tenth Amendment, which states that any power not specifically identified in the Constitution belongs to the state), nationwide agreement among all states is problematic.

A cohesive set of Math and English Language Arts standards, based on college and career ready standards, were in fact developed by experts at the behest of the bi-partisan National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers, beginning in 2009. These are known as the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and were adopted by 45 states' legislatures and the Department of Defense Schools (DoDEA) by 2013. Since then, most states have begun implementation of the CCSS, many of them with great success. A number of states, however, have opted out of the CCSS or have modified their implementation for a variety of reasons.

While this may be discouraging for the mobile military-connected student, the outlook is not bleak. States are still committed to rigorous academics and rising to the challenge of college and career ready standards. While in the end, each state's standards may not exactly mirror the others, the educational bar has been raised across the Nation.

Post-Secondary Preparation

Because the college and career ready spectrum involves more than Kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12), we would be remiss in ignoring the post-secondary years. Although this Guide is not intended to address the college years, it's important to note that one of the most stressful academic activities that families undertake is the college and financial aid application process. Done correctly, this is not just a single, isolated task but a carefully considered process that includes taking the right courses, beginning as early as 7th grade, working with counselors, trusted teachers and other professionals to determine a college/career path and making choices.

If college is the decision, then there are multiple steps to be taken in order to make sure testing is completed, applications (and portfolios, if needed) are in order and financial aid and scholarship options are addressed. It's easy to see how this entire process can become infinitely more complicated – derailed, even – if there are state-to-state moves during high school. Support, of course, can be found with school counselors, college admissions and financial aid representatives and sites like **www.schoolquest.org**.

One is not the other – Standards are not Curriculum

In the rhetoric-heavy discussions that have accompanied the adoption and subsequent modifications of Common Core State Standards (CCSS), there has been consistent confusion about standards vs. curriculum. **STANDARDS** simply state what students are expected to know at each grade level. As an example, at the end of first grade, students will tell and write time in hours and half-hours using analog and digital clocks. **CURRICULUM** is the plan for teaching how to read a clock and write the time – the day-to-day methods, activities, lessons, etc. In the world of education, **STANDARDS** are set by the state; **CURRICULUM** is developed by the school district or classroom teacher.

STANDARDS are the end; CURRICULUM is the means.

"Though education is carried out locally, the world that young people must navigate is increasingly national and international. Students must not only compete with peers from other states, but also with counterparts from around the world."

Editorial Board, Minnesota Star-Tribune
February 4, 2015

"My childhood educational experiences led me to become a teacher and now a middle school administrator. As a child, I was blessed with parents who had the ability and forethought to consider strength of schools when moving around the country. As an adult, I can't help but think about the number of transient students in this country that don't have that luxury. Our country and our states need to provide students with a strong, rigorous and common set of achievable goals, while helping transient families achieve a strong public education. I can tell you from my experience that the Common Core State Standards are making that a reality."

Matt Moll, Educators for Higher Standards
January 14, 2015

College, Career and Life Readiness Implications for a Military or Community Leader

While the fundamental mechanics of preparing students to be ready for college and a career may be the responsibility of the public education system serving your community, that system relies upon its military and community leaders to be their partners in success. And to be a good partner, it is critical for you to have a clear understanding of what is meant by college, career and life readiness and how the children in your community are experiencing it.

Even if you are not a trained educator, you must be aware of the challenges of military and veteran children as they move into (or out of) your state, often facing graduation requirements different from the last school, math skills taught in varying primary grades in different locations and academic standards that can vary widely from state to state.

There are key indicators, many of which are covered in chapter 8, that you can use to form an initial assessment of how well your school systems are performing. Using that data and a close working relationship with leaders across the community, you can have an impact on the successful education outcomes for the children within your system.

DATA MYTHS

Conversations around data collection often raise questions about student privacy, particularly related to Common Core State Standards, the **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)** and vendors. The Data Quality Campaign (DQC) seeks to make the case for education data while ensuring state policymakers meet their moral and legal responsibilities to safeguard this information and ensure its appropriate and ethical use. DQC has created a FAQ list that can be accessed via the MCEC website: **www.militarychild.org/myth-busters-getting-the-facts-straight-about-education-data**

Questions to Ask

- If Common Core State standards have been adopted by this state, how are the standards implemented? If not, what set of college and career ready standards are in its place?
- What are this state's graduation requirements? What legislation, if any, has been adopted to revise the requirements?
- If there are multiple paths to achieve a diploma or tiered diplomas, what are the requirements?
- What are the districts' student assessment requirements? How often are students tested? At what grades?
- How is student data being collected in this state? How is it being used? How is data collected for military-connected students?
- What is the local discussion – myths and reality – about college and career ready standards or Common Core State Standards?
- Who are the people within this state and in the local school districts who are making a difference in the world of education?

Things to Do

- Become well versed on College and Career Readiness Standards (and Common Core State Standards). See Resources on the next page.
- Work with the schools in your area to seek solutions (ways and means locally) to mitigate or eliminate challenges and obstacles encountered by military children resulting from state standards different from the last state.
- Engage – be a voice for military and other mobile students to have access to opportunities.

The Learning Skills Toolbox

Parents have questions, and so do students, about what it takes to be ready – for the next grade, for college or life after high school. MCEC, with support from the GE Foundation, produced "The Learning Skills Toolbox," a series of videos that tackle learning and readiness at several stages.

The series of six videos includes discussion with students who have special needs and interviews with educators and administrators at the high school and college levels. They include great tips for any parent, student and lifelong learner. You can find and view them at the link below:

www.militarychild.org/parents-and-students/resources

Resources for You

From the Military Child Education Coalition – www.MilitaryChild.org
Program Descriptions can be found in Appendix B

- Professional Development Courses, In-Person & Online
- Student 2 Student® (S2S) Programs
- Junior Student 2 Student® (JS2S) Programs
- Elementary Student 2 Student™ (eS2S) Programs
- SchoolQuest™ – **www.schoolquest.org**
- Homeroom – **www.homeroom.militarychild.org**
- Parent to Parent™ Programs
- *On the Move®* magazine
- Military Student Transition Consultants™ (MSTC)
- Chart Your Course:™ College Readiness

School Liaison Officers (SLO) – *contact the military installation*

Getting Ready for College, Careers, and the Common Core, David T. Conley. Jossey-Bass: San Francisco, 2014.

Achieve – www.achieve.org

The Data Quality Campaign – www.dataqualitycampaign.org/

The Hunt Institute – www.hunt-institute.org

Interstate Compact Commission – www.mic3.net

Thomas B. Fordham Institute – www.edexcellence.net

CHAPTER 3

School Governance & Funding

"American education is vital to sustaining the nation's international leadership and competitiveness. And it is core to upholding the American ideals that our forefathers set out to establish in this democracy."

Joel Klein and Condoleezza Rice, Forward to Task Force Report, U.S. Education and National Security

In your role as a community or military leader, your interactions and connections to the school systems within your community are keys to the success of all children in the community. This chapter is a brief overview of how school districts are managed and funded.

School Governance

Public Education Governance

The 10th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution states "powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people." Since public education is not specifically mentioned in the Constitution, it is one of the powers reserved to the States. Congress has legislated that federal agencies are prohibited from exercising "any direction, supervision, or control over the curriculum, program of instruction, administration, or personnel of any educational institution, school, or school system."[11]

Therefore, each state has an autonomous accountability and curriculum system. Accountability standards are determined by state government and funded under a framework normally directed by the state legislature in accordance with the state's education code. School curricula and teaching policies are set by locally-elected school boards who exercise jurisdiction over each of the estimated 14,000 local education agencies (LEA) that exist across the Nation.

Federal – The U.S. Department of Education

The role of the federal Department of Education (ED) is primarily to:

- Establish policy for, administer and coordinate most federal assistance to education,
- Collect data on U.S. schools and distribute research, and
- Enforce federal educational laws regarding privacy and civil rights, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Elementary & Secondary Education Act (ESEA), known since 2001 as No Child Left Behind.

Nationally, federal dollars contribute just about 12 percent of all elementary and secondary education funding. This includes funds from the Department of Education and also from other federal agencies, such as the Department of Health and Human Services' Head Start program and the Department of Agriculture's School Lunch program. (See chart on the next page.)

State Department of Education Agencies

State education agencies (SEA) control the form of their public school systems and, through state legislation, determine boundaries, governance (boards of education) and all the financial, operational, curricular and accountability guidelines that local officials use to operate day to day.

11 Section 1232a, Title 20 US Code – Prohibition Against Federal Control of Education

States have either an elected or appointed Chief School Officer (called the State Superintendent of Education in most states) and elected or appointed State Boards of Education. These boards of education focus on the long-term vision, policies and needs of public education within their state. For your reference, the chart in Appendix C, page 74, shows how each state's Board and Chief Schools' Officer are selected.

Local Education Agencies

Local school districts, also known as Local Educational Agencies (LEA), are the legal entities constituted through a Board of Education to provide public education at the elementary and secondary levels. This may include pre-school through Grade 12 education. Depending on the state's directive, school districts can be organized within a city, county, township or other political subdivision of a state or in combination with other of these entities.

Public Education Funding

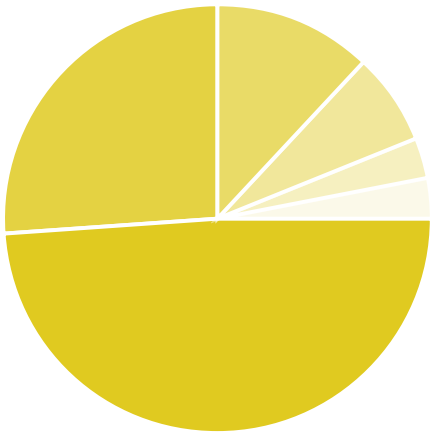
The federal government spends (through discretionary appropriations) nearly $79 billion for primary and secondary education programs annually. Funding flows mainly through the Department of Education, although other federal agencies administer some funds for education-related activities, as shown in the chart below.[12]

School districts work with three levels of governance:

- **Board of Education** – School boards are elected by voters in the district, meet once or twice a month and set policy.
- **District Administration** – The superintendent is appointed by the board and acts as chief executive officer with authority to run the organization. The superintendent generally functions with district level administrators in areas of business operations, academics, pupil and human resources. Organization of these services varies from district to district.
- **School Administration** – Schools are generally staffed according to a district formula and usually include a principal, assistant principals, counselors, nurses, custodians and clerks. Teachers are generally allocated based on student enrollment and any special emphasis for the designated school (e.g., magnet status, bilingual or English Language Learners, unique special needs units, etc.). Principals lead the schools and are responsible for daily operations, student and staff well-being and positive connections with the school community.

Federal Funding for Elementary and Secondary Education

By Agency, Fiscal Year 2011



- **Department of Education** 49%
- **Department of Agriculture** 26%
- **Department of Health and Human Science** 12%
- **Department of Labor** 7%
- **Other** 3%
- **Department of Defense** 3%

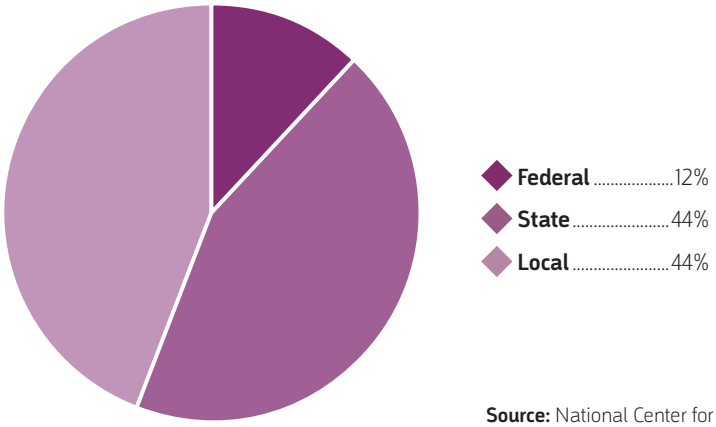
Source: National Center for Education Statistics

12 New America Foundation, Federal Education Budget Project: http://febp.newamerica.net/background-analysis/school-finance.

That is, however, only about 12% of the funding needed to operate schools. The National Center for Education Statistics 2011 National Public Education Financial Survey[13] found that an average of 87.5% of public school funding is derived from state and local sources. There are variances among the states in their funding models. All of them, however, use a formula of state revenues plus local funding derived from some combination of income tax, sales tax, personal and property taxes, special use bonds, mill levies or a variety of fees and other taxes to complete their education budgets. The chart below illustrates the balance of federal, state and local funding.[14]

Elementary and Secondary Education Funding

Fiscal Year 2011



Source: National Center for Education Statistics

Federal Impact Aid as an Offset to Lost Local Taxes

When non-taxable Federal property lies within the boundaries of a local school district, the district suffers the loss of property and other taxes. Congress created the Impact Aid Program in 1950 to provide financial assistance to these school districts. Now known as Title VIII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Impact Aid assists school districts that have concentrations of military-connected students who live on and off the installation.[15]

As a rule of thumb, a district with a minimum of 400 (or 3 percent in smaller districts) federal (including military-connected) students is eligible to apply for Impact Aid funds which are reauthorized annually, necessitating reapplication for funds each year. In recent years, the Impact Aid budget has been funded at only 60 percent of its authorization. As a result, schools do not receive the entire amount due them.

It is the responsibility of the district to encourage families to complete the qualifying forms and return them on time. When allocated, these funds can be used at the discretion of the district and are unrestricted by the Federal government. The exceptions are funds specifically allocated for children with disabilities or for construction.

13 http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/stfis.asp.

14 New America Foundation, Federal Education Budget Project: http://febp.newamerica.net/background-analysis/school-finance.

15 http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oese/impactaid/whatisia.html

Schools Funded or Governed in Other Ways

Department of Defense Education Activity Schools

Unique to the military lifestyle is the presence of an additional category of schools, the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA). These schools are organized primarily as American schooling for military members stationed outside the U.S. (generally referred to as DoDDS). There are also schools located on select military installations within the U.S. (generally referred to as DDESS).

An arm of the Department of Defense, DoDEA is responsible for planning, directing, coordinating and managing Pre-kindergarten through 12th grades in 181 accredited schools. They are organized into three major areas (Americas, Europe and Pacific) and are located in 12 foreign countries, 7 states, Guam and Puerto Rico. They serve more than 78,000 children of Active Duty military and Department of Defense civilian families. In some ways, DoDEA is like a multi-location school district since standards and curricula are relatively uniform throughout the system. This gives military families comfort in knowing that there is consistency from one DoDEA location to another.

DoDEA's Educational Partnership program provides outreach to many public school districts around the county that service military and veteran children. This includes the oversight of grants that allow school districts to implement innovative programs not otherwise possible.

Private/Parochial Schools

According to research conducted by the Military Child Education Coalition, military families choose to send their children to private schools for many of the same reasons as non-military connected families. Many offer faith-based curricula and religious guidance in addition to smaller class sizes and lower teacher to student ratios. Funding for private/parochial schools is generally provided through student tuition, endowments and donations and grants from foundations and organizations. Private and parochial schools may be accredited by a regional Accrediting Commission for Schools, or they may also be accredited by independent accrediting groups and/or the state. Because these schools operate independently, there is little academic standards consistency from one school to another.

Fostering Relationships with Local School Boards

Communication is Key

Robert Muller, Ph.D., Retired Superintendent, Killeen ISD, Texas

In the school district where I was superintendent, the relationship between the school board and the installation was always strong. This was due, in no small way, to the fact that a representative from the installation leadership team attended board meetings. Sometimes the representative was the Garrison Commander and sometimes it was a senior official from the Commanding General's staff. Board discussions on issues such as funding, student growth rates, facilities, student achievement, staffing considerations, services for special needs students and many other topics were enriched exponentially with the installation representative engaged in the conversations.

Hosting quarterly superintendent round table meetings is an excellent way to communicate with multiple superintendents on issues of importance to military family members. Acting as a host allows the installation to structure the agenda, to showcase the installation and to address in a collaborative way issues of importance to military families. Allowing staff the opportunity to hear from installation leadership is very important. Staff are always appreciative of the fact that the installation cares enough about the school district to schedule time to speak at one of their events.

The notion of holding an annual summit is an excellent concept and could be structured with a time where the installation leadership speaks to those in attendance. The common thread which runs through any effort aimed at enhancing local relationship is communication. **Anything that fosters communication between the school district and installation is a step in the right direction.**

Killeen Independent School District is the largest Local Education Agency serving the Fort Hood area.

Understanding School District Organization

Best Practices

Dr. Bill Harrison, Former Superintendent, Cumberland County Schools, Fayetteville, NC

The Garrison Commanders at Fort Bragg held quarterly meetings with the superintendents of school systems serving the post. The meetings were informative and productive and solidified the relationship between the post and the school systems. Each superintendent provided an update on their system.

At each meeting one of the school systems would provide a presentation on "best practices" in serving military children. In addition, the Garrison Commander would share resources available through the Army and bring in outside resources from time to time.

As the superintendent of a system serving approximately 16,000 military students, the Commander and I met individually on a frequent basis. In my mind, the best practice is frequent face to face communication.

Cumberland County Public Schools is the major Local Education Agency serving the Fort Bragg area.

Charter Schools

Charter schools are public schools established by parent groups, communities, universities or organizations to fulfill specific needs, serve special populations or adhere to special curricula or instructional practices. They receive public funding and support and are chartered to operate via a performance agreement. The agreement sets forth the mission, program, student population and methods of evaluation and assessment for the school.

The advantage is that charters are freed from certain school district regulations and may enroll students from anywhere in a district. Over 3,000 charter schools have been established since the early 1990s and are authorized in all but eight states (Alabama, Kentucky, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Vermont and West Virginia) as of early 2015.

Currently, there are eight charter schools active on military installations, with additional installations examining the possibility:

- Jacksonville Lighthouse Charter School: Flightline Upper Academy, Little Rock Air Force Base (AFB), Arkansas
- Sonoran Science Academy Davis-Monthan, Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona
- Manzanita Public Charter School, Vandenberg AFB, California
- Wheatland Charter Academy, Beale AFB, California
- Sigsbee Charter School, Naval Air Station Key West, Florida
- LEARN 6 North Chicago, Naval Station Great Lakes, Illinois
- Belle Chasse Academy, Naval Air Station/Joint Reserve Station New Orleans, Louisiana
- Imagine Andrews Public Charter School, Joint Base Andrews-Naval Air Facility, Maryland

Questions to Ask

- Which of the surrounding public school districts serves the largest number of military children? What relationship do the district leaders have with the military installation? What about the smaller districts? How do districts work together around military student issues?
- Who is the regional expert on Military Impact Aid? How, as a leader, can you influence comprehensive completion and submission of Impact Aid forms?
- Which charter, private and parochial schools serve military children here? How are they doing? What impact do they have on the academic community?
- What do you need to know about school financing in this area? Which school bond issues or other financial concerns require your attention?

Things to Do

- Maintain close communication with the military installation School Liaison Officer, the Board of Education and the Superintendent
- Reach out to the Superintendent to begin (or continue) the process of a partnership among installation, community and school district(s) leadership.

Resources for You

From the Military Child Education Coalition – www.MilitaryChild.org
Program Descriptions can be found in Appendix B

- Professional Development Courses, In-Person & Online
- Student 2 Student® (S2S) Programs
- Junior Student 2 Student® (JS2S) Programs
- Elementary Student 2 Student™ (eS2S) Programs
- SchoolQuest™ – **www.schoolquest.org**
- Homeroom – **www.homeroom.militarychild.org**
- *On the Move®* magazine
- Military Student Transition Consultants™ (MSTC)
- *Research Report for the US Army: Education of the Military Child in the 21st Century* (MCEC) **www.militarychild.org/emc21-report**
- *Charter School Information for Military-Connected Families* (MCEC) **www.militarychild.org/public/upload/files/BR_Charter_School_Info_for_Mil_Fam.pdf**

School Liaison Officers (SLO) – *contact the military installation*

Future of Children: Military Children and Families
http://futureofchildren.org/futureofchildren/publications/docs/23_02_FullJournal.pdf

DoDEA (Department of Defense Education Activity – www.dodea.edu

National Association of Federally Impacted Schools – www.nafisdc.org

Military Impacted Schools Association – www.militaryimpactedschoolsassociation.org

CHAPTER 4

School Organization

"Virtually all school districts educate a child whose parent or guardian is serving in our Armed Forces, whether stationed here or abroad and whether on Active Duty or in the National Guard or Reserves. Of the more than 1.2 million school-age children of service men and women, more than 80 percent attend public schools. We want all military-connected school children to have an equal and fair opportunity for academic success. This requires that those individuals who make up our Nation's educational system – our teachers, principals, school nurses, coaches and counselors – understand the unique situations the children of our service members experience."

Secretary of Education Arne Duncan[16]

School Organization

Critical to an understanding of the U.S. education system is a basic overview of how districts and schools are organized. Most schools follow a traditional structure, with elementary schools organized by grade level and students promoted to the next grade level through a combination of skill and knowledge acquisition, combined with chronological age. Middle schools (or junior high schools in some districts) combine student grade level grouping with specialized and elective courses. Most high schools follow a traditional model, with students identified by grade level for graduation tracking. A core curriculum exists that meets the state's minimum requirements for graduation, and each student's academic plan will include elective courses to match that student's needs and future plans.

Most school districts also include the following programs. Please note that Special Education programs are covered in chapter 5.

Specialized Academic Programs and Honors Programs

Schools at all grade levels may have opportunities for students with special interests and skills, to include STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math), Arts or Language programs. Entry into these programs may be either by choice or selection. It may include elective time with enhanced specialized study, or it may be a comprehensive specialized curriculum. In some schools, there are courses designated as "Honor" courses that challenge students beyond the regular curriculum offerings. These should not, however, be confused with AP courses that offer a certified curriculum and testing that can be evaluated by colleges for credit or placement. Advantages of specialized and Honors programs include:

- Focus on a student's individual interests and talents
- Opportunity for a student to prepare for advanced studies at the high school or college levels

Advanced Placement Courses

Created by the College Board, AP courses are a series of college-level courses and end-of-course exams offered in high schools. Each course must meet criteria set by the College Board in order to be designated as AP, and college placement and credit may be awarded to students who achieve certain high scores on the end-of-course exams. The number and variety of AP courses offered in any high school is dependent on the size of the school and the expertise of the faculty. In some districts, students have the opportunity to travel to other campuses to take advantage of some AP courses that are not offered on their own campuses. Advantages include:

- Enhanced studies in specific fields within the high school environment
- The possibility of advanced placement and credit in college courses. Please note that college credit is not guaranteed in every instance.

16 www.ed.gov/veterans-and-military-families

International Baccalaureate Programme (IB)

As the name implies, this highly rigorous academic program of study is offered all over the world and has primary (elementary), middle and high school components. The authorizing agency, headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, sets high standards for the IB designation, and programs are found only in select locations. Admission at any level is selective. For more information, please see: **www.ibo.org**. Program advantages include:

- Well-respected and highly sought curriculum – excellent for college admissions purposes
- It is possible to transfer from one IB school to another, an advantage for mobile students.

Dual Credit & Concurrent Enrollment Courses

Dual credit allows eligible high school students in public, private or home schools to simultaneously enroll in certain college courses which may be offered at the college, virtually or on the high school campus. The credits students earn will be used toward high school graduation and are also acceptable toward a college associate or baccalaureate degree or technical certificate.

Concurrent Enrollment allows high school students to take college courses that offer college credit only. Permission is normally required in the form of an articulation agreement between the high school and the college(s). These increasingly popular academic options for students who qualify offer the advantages of:

- College-level education at the high school level
- Studies in a college environment, meeting college expectations
- The accumulation of college credits prior to high school graduation

English as a Second Language (ESL) or English Language Learner (ELL) programs

Programs are designed to provide non-English speaking students both English language proficiency and academic content/skill acquisition. Programs are either in self-contained classrooms or integrated into the regular classroom, with trained teachers or aides. The goal is that every student will thrive in an English-only classroom at his or her grade level.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs & Schools

With the college and career ready (CCR) focus of the past few years, career and technical programs have regained the spotlight as pathways to post-secondary careers, education or training and credentialing. Although much emphasis has been placed on readiness for a four-year college education, the CCR continuum includes career exploration from a young age, along with the opportunity for in-school course work, cooperative work experiences, internships and possible specialized training at a CTE Center. Often multiple high schools in a district or region send students to these Centers.

"America is creating millions of jobs.** But, too many of these jobs go unfilled – **five million** to be exact. At the same time, there are roughly 8.7 million Americans looking for work and 24 million front-line workers who could fill these jobs, **if they had the skills or were given the opportunity."[17]

America's job market has not been focused on the skills necessary for jobs that are currently seeking staff. In a June 2014 article, *Forbes Magazine* identified the following as the hardest to fill jobs, based on a workforce that does not match the required skills.[18]

1. Skilled Trade Workers
2. Restaurant and Hotel Staff
3. Sales Representatives
4. Teachers
5. Drivers
6. Accounting and Finance Staff
7. Laborers
8. IT Staff
9. Engineers
10. Nurses

17 www.ed.gov/edblogs/ovae/2015/01/

18 www.forbes.com/sites/kathryndill/2014/06/02/the-10-hardest-jobs-to-fill-in-2014/

School Choice

The term school choice typically describes the opportunity for parents to make educational choices for their children that are outside of their typical school assignments. These may be intra-district, including magnet schools, charter schools, honors programs and other options within the district. Generally, public school choice within a district is a matter of school board policy and administrative design and is available to any student who qualifies.

Inter-district choice includes school in other districts, private schools or dual enrollment. It requires public school funds to be spent (through tax credits, vouchers or other financing options) for non-district education. This is a controversial topic and has been hotly debated for many decades. Despite the controversy, some states have approved legislation that allows school choice in a variety of ways. This can be an advantage to mobile military and veteran children in that they can find placement in a school or program that best aligns with their recent successful academic experiences. But there are cautions raised as well, since school enrollment dates may be at times that don't coincide with students' moving dates. Careful consideration of all the options is recommended.

Transitional Labs

Schools with a focus on their mobile student populations may have created transition labs or classrooms, designed to assist new students in catching up with course content or credits that they lack due to a move. The goal is to ease transition into the new school and allow students to be promoted or graduate on time. Even in the absence of a specific program, most schools will accommodate students as they attempt to gain parity with their new classmates. This may include additional tutoring, summer school or evening programs.

Before and After School Programs

Most school districts run or contract with programs for the time before and after school. In some cases, these are extended daycare programs for students whose parents are not home at the end of the school day. In other districts, the programs are filled with academic content and are designed to provide enrichment. In most cases, transportation is provided between the school and program, if the program is not housed in the local school.

Summer School & Camps

Students often have a wide variety of public school summer school programs available, some funded and some for a fee. In most areas, there are also a wealth of private camps and programs available for vacation periods, including sometimes winter and spring breaks. These offer students enrichment or remediation, as required.

Magnet Schools

Magnet schools offer specialized instruction and are designed to attract a diverse student body from throughout a school district, multiple districts or even a state. They promote equal access to high quality and specialized programs, and the name "magnet" refers to their ability to draw students from a wide area. Magnets are most often organized around a particular academic discipline or area of study. Admission is most often by lottery or selection and dependent on the program and its intent.

Home Schools[19]

The resurgence of home schooling is now a couple of decades old, and as many as 2 million students are involved annually. It is legally recognized and regulated in all states, and home school graduates are recognized as bona fide graduates and may generally be admitted to post-secondary institutions. Parents are normally the primary teachers, and there are an extensive number of support services, materials, virtual courses, home school groups and resources to assist parents and children.

It is difficult to determine the percentage of military-connected families who home school, but various studies since 2001 have estimated that between five and ten percent choose to school their children at home at one time or another. This is estimated to be considerably greater than non-military families. The two primary reasons given for considering the home school option for military children were fear of the unknown in the various school districts where they may live and concern about a possible mid-year move, along with establishing consistency during frequent military moves.

19 Information from the Military Child Education Coalition, *Education Of The Military Child In The 21st Century: Current Dimensions of Educational Experiences for Army Children*, 2012

Online Learning

There are multiple options for students – particularly at the high school level – to complete coursework and gain credit towards graduation online. All states have some provision for online courses and graduation, and some states and districts have even mandated that students experience at least one online course prior to graduation.

Virtual learning works for many students who are unable to physically attend school for any reason, and it is also an option for students who need to catch up or refine content areas following a move. Many families who home school have used online courses to supplement their existing curriculum. Because of the proliferation of available profit and not-for-profit virtual programs, students are wise to check their state's and district's guidelines for policies and regulations.

Implications for Transition

"...So we make sure we provide many opportunities if they need to catch up on anything. If it's just a transfer from a different school, then they will have transfer grades, and we will try to match those classes as best we can. When that doesn't fit perfectly, that's when you become the creative problem solver."

High School Administrator, MCEC EMC-21 Study, 2012

As a military or community leader, your understanding about the organization and influence of the school districts in your area is key to providing a system of support for the well-being of your military families. As with anything, you need to understand the structure before you can appreciate the successes, challenges and problems of the community. While the options listed in this chapter may be overwhelming, the opportunities are great!

As a closing thought, please consider the Correlates below. The Association of Effective Schools, Inc. believes that good schools share certain characteristics, such as the Seven Correlates of Effective Schools.[20]

Seven Correlates of Effective Schools

1. **Clear School Mission:**
   Understanding, commitment and accountability.
2. **High Expectations for Success:**
   Staff can help students attain content mastery.
3. **Instructional Leadership:**
   The principal is the instructional leader.
4. **Frequent Monitoring of Student Progress:**
   Results based on a variety of assessments.
5. **Opportunity to Learn and Student Time on Task:**
   Classroom time is allocated to essential knowledge and skills.
6. **Safe and Orderly Environment:**
   Business-like atmosphere conducive to teaching and learning.
7. **Home-School Relations:**
   Parents play an important role in school mission accomplishment.

20 http://www.mes.org/correlates

The Give and Take of Relationships

Colonel Rebecca Porter, Ph.D.
U.S. Army

Developing and nurturing relationships with local school officials is key. And the time to build those relationships is now – before you think you need them.

Consider the friends you have relied on at different times in your life. You did not become friends with them when you needed something, but rather had been developing a relationship for some period of time. Perhaps the friend needed to call on you for assistance in the past, and you gladly helped them out. Now those same friends are prepared and willing to return the favor if you ever need it.

This sort of give and take is the nature of friendships, relationships and communities. It may not be that military leadership ever needs something tangible from the school district (or vice versa), but perhaps the military-connected students in the school could benefit from school personnel having an understanding of the military, the local installation or the demands that the mission puts on military children. In such cases, an ongoing relationship with regular communication between the installation and the school system can make all the difference in getting military-connected students' education needs met.

No matter how you accomplish it, building a relationship between installation leadership and school system officials – with regular and open communication – is a key to enhancing the education of military-connected children.

Questions to Ask

- How are schools organized in your community (e.g., magnet, alternative, International Baccalaureate, career and technical)? What options are available for students who desire enhanced learning (e.g., AP courses, middle school Algebra, Career & Technical courses)?
- What do you know about home schooling in this area? What support programs exist for them?
- How do your local schools support the transition challenges for their mobile students?
- What type of informed and equitable options for school choice are available for parents?
- How do your local schools provide professional development opportunities for staff members so that they are adequately prepared to work with military-connected children?

Things to Do

- Determine what programs are available at the schools in your area. Where do you find Dual Credit programs, magnet schools and others?
- Attend School Board meetings and advocate for a senior uniformed presence as an ex officio member of the School Board.
- Ask questions about and encourage agenda items on military-connected students at forums like the local Chamber's Military Affairs Committee or the Education committees for AUSA/AFA/ Navy League in your community.

Resources for You

From the Military Child Education Coalition – www.MilitaryChild.org
Program Descriptions can be found in Appendix B

- Professional Development Courses, In-Person & Online
- Student 2 Student® (S2S) Programs
- Junior Student 2 Student® (JS2S) Programs
- Elementary Student 2 Student™ (eS2S) Programs
- SchoolQuest™ – **www.schoolquest.org**
- Homeroom – **www.homeroom.militarychild.org**
- Parent to Parent™ Programs
- *On the Move*® magazine
- Military Student Transition Consultants™ (MSTC)
- *A Policy Leaders' Guide to Military Children* (MCEC) **www.militarychild.org/public/upload/files/LegislativeGuide2012.pdf**
- *Research Report for the US Army: Education of the Military Child in the 21st Century* (MCEC) – **www.militarychild.org/emc21-report**
- *Charter School Information for Military-Connected Families* (MCEC) **www.militarychild.org/public/upload/files/BR_Charter_School_Info_for_Mil_Fam.pdf**

School Liaison Officers (SLO) – *contact the military installation*

Future of Children: Military Children and Families
futureofchildren.org/futureofchildren/publications/docs/23_02_FullJournal.pdf

Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) – www.dodea.edu

AP Courses (the College Board)
apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/public/courses/index.html

International Baccalaureate Program – www.ibo.org

Career Technical Education – www.acteonline.org

Alliance for School Choice – www.allianceforschoolchoice.org

CHAPTER 5

Special Education and Gifted Programs

"Anything that can help the children (with special needs) move from one state to another to let them transition into these special programs – anything that would allow that continuity – would be huge between the states. Some sort of agreement that would allow that child to continue, that would really be helpful."

Teacher

A student with special needs means that transitions require more attention and advance preparation for the entire family. This chapter looks at both the regulations and ways that you as a military or community leader can assist in alleviating many of the potential pitfalls.

Special Education

There are many categories of disability that may be classified as eligible for special education services, as listed below:

Examples of Special Needs that Might Qualify a Student for School-Provided Services[21]

Category	Special Need	Examples of Conditions
Physical Disabilities	Limited basic activities such as walking, lifting, climbing stairs	Muscular Dystrophy, Cystic Fibrosis, Epilepsy, Spina Bifida
Emotional or Behavioral Disabilities	Adversely affect educational performance and interpersonal relationships	Bipolar Disorder, Aggressive Conduct Disorder
Intellectual Disabilities	Limit the capacity for self-care, communication, or learning	Down Syndrome
Autism Spectrum Disorders	Affects the child's ability to use language and relate to others	Autism, Asperger's Syndrome, Rett syndrome
Learning Disabilities	Limits the capacity for learning academic skills	Dyscalculia (difficulty understanding and using math concepts and symbols), Dyslexia (difficulty learning to read or interpret words, letters or other symbols), Central Auditory Processing Disorder
Other Health Impairments	Limited strength, vitality or alertness due to chronic or acute health problems	Asthma, Sickle Cell Anemia, Hemophilia, Diabetes

21 Military Child Education Coalition, Education Of The Military Child In The 21 St Century: Current Dimensions of Educational Experiences for Army Children, 2012

Laws Governing Special Education

Two federal laws deal with the right to a public education for children with special needs:

- **The Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA):** This law was passed to ensure that states and public agencies (such as schools) provide a free and appropriate education (FAPE) to all children identified with disabilities. It allows for identified students' academic plans to be modified in ways such as assigning material at the student's level and adapting teaching to the learner's style for children with disabilities.
- **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504):** Some children with disabilities do not qualify for modified services under IDEA but may qualify for services under Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act. These children require accommodations such as use of technology or a set of textbooks kept at home in order for them to be successful in their studies.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, in school year 2010-11,[22] 13 percent of all public school students age 3 to 21 – the ages mandated by the IDEA – were served in special education programs. The most common disabilities are specific learning disabilities, speech or language impairments, intellectual disabilities and emotional disturbance.

Determining the Need for Special Education

Some children are easily identified as candidates for special needs services or accommodations because of early-diagnosed conditions that are intellectual, developmental or physical.

The majority of students, however, will require referrals for evaluation from parents or educators, or they will be identified through the Response to Intervention (RTI) process. RTI is a comprehensive evaluation of all students, beginning in the early grades. Struggling learners are presented with increasing levels of support interventions to help improve learning. If students are determined to have significant learning challenges, they are referred for complete evaluations and determination for special education services under IDEA.

Documentation for Special Education

There are two types of written plans which document the requirements for each child under IDEA and Section 504:

- The **Individualized Educational Program (IEP)** is a legal document which, in part, sets forth the duties and responsibilities of the school district and staff regarding students with disabilities. The IEP addresses the individual remediation and assistance needed by each student, as well as any accommodations that need to be made for state-mandated assessments. This document has legal status and must be witnessed and signed by appropriate parties and reviewed on a specific schedule.
- The **504** plan is considered a civil-rights protection and requires the school to provide accommodations that allow students with disabilities to participate freely in school and extracurricular activities. It is separate from the IEP and addresses different needs. The 504 plan is meant for the regular classroom and is overseen by the classroom teacher.

22 http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=64

"...(we need) some type of system for consistency so you're not having to re-establish services. As far as my younger child's IEP, you know, its half way thru the year when we're finally back on track."

Parent

"Often our difficulty comes when the students received special education services, and then that doesn't always match up with what we have available."

Administrator

"...he's a special education student and does not do changes well at all."

Parent

Implications for Transition

Despite federal policy and regulations, there are differences in state policies and district services, and parents may see this as a lack of consistency of services for students. Federal statute outlines specific and minimum requirements for the development and implementation of an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Programs, practices, formats and procedures, however, vary from state to state. Some receiving school districts may, because of inadequate funding or resources, be unable to provide the services outlined in the original IEP so that students may not experience the same services at the new location. In that case, the school must follow its established procedure to respond to the student's need according to state policy and local capability.

It is imperative that parents – as the primary advocates for their children – ensure at least two actions when moving with their children with special needs:

- The timely and accurate transfer of records. Parents should request the official transcripts and IEP but should hand carry an unofficial copy with them when they arrive at the new school.
- Communication…communication… communication. Knowing that the complex nuances of a special needs situation are often unspoken, it is critical that parents contact the new school office as early as possible prior to the move. And, keep communicating to make sure that the child's needs are being met.
- A third action for parents is to prepare themselves with as much information as possible to advocate for their children. Wrightslaw and STOMP (Specialized Training of Military Parents) are both well-respected sources of information. In addition each state has advocacy support groups, and each district has a process for creating the most effective educational plan for each child. Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) personnel on military installations and state special education blogs, boards and websites will provide references.

One is not the other

The EFMP (Exceptional Family Member Program) is a military asset that addresses the needs of family members with special needs throughout the transition process and then offers support in their new location. Its focus is on resources that the family member may need in accessing non-emergency medical care and other support services. **It is NOT an access point to the school-based special needs programs**, although most EFMP personnel will be able to guide school-age family members to the proper connections in the school districts.

Many transition issues for children with disabilities have been addressed in the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children that is discussed in chapter 7. There will continue to be discrepancies in services between states, but awareness has been raised, and that contributes to some easing of the transition burden.

Gifted Education

"The most enjoyable part was being with other students who actually enjoy being in school, enjoy doing their work and like to learn. Being with a group of other guys who actually care about school work is really great. We do more difficult work and it's actually a challenge. Some of my less difficult courses actually get boring because they're easy, so it [being in the gifted program] keeps me challenged and interested."

Student

Consideration needs also be given to those students who are identified as "gifted." The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) estimates that there are between three and five million children who qualify; that's somewhere between six and ten percent of the total student population.[23] This population is infinitely more difficult to define than those with disabilities because there are no nationwide or even state-wide standards for identification. Each school district makes a determination about which and how many students it is able to service within its programs based on its definitions, philosophy and resources.

A quick overview of gifted definitions, authority, mandates and funding across the United States[24] shows that there is no consistency in how a child may be identified as gifted and whether there are funded programs in place to support that identification. Programs range from full-day placements in special schools to one-hour classroom pullouts. In some states there is little or no funding for gifted programs.

Implications for Transition

Because there is no nationwide definition of giftedness and because each state addresses the topic in different ways, it is difficult for students to expect identical (or even similar) services in a new location. With the exception of a few states (Alabama, Florida, Kansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Tennessee and West Virginia) that require IEPs (Individualized Education Programs) for gifted students, there is no nationally accepted document that verifies a student's eligibility for services. In addition, states and districts each structure their gifted programs in unique ways that suit the philosophy and resources of their districts but don't necessarily align with other schools or districts.

The MCEC recommends that students who are leaving gifted programs make contact with the new district as early as possible and bring with them documentation supporting their child's identification and the services they've been receiving. The Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children addresses this issue in its section on class placement. Please note the chart and information block on the next page that include transition information for children with both special needs and gifted requirements.

23 www.nagc.org/resources-publications/resources/gifted-education-us

24 www.nagc.org/resources-publications/gifted-state

The Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children Addresses Special and Gifted Education through the Following Regulations[25]

Course Placement

Receiving school shall honor placement based on student's previous enrollment and/or educational assessments. The receiving school is not barred from performing subsequent evaluations to ensure appropriate placement and continued enrollment.

Educational Program Placement

Receiving school shall honor placement based on current educational assessments. Receiving school is not barred from performing subsequent evaluations to ensure appropriate placement.

Special Education Services

- Comply with IDEA and provide comparable services based on his/her current IEP.
- Comply with Section 504 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Make reasonable accommodations and modifications of incoming students with disabilities.
- Receiving school is not barred from performing subsequent evaluations to ensure appropriate placement.

Placement Flexibility

LEA (Local Education Agencies) officials shall have flexibility in waiving course/program prerequisites.

A Quick Overview of Considerations for both Special Education & Gifted Programs[26]

- Students with special needs face enhanced challenges as they transition and need predictability and consistency.
- Children may not receive the same services as they move from location to location.
- Educators are concerned that the delay in receiving records may result in delayed initiation of services and can cause students to lose learning time.
- Parents are concerned about social as well as academic effects of mobility on the student with special needs.
- Effective communication between parents and school personnel can ease the transition for children with special needs.
- There is inconsistency in programs and services available to the student with special needs from state-to-state and district-to-district.

Questions to Ask

- Who in your community are the experts in working with students with special needs?
- How are the local schools addressing transition issues for children with special needs? Students who are identified as gifted? What can you do to support them?
- How are gifted students identified and served in the schools in your community?
- Who are the EFMP (Exceptional Family Member Program) professionals on the military installation?
- What can you do to help ease the transitional challenges for families with children with special needs?
- How do your local schools provide professional development opportunities for staff members so that they are adequately prepared to work with military-connected children?

25 Excerpted from the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children – www.mic3.net

26 Military Child Education Coalition, Education Of The Military Child In The 21 St Century: Current Dimensions of Educational Experiences for Army Children, 2012.

Things to Do

- Determine what additional support is needed in the community to ease special needs transition challenges. Verify that all stakeholders are working together to ensure that the child is at the center of the conversation.
- Form strong relationships with the school district leaders in the community to ensure that families in your community have the resources needed to make successful transitions with their children with special needs.

Resources for You

From the Military Child Education Coalition – www.MilitaryChild.org
Program Descriptions can be found in Appendix B

- Professional Development Courses, In-Person & Online
- Student 2 Student® (S2S) Programs
- Junior Student 2 Student® (JS2S) Programs
- Elementary Student 2 Student™ (eS2S) Programs
- SchoolQuest™ – **www.schoolquest.org**
- Homeroom – **www.homeroom.militarychild.org**
- Parent to Parent™ Programs
- *On the Move®* magazine
- Military Student Transition Consultants™ (MSTC)
- *Special Needs & the Military Child* (MCEC)
  www.militarychild.org/public/upload/files/OTMSpecialNeedsInsertFinal.pdf
- *Research Report for the US Army: Education of the Military Child in the 21st Century* (MCEC)
  www.militarychild.org/emc21-report

School Liaison Officers (SLO) – *contact the military installation*

Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children – www.mic3.net

Future of Children: Military Children and Families
futureofchildren.org/futureofchildren/publications/docs/23_02_FullJournal.pdf

National Association for Gifted Children – www.nagc.org

Wrightslaw (advocacy & law for special education) – www.wrightslaw.com

STOMP (Specialized Training for Military Parents)
wapave.org/programs/specialized-training-military-parents-stomp/

EFMP (Exceptional Military Family Program Overview through MilitaryOneSource
www.militaryonesource.mil/efmp/overview?content_id=269174

The Complete Guide to Special Education: Expert Advice on Evaluations, IEPs and Helping Kids Succeed. Linda Wilmshurst and Alan W. Brue. Jossey-Bass: San Francisco, 2010.

CHAPTER 6

School Schedules and Calendars

"I've worked in a high school, and when somebody comes from a seven-period day to a four-by-four (a form of accelerated block schedule structured so that a student completes four 90-minute classes in one semester and four the next), you know, that's a nightmare…"

School Counselor

Chapter 2 spoke about the quest for consistent and rigorous standards across our Nation. What a boon that would be for the mobile student! In much the same way that varying state standards create a challenge for mobile students, school calendar and scheduling variables – periods, terms, semesters and year – can have a profound effect on the transition of mobile students.

School Calendars

According to the Center for Public Education, each state legislates the number of days that are required per school year. Across the Nation, academic years are between 175 and 180 days or 900 to 1000 instructional hours.[27] Within that window school calendars vary widely. The MCEC 2012 EMC-21 study found the following variances in participating schools in representative military communities:[28]

- Schools started anywhere from August 5 to September 7 and ended between May 20 and June 10 in one academic year.
- School semester breaks occurred either before the winter break or afterward, as early as December 17 and as late as January 21.
- Two districts had some (but not all) schools that were on a year-round calendar that began in mid-July and ended in early June.

"We get students from everywhere. As a matter of fact, I just did enroll a young lady yesterday who is on a year-round school calendar, which means we have to assimilate her the best that we can into second quarter, because she wasn't anywhere near ready to be second quarter at her (previous) school."

Administrator

Implications for Transition

- **Differences in Calendars:** Different districts observe different start dates, end dates and marking periods. These dates may differ, even within a district. These structures can be a major stumbling block to a smooth transition for students who move from schools with different calendars.
- **When a Family Moves:** Ideally, families move during the summer vacation, but there are many times when that is not possible. The next best time seems to be over the long, winter holiday break. This option, however, may be problematic for the high school student when there is variation in when the semester break occurs.
- **High Stakes Testing:** To some degree, required testing drives the schools' calendars. Transition during testing periods – which vary from state to state – can be problematic for students at every level.

27 www.centerforpubliceducation.org/Main-Menu/Organizing-a-school/Time-in-school-How-does-the-US-compare

28 Military Child Education Coalition, *Education of the Military Child in the 21st Century: Current Dimensions of Educational Experiences for Army Children*, 2012

- **Extracurricular Activities:** School calendars affect the start dates of school sports, music programs and other key activities for students.
- **Dual or Concurrent Coursework:** Students who take dual credit or concurrent enrollment college courses at the high school level may find that enrollment and start dates for those courses are different from the district's regular calendar.
- **Special Needs:** As described in Chapter 5, students with special needs may require additional transition time in order to assure that records and any unique programs can be accommodated.
- **International Moves:** Students transferring from international schools may need additional planning time, as these moves are less common for most school districts and may require translation services. Please note that this not the case with transfers from overseas Department of Defense (DoDEA) schools.

School Schedules

At the elementary and middle school level, students who transition may find academic day-to-day schedules that are different from their previous schools. In most cases, discrepancies between the previous and new school schedules will not have negative implications for students in these grades.

At the high school level, school day scheduling can range from a traditional schedule where students attend classes with all subjects taught every day for a full year to a variety of block scheduling options, including classes that are taught every other day for a school year, or every day for a semester. Differences between sending and receiving school's schedules can affect a secondary student's credits dramatically.

"You have to match what they come with, with what you have. And sometimes making a schedule work for that student is a challenge. But we haven't had one that we haven't been able to do yet. And so we don't give up easily. We work with situations."

Administrator

"This is a big problem. Some schools are block schedules, and, if a student moves during the semester from a block schedule to us - we're regular seven-hour schedule – they're going to lose a credit and a half off their high school transcript. And there's really no way to get around it, you know. 'Cause they're taking four courses at another school, and we can't just give them credit for something they've missed twenty days of, or something like that. So we work around it. But one thing I can say, it doesn't keep them from graduating any earlier or later than what they were supposed to. They may have to go to school a couple extra hours a day their senior year, instead of being early release."

Administrator

The most common high school schedules include:

Traditional: Students take between six and eight classes per day for the entire year.

Block Schedule: Sometimes called the accelerated or four-by-four block schedule, students take four, 90-minute classes a day, every day, for one semester.

Alternating Block or Alternative Block: Students attend eight 90-minute classes, four one day and the other four on the alternating day, for the entire school year. A/B days or school colors such as Black/Gold, Red/Blue, are frequently used to identify the days.

Advantages & Disadvantages to Block Scheduling

Student & Parent Impressions		*Educator Impressions*	
Positive	**Negative**	**Positive**	**Negative**
Opportunity to take more courses in a school year	A mid-year move from a block to traditional schedule and vice versa can cause loss of credit	More time for supervised research and practice	More costs associated with staffing
More time to complete labs	Absences can result in difficulty in making up missed work	Opportunities to work with students who need to master essential skills	A traditional to/from block schedule move can cause credit loss
Fewer subjects to prepare for	Sequential skill development in courses such as math & foreign language can be disrupted	Time to get to know students	AP testing in spring can be adversely affected if class taken in the fall
More time for group projects and work	Not all teachers use a variety of activities needed to effectively implement block scheduling	Time to plan instruction and collaborate with colleagues	Each district handles students who are out of step with local scheduling in a different manner
Teachers have more time to work with students and "get to know" them	Juniors and seniors particularly impacted by a move that involves changing from block to/from traditional schedule	Extended time for group projects	Activity based learning increases cost of supplies, resources and materials

From the MCEC EMC-21 Study, 2012[29]

Implications for Transition

While a military child's move during the summer break will always be preferable at any grade level, it doesn't always happen that way. When considering course completion and credit transfer, the students who feel the greatest impact from mid-year moves will be those in 7th through 12th grade. And, all students deal with some social/emotional challenges when moving mid-year. It is imperative that military and school leaders look at all options to assist students in making those smooth transitions.

29 Military Child Education Coalition, *Education of the Military Child in the 21st Century: Current Dimensions of Educational Experiences for Army Children*, 2012

Questions to Ask

- How many different school calendars and academic schedules exist in your community (see chapter 4)?
- How do school counselors and administrators handle transition challenges?
- In what ways can military and area schools work together to create compatible calendars and schedules?

Things to Do

- Minimize potential conflicts by working to align military and school calendars as much as possible.
- Consider ways in which military leaders can help alleviate the barriers to a parent and child(ren) staying at a military installation in order to avoid a mid-year academic move.
- Work with schools to assure that they have transition support programs in place.

Resources for You

From the Military Child Education Coalition – www.MilitaryChild.org
Program Descriptions can be found in Appendix B

- Professional Development Courses, In-Person & Online
- Student 2 Student® (S2S) Programs
- Junior Student 2 Student® (JS2S) Programs
- Elementary Student 2 Student™ (eS2S) Programs
- SchoolQuest™ – **www.schoolquest.org**
- Homeroom – **www.homeroom.militarychild.org**
- Parent to Parent™ Programs
- *On the Move®* magazine
- Military Student Transition Consultants™ (MSTC)
- *Research Report for the US Army: Education of the Military Child in the 21st Century* (MCEC) **www.militarychild.org/emc21-report**

School Liaison Officers (SLO) – *contact the military installation*

Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children – www.mic3.net

CHAPTER 7

Topics Unique to Military and Veteran Populations

"We ask so much of our service members and their families, but we don't have any programs in place to study the impact that life in a military family can have on a child's education."

Senator Patty Murray, Washington

Senator Murray is speaking specifically about the lack of data regarding military-connected children and its implication in addressing long-term plans on behalf of those students. This chapter will address this and a number of military-specific topics that affect military-connected children in our Nations' schools.

The Military Student Data Identifier

"Having an identifier would allow us to understand where our military-connected children attend school, how they perform, whether they graduate and whether they choose higher education or enter the workforce. This will empower us to work together to understand effective programs and resources. This greater understanding and partnership will help us provide better support to our military-connected children and families."

General Mark A. Welsh, U.S. Air Force Chief of Staff

As articulated by Senator Murray and General Welsh above, there currently exists no reliable, consistent data on the academic well-being of students from military families. Without a nationwide military-connected student identifier, school districts cannot track these students' performance, educators cannot effectively prepare transitioning students for their new schools, and there are no performance indicators so that local districts can discover practices and processes worthy of attention and replication. The MCEC seeks a nationwide, voluntary, non-identifiable data point that would count children of the Active Duty, National Guard and the Reserves in order to monitor education success, including:

- Academic progress and proficiency
- Special and advanced program participation
- Mobility and dropout rates
- Patterns over time across state and district lines

As of early 2015, the following 15 states had adopted their own in-state military child data count: Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee and Texas. While this collected data is valuable, the MCEC continues to advocate wholeheartedly for a nationwide military student data identifier in order to gather consistent and comprehensive data.

Commanders of the military services, the Department of Defense State Liaison Office, most military family support organizations and many legislators have strongly endorsed the inclusion of this identifier in the federal reauthorization of the ESEA (Elementary and Secondary Education Act). In fact, the comprehensive final report from the Department of Defense's Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission included the military identifier as one of its 15 recommendations.

Passage would require all states to collect data in a non-identifiable manner, much as they already do for non-English speakers and other populations. At the time of this Guide's printing, the identifier had been added to the House of Representatives Committee on Education and the Workforce's version of the federal reauthorization. The MCEC and others continue to advocate in favor of its passage.

Implications for Transition

Imagine trying to run a company with only anecdotal data about your product, your distribution and your bottom line. As it currently stands, schools attempt to build systems and processes for their military and veteran-connected children based on big hearts and little valid data. It isn't difficult to consider the positive implications for school systems and individual students when accurate data helps to drive decisions.

Data Myths

Many individuals – parents, in particular – are concerned about federal intervention and possible privacy loss with the collection of a military student data identifier. While caution is important, the truth is that the recommended **data collection will not identify individual children beyond the school or district level**. Data sent to the state and the federal government will be reported by cohort (grouped in ways that make individual identification impossible).

Some school districts count the number of enrolled military children in order to collect federal Impact Aid funds (see chapter 3). Although this may appear to be a "military student data identifier," it is not because:

- the data collected is **unconnected to overall student counts, attendance and other outcomes**, and
- the majority of military children live in school districts that **do not apply for these funds.**

The Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

Starting in 2006, the Council of State Governments, working with the Department of Defense and with support from various organizations, including the Military Child Education Coalition, created the Interstate Compact. It provides for the uniform treatment of military children transferring between school districts and states. While the Compact is not exhaustive in its coverage, it does address five key issues encountered by military families: enrollment, placement, attendance, eligibility and graduation.[30]

30 www.mic3.net

In order for these policies to have the impact of law, each state legislature had to adopt the Compact individually. As of late 2014, all 50 states and the District of Columbia had adopted the Compact. The Department of Defense Schools (DoDEA) are also committed to following the Compact guidelines and related rules.

What does this mean for military families?

Military-connected children now have a nationwide set of guidelines and policies that allow them equal opportunity in areas like:

- Eligibility for enrollment in school, with flexible placement in courses and in extracurricular activities
- Kindergarten and 1st grade entry age parity, 30-day allowance on new immunizations and appropriate placement in courses with hand-carried student records
- Allowances in graduation and high-stakes testing requirements
- Specific focus on comparable services for children with special needs

As part of the Compact, the Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission (MIC3), a nationwide commission, was established. Each state appoints representation to this commission which enacts necessary rules. In addition, the Compact calls for the development of state councils in each member state. Each state council is tasked with development of its policies concerning operations and procedures within the state.

Next steps?

Now that the Compact has been adopted across the Nation, the Commission's goal is to ensure that all states and school districts have plans in place to implement its regulations.

Importance of Extracurricular Activities for Military-Connected Children

"We find that participating in extracurricular activities helps the academic side. Involved students are happier, adjust better and make social contacts faster."

Educator

Studies by the National Center for Education Statistics and the College Board have shown that participation in extracurricular activities has the advantage of increasing student engagement and providing valuable college admissions information. The MCEC 2012 EMC-21 study cited multiple sources in confirming that students benefit from extracurricular activities, whether they are athletic, academic/special interest-related, community (e.g., Scouts and church) or volunteer programs. It confirmed that students involved in extracurricular activities generally have higher grade point averages, post-secondary aspirations and a greater high school completion rate than those who do not participate.

Like all students – and maybe more so because of consistent transition – military students can benefit as follows:

- Learn to exert control and express identity outside the classroom
- Increase their network of peers and connections to adults
- Develop leadership opportunities
- Learn to set and achieve goals
- Learn to compete fairly, recover from defeat and peacefully resolve disputes[31]

31 http://nces.ed.gov/pubs95/web/95741.asp

"My son plays football and wrestles. He's had the benefit of having many different coaches with many different styles and objectives, so he is becoming a better, well-rounded athlete as a result. Rather than looking at it like, 'That's not how we used to do it. This place stinks,' he thinks of it as an opportunity to enhance his ability as an athlete."

Parent

School Liaison Officers

School Liaison Officers, or SLOs as they are sometimes called, provide a valuable resource for military parents and students. Present at almost every military installation in the U.S. and overseas for each of the military services and the Army Reserve, they work to connect military parents and students with school information, resources and people. Their role is to help ease transition issues for both incoming and outgoing students. Please note that each state's National Guard Headquarters has Child & Youth personnel who may also perform some of the same roles identified below.

The SLOs work with community members, military and civilian organizations, garrison and school staff, parents and students. They meet with internal and external customers to help them make sense of processes and connections that can often be overwhelming.

Their goals are to:

- Identify barriers to academic success and develop solutions;
- Promote parental involvement and educate local communities and schools regarding the needs of military children;
- Develop and coordinate partnerships in education; and
- Provide parents with the tools they need to overcome obstacles to education that stem from the military lifestyle.

School Liaison Officers' roles and responsibilities include:

- School transition and deployment support
- Partnership between the installation and the schools
- Garrison and school communications
- Home school linkages
- Post-secondary preparation opportunities

A list of School Liaison Officer contacts can be found on the Department of Defense Education Activity's (DoDEA) website: **www.dodea.edu/Partnership/schoolLiaisonOfficers.cfm**.

32 Military Child Education Coalition, *Education of the Military Child in the 21st Century: Current Dimensions of Educational Experiences for Army Children*, 2012.

Findings about the Importance of Extracurricular Activities[32]

- Eligibility for students to participate in extracurricular activities may be governed by state associations which set rules and procedures. These rules may limit the flexibility of the local district to work with mobile students when they enroll. Since December of 2014, all 50 states have adopted the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children (see page 1 of this chapter) which offers some options for transitioning students.
- Most schools are aware that extracurricular activities are important to children and work hard to provide the mobile student with the opportunity to participate and exercise flexibility by reserving slots and using waivers in competitive activities for mobile students, for example, on athletics teams, cheerleading squads or performance teams.
- Students may transfer from their sending school into some nationally-based activities at their receiving school. National Honor Society is an example of this type of activity.
- Some activities such as band or choir focus on a skill or talent and present students with a broad and instant group of friends with similar interests. Students and parents are aware of this and speak about its importance.
- Parents and students look to extracurricular activities as a means to obtain scholarships, whether directly as a result of participation in an activity or indirectly to show that the student is "well-rounded."

Extracurricular activities build character, connect students socially with peers and provide the opportunity for relationships with adults.

Parental Involvement Eases Transition

Cindy Simerly, Parent and Military Spouse

Transition issues top my list of challenges as a parent of two military-connected kids who handled moving and changing schools very differently. Wondering whether they'd be ahead in certain subjects or behind in others, and concerns about testing for special programs arose with each move.

One way I reduced some of the stress was to contact the school district ahead of time to learn more about policies and practices covering academic readiness, requirements for programs like Gifted Education and participation in extracurricular activities like band or athletics. When possible, I asked for contact information for department heads, coaches or band directors.

My goal was to ask questions that would enable me to better prepare my kids for their new school; whether that meant gathering specific paperwork ahead of time, or requesting materials from the school we were leaving in order to expedite placement in classrooms or on sports fields. My "recon" also included sources on the installation itself.

Summer brings an influx of new service members and their families and most installations recognize newcomers will be looking for information about the community. Newcomer gatherings are a great resource to meet other families and installation representatives and to learn about local opportunities.

Through each move, I found programs and people willing to help, but showing initiative definitely made the process smoother. As parents, we know and understand our children well, and using that knowledge to ease transitions goes a long way with administrators, teachers and other personnel who are there to help.

Military Student Transition Consultants (MSTC)

In order to address school-related challenges in school districts with significant military-connected student populations or special needs, the MCEC developed the Military Student Transition Consultant (MSTC) Program. These consultants are full-time, highly specialized education professionals embedded within their school districts. MSTCs work directly with children, parents and school personnel on a daily basis. MSTCs serve as expert "navigators" and advocate for military-connected students and their families. They help decrease the turbulence in family life, building resiliency in students so that they can more successfully cope and overcome the unique challenges they face and meet their academic goals. The MSTCs also use their skills to help any student who the district identifies as requiring school transition support.

The MSTCs provide an ongoing continuum of care to help students and parents traverse the often-confusing paths associated with school transitions. This immediate and ongoing care is accomplished by addressing challenges and needs, facilitating connections to school, installation and community resources, and educating others on the unique needs of military-connected students and how to provide the best support possible.

To see the school districts where MSTCs are currently located, go to **www.militarychild.org/parents-and-students/programs/mcec-military-student-transition-consultants-mstc**. The MCEC goal is to develop more programs in military impacted communities.

Please note: Some states (North Carolina, as an example) and communities have created their own military transition specialists who are embedded in school districts or within the state department of education. Although their titles and funding are different from the MSTCs, their goals are similar.

Questions to Ask

- Which school, community and military leaders in this area are familiar with and implementing the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children? Who serves on the state's Commission? What work might be done to ensure that the Compact regulations are known and enforced in all the community school districts?
- What type of military student-identifier, if any, is used in your state? What work is being done to advocate for a nationwide military student data identifier?
- What systems are in place to allow military-connected children access to extracurricular activities in the schools, particularly when students move at times that are not aligned with the normal "try-out" schedule?

Things to Do

- Work with the governor's education representative to ensure that the state's Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children Commission is at full capacity and working on behalf of the military students in the state.
- Encourage your schools to identify the military and veteran-connected children in their populations. This may be through a local or state count.
- If appropriate, consider ways in which you might advocate for a nationwide military child data identifier.

Resources for You

From the Military Child Education Coalition – www.MilitaryChild.org
Program Descriptions can be found in Appendix B

- Professional Development Courses, In-Person & Online
- Student 2 Student® (S2S) Programs
- Junior Student 2 Student® (JS2S) Programs
- Elementary Student 2 Student™ (eS2S) Programs
- SchoolQuest™ – **www.schoolquest.org**
- Homeroom – **www.homeroom.militarychild.org**
- Parent to Parent™ Programs
- *On the Move®* magazine
- Military Student Transition Consultants™ (MSTC)

School Liaison Officers (SLO) – *contact the military installation*

Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children – www.mic3.net

CHAPTER 8

School Ratings and Student Assessments

"I knew what schools they were going to be attending so I looked on some websites to see how they were rated, how their test scores matched up nationwide and with others in the area and to see what parents had to say about teachers and students and staff. This is my first move with kids, and I did find that it was more difficult to find out how schools ranked nationwide than they did in terms of test scores against other students in the state."[33]

Parent

It's probable that school ratings (rankings) and student testing (assessments) will be among two of the most hotly discussed topics in your community. In late 2013 the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) released the results of its 2012 assessment, an international test of reading, mathematics and science literacy given every three years to 15 year-olds in 65 countries.[34] In many ways, this assessment has become the world's comparison test of note. **U.S. schools ranked in the middle of these nations for math, reading and science scores.** This international ranking is troubling to a Nation that is accustomed to being on top. What are you hearing about ratings and assessments in the schools in your community?

What are School Ratings?

The No Child Left Behind legislation (NCLB) is the 2002 re-authorization of the original 1965 and 1994 federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Among other requirements, it mandated the development of assessments and accountability at the state and district levels.

Remember that the federal government has the authority to establish policy and collect data, but it cannot mandate curriculum or tests. So, all decisions about assessments and "passing rates" are left to each state's discretion to decide. Consequently, some state's passing rates were set higher than others, creating inequities in comparing states performances.

Standardized yearly state tests measure how schools are performing against state-imposed achievement bars, and school districts are required to publish annual "report cards" that detail student achievement data. NCLB introduced the key metric of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) that is based on each state's measure of progress towards the 100 percent passing rate goal in reading/language arts (at a minimum). Each district's report within a state report card also includes additional information, such as graduation and dropout rates.

33 Military Child Education Coalition, *Education of the Military Child in the 21st Century: Current Dimensions of Educational Experiences for Army Children*, 2012

34 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, PISA Results. www.oecd.org/pisa/keyfindings/pisa-2012-results.htm

School district and individual school "report cards" are found on both the state's and the district's websites. By going to the state website, you can also find comparison data about each district. While there is a large amount of data contained in these reports, there are indicators about how well an individual campus is preparing its students to be college-ready. These key indicators include:[35]

- Number of students taking Advanced Placement (AP) courses
- Dual-credit (HS and College) courses
- Percentage of high school graduates who go to college
- SAT/ACT/AP Scores
- One-year college retention rates

There is also a "Nation's Report Card" (www.nationsreportcard.gov) that informs the public about the academic achievement of elementary and secondary students in the United States. It is based on the results of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), a nationally representative measure of achievement in various subjects over time. Results allow users to compare states but not schools within states. (There are additional data for selected urban areas, however.) Because this assessment is administered consistently with a representatively selected group of students, it offers perhaps the most common metric by which to compare states.

Implications for Transition

Parents and mobile students are most certainly interested in the results of a school's assessments, as they offer a public snapshot of the school's performance. For that reason, military and community leaders, in addition to school leaders, must be aware of how schools measure up with their own metrics (currently the AYP) and in comparison to other schools and districts in the state.

What are Student Assessments?

Though the assessment landscape is complex, tests are a natural part of both teaching and learning. They are essential for educators, parents and students to determine if the students are on track to build necessary skills and concepts as well as to gauge the need for remediation or accelerated instruction. Assessments also go a step further in allowing students, schools, districts and states to determine achievement and skills acquisition and to provide their "report card."

Types of Student Assessments

Achievement tests measure a student's mastery of skills and content. They are typically used to determine grades, promotions or even graduation. Schools, states and federal agencies may use certain achievement test outcomes for accountability and information purposes.

Aptitude tests examine a person's strengths and weaknesses, as well as special abilities, and help to predict aptitude and interests. They can be used to help determine program or course placement and are often used for career guidance.

Formative assessments are in-progress checks so that adjustments can be made to materials, lessons and presentation styles.

35 Not all states require campuses to report all indicators.

Summative tests are end-of-project, unit, course or grade level assessments that determine how much of the material has been learned. These tests are often used to help determine course grades.

Criterion-referenced assessments measure against defined (and objective) criteria, such as state curriculum and standards. Advanced Placement exams and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) are well-known examples.

Norm-referenced assessments compare and rank test takers in relation to one another. The SAT and ACT exams, IQ tests and other well-known tests such as the California Achievement Test, Iowa Test of Basic Skills, Stanford Achievement Test and Terra Nova are examples.

High Stakes Testing is a subjective term that identifies any test used to make important decisions about students, educators, schools or districts, most commonly for the purpose of accountability.

How Should Parents Assess Their Child's Progress?

A parent's first concern is generally the academic welfare of his or her own child. In order to know how they are progressing, they should:

- Monitor formative testing/quizzes, homework, summative tests and end-of-period grades to assess ongoing progress.
- Meet with teachers to understand state standards and class curriculum expectations. Ask how children are doing in relation to standards and what can be done at home to enhance their learning.
- Ask questions about standardized test scores; how are they used, what do they mean, how can they help my child in the future?
- Look at state and district (and school campus) assessments. All are available online. A good place to start is with the MCEC SchoolQuest website: **www.schoolquest.org**
- Use assessment toolkits from the National PTA **www.pta.org/parents/content.cfm?ItemNumber=2583&navItemNumber=3363** and the Council of Great City Schools **www.cgcs.org/Domain/36**

Why Are There Concerns About Assessments?

The seeming proliferation of tests given during each school year is of concern to parents and some educators. Some feel that too much time is allotted to testing and preparation, and others feel that high stakes standardized tests in any grade year cause undue pressure for both students and teachers. Others feel that teachers who are held personally accountable under NCLB regulations for their class success will "teach to the test."

Many experts feel that reversing the NCLB requirement tying teacher evaluations to test results as well as streamlining each state's and district's testing schedule will eliminate those concerns. In addition, newer standardized assessments being implemented in the spring of 2015 in some states will closely tie the testing to the states' academic standards, eliminating fears that tests address skills and content not covered in that grade year.

Implications for Transition

For now, state assessments are different from state to state, and mobile students may discover that they missed state mandated testing in a particular district or may be required to take a test covering content and skills that they've not yet studied. The Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children (MIC3), adopted by all 50 states and authorized by the Department of Defense Schools (DoDEA), assists the military child in requiring that exit or end-of-course exams, nationally norm-referenced achievement tests and alternative testing from previous states be accepted in the new state.

Questions to Ask

- What assessments are regularly administered in the schools in your area and when?
- What does your state require in the way of assessments? How is this data used?
- How do the districts and schools in this area compare to each other? What about individual school campuses within the districts?
- What are concerns of military family members in this area regarding assessments and the ability to gauge their children's progress?

Things to Do

Express your interest in academic assessments to the school superintendents in the community. Superintendents know their assessment data, understand it and can explain it within the context of their particular districts and within student demographic groups down to the campus level.

Resources for You

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- Junior Student 2 Student® (JS2S) Programs
- Elementary Student 2 Student™ (eS2S) Programs
- SchoolQuest™ – **www.schoolquest.org**
- Homeroom – **www.homeroom.militarychild.org**
- Parent to Parent™ Programs
- *On the Move*® magazine
- Military Student Transition Consultants™ (MSTC)
- *Research Report for the US Army: Education of the Military Child in the 21st Century* (MCEC) **www.militarychild.org/emc21-report**

School Liaison Officers (SLO) – *contact the military installation*

DoDEA (Department of Defense Education Activity) – www.dodea.edu

Achieve – www.achieve.org

Getting Ready for College, Careers, and the Common Core, David T. Conley. Jossey-Bass: San Francisco, 2014.

CHAPTER 9

Military & Community Engagement & Partnerships

"Building school district relationships cannot be overstated in terms of importance. The more closely the installation and school district work through the various levels of organization toward a common purpose of educating students, the more effective the effort will be."

Robert Muller, Ph.D., Former Superintendent, Killeen Independent School District, Texas

Throughout this Guide the relationship among schools, the military and the community has been emphasized. This chapter looks at models for community engagement and opportunities for creating those relationships. The information in this chapter has been compiled from shared successes of superintendents, military commanders and communities-at-large.

Why Partnerships?

Many of today's leaders in education realize that schools alone cannot prepare our youth for productive adulthood. Schools, installations and communities, especially those with dense populations of military-connected children, need to work closely with each other to meet their mutual goals.

School-community-military installation partnerships can better interconnect resources and strategies to enhance support for all youth and their families. Building such partnerships requires a vision, strategic planning, creative leadership and new multifaceted roles for professionals who work in schools, the community and the military.

Relationships among Senior Military, Schools & Community Leadership

Frequent and planned partnership meetings among a military installation's leadership and that of the school district(s) and community leaders are critical to ensuring a positive, proactive and productive relationship. In between scheduled meetings, open and direct lines of communication to address issues, concerns and required support are essential. This leads to transparency and trust all around.

When multiple school districts in an area serve military children, it's probable that the superintendents meet cooperatively for planning purposes. Therefore, it is important that a military command representative is included in these meetings as well. This is an important venue for sharing policy and strategic planning information that affects the entire community.

This dialogue not only serves to quash rumors that may emanate from either the installation or school district(s), but also enables the school district staff to receive reliable data directly from military leadership. Such data provides beneficial information from which the staff can make accurate assumptions and adjust systems, policies, programs and budgets. This leads to a positive and proactive relationship built on continuous, open communications and trust. Furthermore, this consistent dialogue sets the tone for a productive relationship among the installation, the community and school district(s), rather than an adversarial "us vs. them" relationship.

In addition, community leaders, school district leaders and military leaders should all have a "seat" at each other's planning and town hall-style meetings in roles as both observers and active participants. When appropriate, leaders should have a spot on the agenda of the others' gatherings in order to share successes, issues and concerns, activities and future plans

that will affect the community. The presence of top military, community and school leadership at each other's events demonstrates an integrated approach that is beneficial to the installation, the school district(s), the community-at-large and ultimately to all military-connected students.

Relationships with School Boards

Building a relationship with local school boards can be extremely beneficial in the partnership between a military installation and the local community. Boards serve as the interface between community and school and are the public face of the districts. Whether elected or appointed, school board members serve their communities in several important ways:[36]

- First and foremost, school boards look out for students. Education is not a line item on the school board's agenda – it is the only item.
- When making decisions about school programs, school boards incorporate their community's view of what students should know and be able to do.
- School boards are accessible to the public and accountable for the performance of their schools.
- School boards are the education watchdog for their communities, ensuring that students get the best education for the tax dollars spent.

If a school district includes a large number of military-connected children, it is critical that a military command representative attends monthly school board meetings to gather and share important information. On some school boards, there is an ex officio spot reserved for senior military command, emphasizing the importance of the anticipated close relationship between schools and the military community. For districts with fewer military students, it is also important that senior military leadership seek occasional opportunities to meet with the school board.

A Few Tips to Connect Military and Schools

- Military commanders can host school board members on the installation and familiarize them with military-related issues and resources.
- Connect with teachers routinely through in-service programs in coordination with principals. You can use MCEC training as a part of the in-service days.
- Recognize teachers during on-installation awards ceremonies. And, communities can recognize key military leaders at public events as well.
- Including school, community and military leaders in each other's social events is also a great way to strengthen the bonds for the entire group.

Community Engagements

Creating an opportunity for all stakeholder groups to work in a facilitated decision making forum is a constructive way to elicit input and weigh solutions across a community. As an example, the MCEC has successfully hosted public engagements, community convenings and education summits across the country since 2007. These formats have elicited comprehensive community input and decision-making about key military/education issues and have allowed stakeholders to be involved in priority and strategic plan-setting.

36 Center for Public Education - www.centerforpubliceducation.org/You-May-Also-Be-Interested-In-landing-page-level/Audience-The-Public-YMABI/The-Role-of-School-Boards

Establishing School Partnerships

School Success and the Adopt-A-School Program

Karol Carlisle, Former Elementary School Principal

School success hinges on many moving pieces and parts. The Adopt-A-School program is one key piece that has proven to support students on several levels. This symbiotic relationship is an important reminder that partnerships matter.

As a former principal at Meadows Elementary School on Fort Hood (TX), I had the awesome privilege of experiencing an exemplary Adopt-A-School program firsthand. Leadership-level soldiers joined our Site-based Decision Making team to access and develop our campus plan.

Other volunteers eagerly and regularly interacted with students in multiple activities as positive role models by mentoring and tutoring identified students and leading Field Day and Fall Festival activities.

Soldiers displayed positive character qualities of courage, citizenship and responsibility. Students eagerly anticipated each and every event with our Adopt-A-School Unit.

It is expected that, through structured and facilitated group work, the outcomes of these engagements will include:

- A review of the support that already exists for military (and all) children in the community
- A comprehensive and sustainable support plan for the community
- Short- and long-term action items that can achieve the plan
- An intent and method to implement the plan

Adopt-a-School Programs

This popular military/school partnership pairs a particular school with a military unit. The program has service members and students engage in a variety of interesting and fun activities and events that will gain, maintain and enhance public trust, confidence and support.

Schools and units determine the activities, which can include service members reading books to children, sponsoring sports clinics, organizing school field trips, participating in award ceremonies, serving as judges in science fairs and guest lecturers in a variety of classes or participating in career days. The program can also include the unit bringing students, teachers and parents onto the installation to see service members training and to participate in routine military events and activities. The list of activities and events is endless, only limited by the imagination of the command team and the school.

Key Ideas for Community-School-Military Interaction

We all want our military-connected children to be successful! If parents perceive that their children are having positive experiences in school, are learning at the appropriate level and are being well prepared for the future, they will share that information, to the benefit of the entire community. Success will come when all involved parties share in the responsibility of making the educational experience of military-connected students a priority. Following are several ways that the military, the community and the schools can work together to increase the chances of success:

1. Encouraging School Attendance

The key to success for any student is consistent school attendance. Studies show that students are more likely to maintain good attendance in later school years, prioritize education in their lives, graduate from high school and score well on standardized tests if they practice the habit of good attendance as early as Kindergarten.[37] Parents need to recognize the importance of school attendance. Explore local support programs and reinforce good attendance at every opportunity.

37 *Present, Engaged, and Accounted For: The Critical Importance of Addressing Chronic Absence in the Early Grades.* Hedy N. Chang & Mariajosé Romero. Columbia University, 2008.

2. Coordination of School & Military Calendars

Whenever possible, community, school and military leaders should attempt to coordinate major school, training and community calendars. The military can be aware of school vacations, holidays, teacher workdays and standardized testing schedules. Communities and school districts can consider the military schedule and attempt to factor into their calendar upcoming four-day training holidays, as well as any other military-specific events.

3. Web Page Coordination

Communities, schools and military installations can easily reference each other on their web pages and provide links back and forth between sites. Not only does this provide a convenient service for those moving to a location, it also demonstrates pride and coordination within the community. The MCEC website, SchoolQuest.org, connects military installations and school districts as it assists military families in searching for schools.

4. Information Exchanges

In addition to providing representation to school board and town hall meetings on and off an installation, it is suggested that community, school and installation leadership determine other sources for sharing information with constituent groups, such as large PTA meetings, senior spouse information exchanges, etc.

5. Mid-Year PCS Transitions

Children who move to new duty stations during the school year, rather than at the natural breaks (winter and summer), have increased challenges in acclimating to their new environment. The rules, norms and traditions of schools can vary tremendously, and changing schools midstream can affect not only students' academic progression but also their social development. A military commander can work to allow families to stay in military housing (if applicable) until a natural school break. And, school systems can be particularly sensitive to the necessity of some students moving into or out of their schools at odd times by ensuring that there are robust student ambassador/sponsorship programs such as *Student 2 Student* and opportunities for academic remediation if there are missing credits or skills.

6. Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are an integral part of a student's progress reporting system. It is critical that parents attend these twice-yearly meetings. Many military commanders encourage this by making sure the service members are considered "on duty" at the school during their children's conferences. Also, schools can provide support for the military commanders by assuring that these conferences are on the military installation's calendar. The MCEC blog[38] provides excellent tips for parents during these meetings.

7. Student 2 Student® (S2S)[39]

While most schools have instituted new student welcoming systems into their school culture, the MCEC *Student 2 Student* (S2S) program is a one-of-a-kind program. It trains both "from here" (civilian and long-term residents) and "come here" (usually military-connected) students to establish and sustain a peer-based programs in the school that support mobile students as they transition to and from the school. Building on this successful program, the MCEC *Junior Student 2 Student*® (JS2S) program was created for middle school students, addressing the needs of this vulnerable age group.

38 www.militarychild.org/blog/3-signs-its-time-to-talk-with-your-childs-teacher

39 www.militarychild.org/parents-and-students/programs/student-2-student

School advisors and students are trained to provide leadership in support of students who are transitioning to or from their school. Through the training, the team develops well-prepared local lesson plans and clear team assignments for implementation at their home campuses. Both programs meet the needs of transitioning students by ensuring:

- Immediate peer credibility
- Positive peer relationships
- Valued information about the school and the community

The S2S program is currently in 342 high schools across the United States and at overseas high schools. The JS2S program is in 416 middle (or junior high) schools.

The *Frances Hesselbein Student Leadership Program* was established by MCEC in 2006 to identify exemplary young people through their participation in MCEC S2S programs across the world. Each year 10 to 14 students are selected to spend one week at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, NY, for an intense leader development program. A similar program has also been developed at the U.S. Air Force Academy at Colorado Springs, CO.

Along similar lines, the *Elementary Student 2 Student* program™ (eS2S) is a leadership development and service program for children at the elementary school level. Under the guidance of staff members, student leaders work to include new students and farewell those who are leaving.

8. Parent to Parent™ [40]

The MCEC *Parent to Parent* program empowers parents to be their child's strongest advocate on educational and social issues through MCEC Parent Workshops. More than 170,000 parents have attended these workshops since the program's beginning in 2006. In the MCEC Parent Workshops, trainers share practical ideas, proven techniques and solid resources to support military-connected families.

As of February 2015, there were 15 *Parent to Parent* teams. Teams generally include 3 highly-trained professionals, and they concentrate on providing the Parent Workshops and reading programs to families in their region.

The MCEC has also developed the *Parent to Parent* Surge program to offer one-day parent education seminars for parents who are stationed outside the range of the community based teams. These seminars include the most requested parent education workshops and resources.

9. Military Student Transition Consultants™ (MSTC)[41]

The *MSTC* is a full-time, highly specialized education professional embedded within a school district near military installations in the United States. The *MSTC* works directly with the children, parents and school personnel of that district on a daily basis. The *MSTC* serves as an expert "navigator" and advocate for military-connected students and their families and decreases the turbulence in family life, building resiliency in students so that they can more successfully cope and overcome the unique challenges they face and meet their academic goals. The *MSTC*s also use their skills to help any student who the district identifies as requiring school transition support.

40 www.militarychild.org/parents-and-students/programs/parent-to-parent

41 www.militarychild.org/parents-and-students/programs/mcec-military-student-transition-consultants-mstc

Key Players in Military and School Relationships

School Board Members develop district-wide policies that affect military children.

School Administrators, Principals and Superintendents are responsible for the day-to-day operation of the schools. This group benefits from understanding military routines and who to contact if any military-related issues arise.

Teachers interact with military-connected children every day and need to understand possible challenges these children face.

School Liaison Officers (SLO) understand military culture and best represent the installation to military-connected schools on a regular basis.

Military Student Transition Consultants are embedded in a number of school districts and serve as navigators for transitioning students into and out of those districts.

Senior Military Mission Commander is generally the most senior (or one of the most senior) military leaders on an installation. His or her responsibilities and authorities are mission focused. Overall, the mission includes the care of service members, families and civilians and to enable unit readiness.

Military Installation Commander is responsible for the operation of a military installation. The well-being of all who live or work on this installation is one of the commander's key responsibilities. That includes the installation's connection to school and community leadership.

Great Ideas from the Pete Taylor Community Partnership Awards[42]

Because the MCEC believes so strongly in the value of strong working partnerships among communities, schools and military installations, they have created the Lieutenant General (Ret) H. G. "Pete" Taylor Partnership of Excellence Award. Established in 2005, it recognizes successful partnerships and projects benefiting military children and is given in two areas: K-12 and higher education. The K-12 award represents either a single project in which a military installation and one or more school districts participated, or it may be a summation of the entire program between a military installation and the school districts serving an installation. The Higher Education Award, recognizing the efforts that exist in our colleges and universities, highlights and encourages the outstanding teacher preparation programs that include critical information and experience focusing on military-connected children.

Communities, military installations and school districts are invited to submit their applications each year prior to the MCEC National Training Seminar (NTS), held annually during the summer. Prize winner representatives attend the NTS and are presented the award in a general session.

You are invited to look at examples of award-winning partnerships on the MCEC website at **www.militarychild.org/parents-and-students/programs/pete-taylor-partnership-of-excellence-awards**.

42 www.militarychild.org/parents-and-students/programs/pete-taylor-partnership-of-excellence-awards

Questions to Ask

- What kinds of partnerships currently exist among schools, the military and other community leaders? What can be done to enhance them?
- How is the military represented on local school boards? How are the school districts represented on military community committees and panels?
- What opportunities does the military use to host community and school leaders on the installation?
- What support systems are set up in the schools (and on the installation) to ease transition issues and to ensure that school/military concerns are addressed effectively?
- What systems are in place for the military and the schools to work together in the creation of academic/training calendars, website acknowledgements, parent-teacher conference schedules, school attendance, emergency planning and other critical issues?

Things to Do

Create or enhance a partnership with your community and military neighbors. Set conditions so that communication is ongoing and transparent. Ensure that military and veteran-connected children are considered in all decisions.

Resources for You

From the Military Child Education Coalition – www.MilitaryChild.org
Program Descriptions can be found in Appendix B

- Professional Development Courses, In-Person & Online
- Student 2 Student® (S2S) Programs
- Junior Student 2 Student® (JS2S) Programs
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- Parent to Parent™ Programs
- *On the Move*® magazine
- Military Student Transition Consultants™ (MSTC)
- *Research Report for the US Army: Education of the Military Child in the 21st Century* (MCEC) **www.militarychild.org/emc21-report**

Future of Children: Military Children and Families
futureofchildren.org/futureofchildren/publications/docs/23_02_FullJournal.pdf

School Liaison Officers (SLO) – *contact the military installation*

DoDEA (Department of Defense Education Activity – www.dodea.edu

In Conclusion

What Does This All Mean?

It is evident from the tremendous amount of information shared throughout the previous nine chapters that the academic landscape for military and veteran-connected children is complex. But it is equally evident that resources proliferate and caring supporters tilt the balance towards success.

It seems clear that there are at least three major points to be drawn from the text:

1. **Military and veteran-connected children are children first and foremost.** Despite the challenges of frequent moves and separations, most military children weather those challenges and survive. This Guide, though, is about the development of processes to help them thrive.

2. **The academic reform that is sweeping our Nation, increased academic rigor and implementation of college and career-ready standards in all states are topics worthy of your attention as community and military leaders.** They have certainly increased the rhetoric and the politics surrounding education, so it is important for you to be knowledgeable about facts and myths, truths and suppositions. More important to you, however, is that they have created an academic environment aimed at deeper learning and preparation for the challenges of post-secondary education and life after school in a competitive world.

3. **Partnerships. Partnerships. PARTNERSHIPS.** Why go it alone? Your focused connections with the professionals on both sides of the military gates will have a profound effect on your community in so many ways. You will create a cooperative culture that resonates with both those who currently live in your community and those who may be moving there.

As the only non-profit focused exclusively on the academic well-being of military and veteran-connected children, the MCEC has seen firsthand how valuable your personal and professional support of "our kids" is. We encourage you to read more and look further into the Appendices. But, more importantly, **we thank you for beginning (or continuing) the process of ensuring the total success of the military-connected children in your community!**

APPENDIX A

Definitions

ACT, Inc: (formerly American College Testing) Assessment measures high school students' general educational development and their capability to complete college-level work with the multiple choice tests covering four skill areas: English, mathematics, reading and science. The optional Writing Test measures skill in planning and writing a short essay. It was first administered in November 1959 by Everett Franklin Lindquist as a competitor to the College Board's Scholastic Aptitude Test, now the SAT Reasoning Test.

Active Duty: Refers to a full-time occupation as part of a military force, as opposed to reserve duty. Those who serve full-time in the Army, Marines, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard are called active duty forces.

Advanced Placement: Is a program in the United States and Canada, created by the College Board, which offers college-level curricula and examinations to high school students. American colleges and universities often grant placement and course credit to students who obtain high scores on the examinations. The AP curriculum for each of the various subjects is created for the College Board by a panel of experts and college-level educators in that field of study.

Assessments: Refer to a wide variety of methods that educators use to evaluate, measure and document the academic readiness, learning progress and skill acquisition of students from preschool through college and adulthood.

Career and Technical Education: Prepares both youth and adults for a wide range of careers. These careers require varying levels of education – from high school and postsecondary certificates, to apprenticeships or two- and four-year college degrees. Students add value to their overall education by completing CTE programs of study that provide opportunities to earn industry-recognized credentials and college credit while still in high school.

Charter School: A school which receives public funding but operates independently. The "charter" establishing each school is a performance contract detailing the school's mission, program, students served, performance goals and methods of assessment. Minnesota wrote the first charter school law in the United States in 1991. Parents, community leaders, social entrepreneurs, businesses, teachers, school districts and municipalities can submit a charter school proposal to their state's charter authorizing entity. As public schools, charter schools are tuition-free. Charter schools are entitled to federal categorical funding for which their students are eligible, such as Title I and Special Education monies. Federal legislation provides grants to help charters to manage start-up costs.

College Board: Founded in 1900, the College Board was created to expand access to higher education. Today, the membership association is made up of over 6,000 of the world's leading educational institutions and helps more than seven million students prepare for a successful transition to college through programs and services in college readiness and college success — including the SAT and the Advanced Placement Program. The organization also serves the education community through research and advocacy on behalf of students, educators and schools.

College and Career Readiness (CCRS): The content knowledge, skills and habits that students must possess to be successful in postsecondary education or training that lead to a sustaining career. A student who is ready for college and career can qualify for and succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing college courses without the need for remedial or developmental coursework. CCRS is the umbrella under which many education and workforce policies, programs and initiatives thrive.

Common Core State Standards Initiative: An educational initiative in the United States that details what K-12 students should know in English language arts and mathematics at the end of each grade. The initiative is sponsored by the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and seeks to establish consistent educational standards across the states as well as ensure that students graduating from high school are prepared to enter credit-bearing courses at two- or four-year college programs or to enter the workforce.

Data Quality Campaign: A nonprofit, nonpartisan, national advocacy organization based in Washington, DC. It is a partnership of nearly 100 organizations committed to realizing the vision of an education system in which all stakeholders—from parents to policymakers—are empowered with high-quality data from the early childhood, K–12, postsecondary and workforce systems to make decisions that ensure every student graduates high school prepared for success in college and the workplace. To achieve this vision, DQC supports state policymakers and other key leaders to promote the effective use of data to improve student achievement.

Department of Education (ED): The federal department of education is a cabinet level organization. Its mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

Department of Defense Education Activity (DODEA): A civilian agency of the United States Department of Defense that manages schools for military-connected children in the United States and overseas. DoDEA operates 193 schools in 14 districts located in 12 foreign countries, seven states, Guam and Puerto Rico. All schools within DoDEA are fully accredited by U.S. accreditation agencies.

Department of Defense Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools (DDESS): The Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools (DDESS) is 1 of 2 distinct educational systems operated by the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA). DDESS operates 65 schools on 16 installations, organized into 6 districts serving more than 28,000 students.

Deployment: The period of time when service members leave their normal duty station to undertake a military mission. In most cases, it includes all parts of the absence, including training time and preparation time. A deployment generally is activated by a written document, called "orders" that sate the mission and the period of time that the service member will be gone.

Dual Credit: Courses offered through agreements between high schools, universities and community colleges whereby a high school student enrolls in a college course and simultaneously earns college credit and high school credit for the course.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA): A part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's "War on Poverty." The act is an extensive statute that funds primary and secondary education, while explicitly forbidding the establishment of a national curriculum. It also emphasizes equal access to education and establishes high standards and accountability. In addition, the bill aims to shorten the achievement gaps between students by providing each child with fair and equal opportunities to achieve an exceptional education.

Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP): A program in all branches of the military that enrolls families with special medical and educational needs. The program has three components:

- Identification and enrollment of a family member with special medical or educational needs
- Assignment coordination to determine the availability of services at the projected duty station
- Family support to help families identify and access programs and services

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA): A Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

Gifted Education: A broad term for special programs, practices, procedures and theories used in the education of children who have been identified as gifted or talented. There is no standard global definition of what a gifted student is.

Federal Impact Aid: Funding through the Department of Education, designed to directly compensate local school districts for: (1) local revenue lost due to the presence of federally owned, and therefore tax-exempt, property and (2) costs incurred due to "federally connected" students, such as the children of armed services personnel working at a nearby military base. These dollars, when approved, are sent directly to the school district, rather than disbursed through the state.

Local Education Agency (LEA): A commonly used synonym for a school district, an entity which operates local public primary and secondary schools in the United States.

Individualized Education Program (IEP): A legally binding document that addresses each child's unique learning issues and includes specific educational goals. The school must provide everything it promises in the IEP. A committee of academic personnel and the parent(s) work together to create an IEP for a child, following evaluation.

Individual with Disabilities Act (IDEA): The federal law that ensures that all children with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment and independent living.

Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children: An agreement among member states (all 50 plus the DoDEA schools) that they will address certain school transition issues for military children in a consistent manner. This compact addresses the key school transition issues encountered by military families: eligibility, enrollment, placement and graduation.

Magnet School: Public schools with specialized courses or curricula. "Magnet" refers to how the schools draw students from across the normal boundaries defined by authorities (usually school boards). Magnet schools emerged in the United States in the 1960s as one means of remedying racial segregation in public schools, and they were written into law in Sec. 5301 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Authorization. Most magnet schools concentrate on a particular discipline or area of study, while others (such as International Baccalaureate schools) have a more general focus.

National Guard: A reserve military force composed of military members or units of each state and the territories of Guam, of the Virgin Islands and of Puerto Rico, as well as of the District of Columbia, for a total of 54 separate organizations. All members of the National Guard of the United States are also members of the militia of the United States. National Guard units are under the dual control of the state and the federal government.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act: Is a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which includes Title I, the government's flagship aid program for disadvantaged students. NCLB supports standards-based education reform based on the premise that setting high standards and establishing measurable goals can improve individual outcomes in education. The Act requires states to develop assessments in basic skills. The Act does not assert a national achievement standard. NCLB expanded the federal role in public education through annual testing, annual academic progress, report cards, teacher qualifications and funding changes.

Reintegration: A term used in the military to identify the period of time when a service member returns from a deployment and "reintegrates" into family and community life. It is considered a process, rather than an event, since it requires a period of time to adjust to new and old routines and relationships.

Reserves: This term has two meanings. The "Reserve Component" is comprised of the Army and Air National Guard, the Army Reserve, the Air Force Reserve, the Marine Reserve and the Navy Reserve. Generally, when the term is used, it denotes one of the four service reserve groups.

School Choice: A term given to a wide array of programs offering students and their families alternatives to publicly provided schools to which students are generally assigned by the location of their family residence.

Section 504: A federal law designed to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive Federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education (ED). These include public school districts, institutions of higher education and other state and local education agencies. Its purpose is to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability against students with disabilities.

Service member: A member of one of the Armed Services. This includes the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force and Coast Guard.

Standards (Academic Standards): Define the knowledge and skills that students are expected to learn in a subject in each grade. Academic standards are designed to provide a clear path for students to gain the proficiency that is required to learn increasingly complex material in the next grade. Students who learn the knowledge and skills defined by the academic standards, year after year, are on track to graduate from high school on time and ready to enter college or the workforce.

Title VIII: Impact Aid Program - Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Provides financial assistance to school districts burdened by the loss of local personal property taxes because federal properties are within the district boundaries. This section, updated in 2002, provides the framework for authorization and payment of Impact Aid to the districts.

APPENDIX B

MCEC® Resources

This listing of products and services from the Military Child Education Coalition® is intended as an overview. To find out more about MCEC programs, go to www.MilitaryChild.org. For complete course descriptions and credit options, please see the Course Catalog at **www.militarychild.org/professionals/course-catalog**

The MCEC Website – The hub of all of the services, products and connections for MCEC – **www.militarychild.org**

Homeroom Community – An interactive online community, a place for anyone and everyone concerned about military-connected kids to share information, experiences, ideas and resources. **http://homeroom.militarychild.org/home**

SchoolQuest™ - An educational resource tool designed for military students, their families and the caring professionals who support them. Easy access to information about schools in a new location, college and workplace readiness, transition, etc. It includes the College Prep Toolbox (help with planning the high school path, prepare for the ACT and SAT tests, find colleges, locate available scholarships and gain a better understanding of financial aid). **www.schoolquest.org**

***On the Move*® Magazine** - **www.militarychild.org/parents-and-students/on-the-move-magazine**

The National Training Seminar (NTS) - a globally-recognized, premier annual training event for anyone interested in serving and supporting military-connected children. The event provides a unique opportunity for our more than 700 attendees to engage with senior military and education leaders. This seminar provides in-depth coverage of current issues relevant to military-connected children during a period of significant change and challenge. Held during the summer each year.

MCEC Professional Development

These institutes, seminars and online courses assist professionals such as educators, health care and child care providers and community/business leaders in learning the most current research-informed methods for supporting military-connected children and youth. The highly skilled presenters train in effective ways to support constantly transitioning military-connected children and youth. **www.militarychild.org/professionals/programs**

"I had never really thought about what military children go through. It is all just such important information for everyone involved with military students."

Participant, El Paso, TX

Living in the New Normal Institute™ - 2-day course for guidance counselors, professional educators, social workers, school nurses, installation leaders, transition specialists, community professionals and military parents will explore how concerned adults can support military-connected children and youth through good and challenging times.

Living in the New Normal Practicum™ - 1-day training with unique, practical, developmentally appropriate resources focused on supporting children's' resilience.

Supporting Children of the National Guard and Reserve Institute™ - 2-day course for school counselors, professional educators, social workers, school nurses and family support personnel focuses on the unique challenges faced by children of members of the National Guard and Reserve components.

Supporting Military Children through School Transitions™ ***Foundations*** – 2-day course for participants to have access to professional networks, technologies, resources and support systems to stay up to date on the dynamic and diverse K-12 school experience that impacts the transitioning student.

Supporting Military Children through School Transitions™ ***Social/ Emotional*** – 2-day course focuses on the social and emotional implications of moving for the transitioning student.

Responding to the Military Child with Exceptional Needs™ - 2-day institute prepares professional educators, social service providers, parents and community leaders to address the additional challenges associated with transitioning military-connected students with exceptional needs (defined as those who need either special education services or gifted education services for this course).

"I learned a lot about EFMP and MFLC and how they can help children with special needs. Learning about the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children was also very important for me."

Participant, Fairbanks, AK

Continuing Education Units (CEUs) and Graduate Credit are available for many of the courses we offer.

Military Child Education Coalition is:

- an Authorized CEU Provider via the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET).
- an NBCC-Approved Continuing Education Provider and may offer NBCC-approved clock hours for events that meet NBCC requirements.
- approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists.

The Journey from "Welcome Home" to Now: Reunion, Reconnecting, Routine™ - 1-day in-person course or an 8-hour online course, designed to teach professionals who support military-connected children and youth the challenges and joys that children face during a time of reintegration following a family member's return after an extended absence.

Helping Military Children Discover Their S.P.A.R.C.: Strength, Potential, Aspirations, Resourcefulness, Confidence™ - 1-day in-person course or an 8-hour online course, provides participants with strategies to assist young people in developing hardiness skills to meet personal and professional goals. Participants learn to identify sparks and interests that contribute to a growth mindset in children and youth.

"It is very important for me to be a Spark Champion at home and at school. Children really need "Sparks." Never overlook a child's "spark" or passion to enhance their learning and build resilience."

Participant, S.P.A.R.C.

MCEC Public Engagements, Convenings and Education Summits

The MCEC has developed, coordinated and facilitated interactive gatherings of professionals with a connection to the wellbeing of military and veteran children at the state, regional and local levels. These events are outcome-driven, utilizing group-facilitated decision-making to determine strategic plans and enabling actions that increase that community's support of their military children and families. Each event is focused on the unique needs of the community. Public Engagements have been held in 30 states and 6 regions, Education Summits have been offered in a number of military communities and Convenings have been held at the National, Regional and School District levels.

MCEC Student Programs

MCEC provides support to military-connected children through our peer-to-peer mentoring programs:

Student 2 Student® (**S2S**™) - A research-based, high school transition program that is directed at supporting highly mobile students. S2S is a student led program and is operated, under a faculty sponsor, at each high school campus. S2S includes both military-connected and non- military-connected high school students who are trained in leading any transitioning student through a school move and the related adjustments to new and uncertain surroundings.

"I was able to refer to so many of my Student 2 Student responsibilities, trips and memories on my college application."

S2S Alumna

Frances Hesselbein Student Leadership Program - A highly selective week-long leadership program for exemplary students in the MCEC S2S program delivers intensive leadership training, interaction with positive role models and practical applications that benefit participants in their studies and throughout their lifetimes. Training programs take place at the U.S. Military Academy, West Point or the U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs.

Junior Student 2 Student® (**JS2S**™) - A program for middle school and junior high schools, similar to the S2S program.

Elementary Student 2 Student™ (**eS2S**™) - The MCEC eS2S is an elementary program designed to increase awareness and address school transitions and concerns impacting mobile elementary school students through a faculty led model. A team consisting of four campus staff members, one district- level staff member and two parents, attends an extensive, highly interactive, 12-hour training to identify transitional student needs and create a customized campus model.

Bernard Curtis Brown II Memorial Space Camp Scholarship – Selective opportunity for military-connected students to attend the week-long Huntsville (AL) Space Camp at no cost.

MCEC Parent Programs

Parents are a child's primary and most important advocate. In recognition of that critical role, the MCEC developed a series of programs, webinars and workshops addressing needs based on a child's developmental stages. Workshops are generally 30-60 minutes in length, and offerings are updated regularly to reflect topics that are relevant and timely. Current workshops include:

Parent-to-Parent Workshops

- School Transitions: What Every Parent Needs to Know™
- Coping with the Military Lifestyle™
- Building Resiliency Skills during Deployments and Transitions™
- Preparing for the Journey™: Giving Your Child a Head Start on the Road to Academic Success
- Keys to Success in Elementary School™
- Chart Your Course (CYC) for Success in High School and Beyond™
- Chart Your Course (CYC): Keys to Success in Middle School™
- Parental Involvement: The Key to Academic Success™
- Transitioning with a Student with Special Needs™
- Staying Connected to Your Child's Education during Deployment™
- Time Management - Tools and Techniques™
- Homework - Motivation, Strategies and Support™
- Test Taking Strategies - Easing Stress and Anxiety™
- Early Explorations: Baby Sign Language™
- The Importance of Reading with Your Child at Home™
- Back to School Basics™
- Portfolios and School Transitions™
- The College Application Process™
- Learning Styles and Your Child™
- Kindergarten Readiness™
- Preventing the Summer Slide™
- Early Explorations in Math, Science, Music and Reading™

Supporting Caregiver Parents™

Caregiving is not a new phenomenon, and the caregivers of our nation's wounded, ill or injured Veterans are frequently also parents who are caring for individuals with complex challenges often requiring a lifetime of care. The MCEC is addressing this reality with programs that acknowledge the challenges for these parents, while recognizing opportunities and providing support for their children to thrive.

Webinars:

- Grief, Trauma and Loss in Children™
- Positive Psychology and Developing Skills to Help Children and Youth Build Resilience and Thrive™
- Processes That Support Military/Veteran-Connected Children with Exceptional Needs™
- School Transition Concerns Impacting Military/Veteran-Connected Children™

Workshops *(30-60 minutes)*:

- Adaptability to Change™
- Bouncing Back: Turning Stress into Strength™
- Choosing a Better Tomorrow™
- Creating Strong Families™
- Developing Positive Coping Strategies™
- Homework Help and Strategies™
- Organizing the Important Stuff™
- Persistent and Challenging Behaviors™
- School Success - Tips, Technology and More™
- Social Building Blocks for a Sturdy Foundation™

Let's Chat About…™ Series *(small group discussion style, 30-60 minutes)*:

- Let's Chat About…™ School Success
- Let's Chat About…™ Choosing a Better Tomorrow for your Young Child
- Let's Chat About…™ Organizing the Important Stuff
- Let's Chat About…™ Choosing a Better Tomorrow for your Adolescent Child

MCEC Literacy Initiatives

MCEC Early Literacy Initiatives provide parents and caregivers with tools, resources and strategies to support young children in developing a strong academic foundation and social/emotional fortitude. The content areas are: English/language arts, mathematics, science and social studies.

- Tell Me A Story™: Making Connections and Finding Support through Literature
- Growing, Learning, Understanding™ (GLU) Kits - self-contained resources that all parents, child care providers and educators can expand upon, adapt to the needs of their children and use over and over again.

Additional Resources from MCEC

- *A Military Parent's Guide to School Policies & Transitions*
- *Challenges & Transitions*
- *College Admissions Workbook*
- *Life after High School: Being College Ready*
- *How Communities can Support the Children & Families of the National Guard & Reserve*
- *Touching the Hearts of Children Anthology: The Art of Being a Military Child*
- *A Policy Leaders Guide to Military Children*
- *Back to School: It's All About Learning*
- *Getting Your Ducklings in a Row*
- *Preparing Children for Deployment*
- *Military-Connected Students and Public School Attendance Policies*

Please see http://store.militarychild.org/ to order any of the above Resources or the Growing, Learning, Understanding (GLU) Kits.

APPENDIX C

Graphs & Charts

CHAPTER 1: ABOUT MILITARY AND VETERAN CHILDREN

Framework and Setting: Some Important Facts

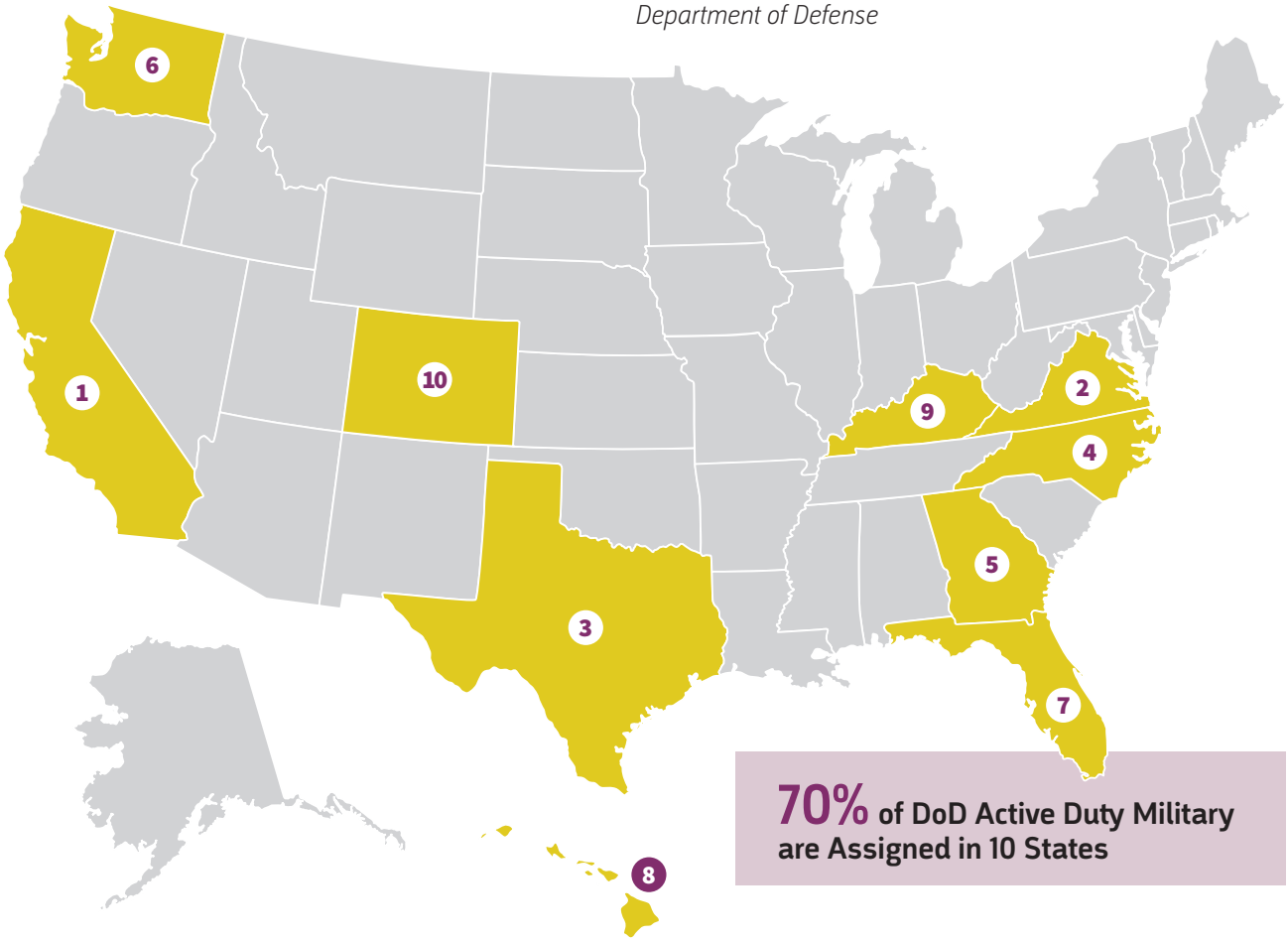
DoD Total Force Demographics

- **2,204,839** service members (62.2% are Active Duty)
- **2,965,050** family members, of which **1,888,486 are children**
- **1,047,269 (55.5%)** of military-connected children are **ages 6-18**
- **36.1%** of Active Duty service members are **married with children**; an additional **6.6%** are **single with children.**
- **87.2%** are stationed in the **Continental United States/U.S. Territories**
- **12.8%** are stationed **overseas**
- **Almost half (49%)** of Active Duty service members are stationed at installations in just **five states**.

2013 Demographic Profile of the Military Community

States with the Highest Military Populations

Department of Defense



70% of DoD Active Duty Military are Assigned in 10 States

School Districts with the Largest Military Populations

Data from DoD Statistics, 2012

California	San Diego Unified School District
Florida	Okaloosa County School District
Georgia	Houston County Schools
	Muscogee County School District
Hawaii	Hawaii Public Schools, Central District (Aeia-Moanalua-Radford Complex)
	Hawaii Public Schools, Central District (Leilehua-Mililani-Waialus Complex)
	Hawaii Public Schools, Leeward District (Campbell-Kapolei Complex)
	Hawaii Public Schools, Leeward District (Nanakuli-Waianae Complex)
	Hawaii Public Schools, Leeward District (Pearl City-Waipahu Complex)
Maryland	Anne Arundel County Public Schools
	St. Mary's County Public Schools
North Carolina	Cumberland County Schools
	Onslow County School System
Oklahoma	Lawton Public Schools
Tennessee	Clarksville-Montgomery County School System
Texas	El Paso Independent School District
	Killeen Independent School District
	Northside Independent School District
Utah	Davis School District
Virginia	Chesapeake Public Schools
	Fairfax County Public Schools
	Newport News Public Schools
	Norfolk Public Schools
	Prince William County Public Schools
	Stafford County Public Schools
	Virginia Beach City Public Schools
Washington	Central Kitsap School District
	Clover Park School District

Facts about Military-Connected Children

There are **over 2 million** children of service members in the Active Duty, National Guard and Reserves – almost 4 million children and youth including those of post 9/11 Veterans.

Over 2 million children have a parent who has served in Afghanistan or Iraq – many have served multiple times.

Military-connected youth are in every zip code in the U.S.

More than **three-quarters** of military families live in civilian communities

Military-connected children move **6-9 times** during their K-12 education.

Military-connected children move and change schools **3x** more often than their civilian peers.

Statistics from Department of Defense, 2012

Active Duty Forces

Percentage of children of Active Duty Service Members by Age

0-5 years | 6-11 years | 12-18 years | 19-23 years

- **42.5%** are birth through five years old
- **30.5%** are six to 11 years old
- **22.5%** are 12 to 18 years old
- **4.5%** are 19 to 23 years old

Children from Military Families

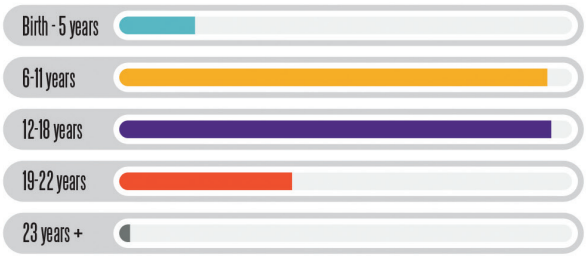
are **2x** as likely as their civilian counterparts to serve in the Armed Forces as adults.

Over 80% of military-connected kids are in US public schools

Less than 8% of our students attend Department of Defense schools

National Guard and Reserve Forces

There are **1,159,227** family members associated with the Reserve Components



- There are **38,014** children birth through 5 years old
- There are **222,512** children 6 through 11 years old
- There are **223,336** children 12 through 18 years old
- There are **87,924** children 19 through 22 years old
- There are **2,749** adults 23 years and older claimed as dependents by the families of Reserve members.

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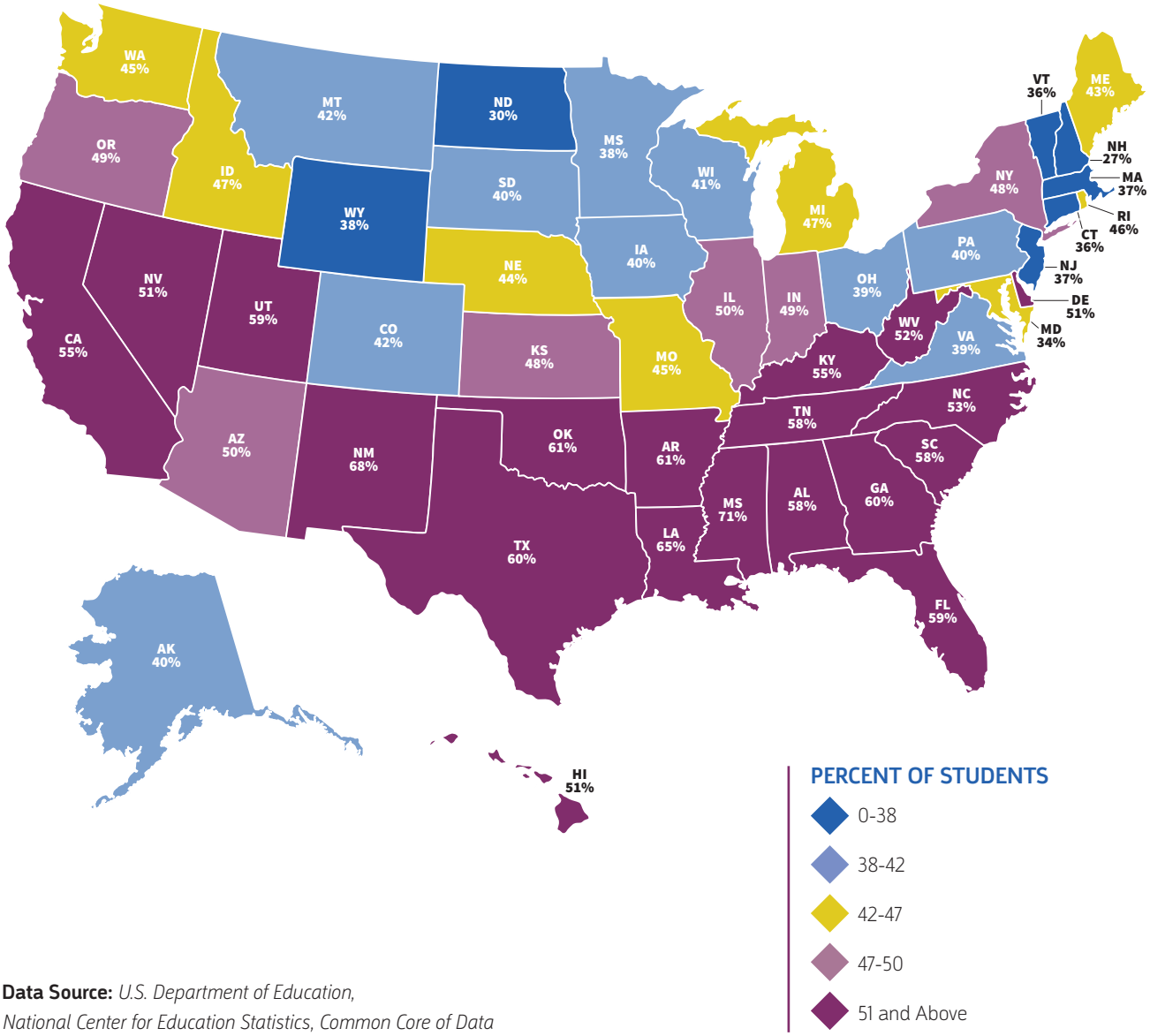
www.MilitaryChild.org

Percent of Low Income Students in the U.S. Public Schools - 2013

Southern Education Foundation • southerneducation.org



Data Source: *U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data*

©EdImagine Strategy Group 2014

Conley, David (2014) *Getting Ready for College, Careers, and the Common Core: What Every Educator Needs to Know.* Jossey-Bass. San Francisco, CA.

Higher Ed Spotlight

Basic Facts About U.S. Higher Education Today

In today's society, a postsecondary education is critical to good citizenship, individual opportunity, and national competitiveness. Higher education in the United States comprises thousands of institutions that serve a wide diversity of students and an equally wide variety of academic preparation levels. As the demand for higher education grows, unpacking this diversity has become important to inform public dialogue about how students access higher education and whether or not they are successful.

Institutions, Students, and Degree Production

Increases from 2002 to 2012

- **4,726** institutions currently offer postsecondary degrees — up 13%
- **21 million** people are attending college — up 24%
- **4.7 million** degrees and certificates are awarded annually — up 53%

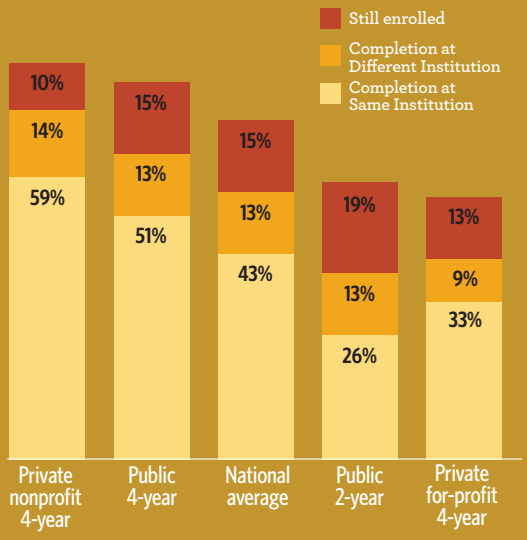
31% Remediation Rate
Students taking at least one remedial course after enrolling

31% First-Year Dropout Rate
College freshmen not returning for their second year at any institution

24% Highly Mobile Learners
Students graduating from an institution different than their starting institution

Student Outcomes

Students obtaining an undergraduate degree or certificate, or are still enrolled after 6 years at any institution



Widespread Payoffs of College Education

Compared with those with a high school credential only, college-educated adults are:

- earning more
- more likely to work
- more likely to participate in civic activities
- more likely to have healthy habits
- less likely to rely on public assistance

Profile of College Students

Typical undergraduates are no longer 18-year-olds straight out of high school.

74%
Post-traditional learners* on U.S. campuses today

SOURCES:
Baum, Sandy, and Jennifer Ma. 2014. *Trends in College Pricing 2014.* New York: The College Board.
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National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. 2014. *Persistence and Retention-Snapshot Report, Spring 2014.* http://nscresearchcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/SnapshotReport14-PersistenceRetention-pdf.
Shapiro, Doug, Afet Dundar, Mary Ziskin, Xin Yuan, and Autumn Harrell. 2013. *Completing College: A National View of Student Attainment Rates.* Herndon, VA: National Student Clearinghouse Research Center.

* Post-traditional learners are diverse, and include those who delayed entry to college after high school, obtained an alternative high school credential such as the GED® credential, studied part time at the start, were financially independent, had children, were single parents, or worked full time while enrolled. These characteristics are known to adversely affect college persistence and completion.

Analysis by Mikyung Ryu

American Council on Education © 2015

www.acenet.edu/news-room/Documents/Higher-Ed-Spotlight-Basic-Facts-About-US-Higher-Ed.pdf

Components of Federal Impact Aid Funding

- **BASIC SUPPORT PAYMENTS** (Section 8003(b)) – formula funding to districts that educate at least 400 federally-connected children, or at least three percent of the district's average daily attendance.
- **HEAVILY IMPACTED DISTRICTS** (Section 8003(b)(2)) – districts with high percentages of enrolled federally-connected children and based on other statutory criteria receive increased Impact Aid formula payments.
- **CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES PAYMENTS** (Section 8003(d)) – additional funding is provided to districts that educate federally-connected children who are eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). Districts that receive that receive these funds must use them for the increased costs of educating federally-connected children with disabilities.
- **CONSTRUCTION GRANTS** (Section 8007) – if appropriated by Congress
- **PAYMENTS FOR FEDERAL PROPERTY** (Section 8002) – post 1938 acquisitions

Source: *Department of Education – About Impact Aid*

State Education Governance Models (2014)

Model I

Governor appoints state board, board appoints/ recommends chief state school officer

13 states

Alaska, Arkansas, Connecticut*, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, Oregon**, Rhode Island, West Virginia

* state board recommends the chief to the gov., who makes final appointment

** state's chief education officer is appointed by the Oregon Education Investment Board

Model II

Elected state board, board appoints chief state school officer

6 states

Alabama, Colorado, Kansas, Michigan, Nebraska, Utah, Also, Northern Marianas

Model III

Governor appoints state board, independently elected chief state school officer

9 states

Arizona, California, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana**, Montana, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma**

** chief state school officer also serves as chair of state board

Model IV

Governor appoints state board and chief state school officer

11 states

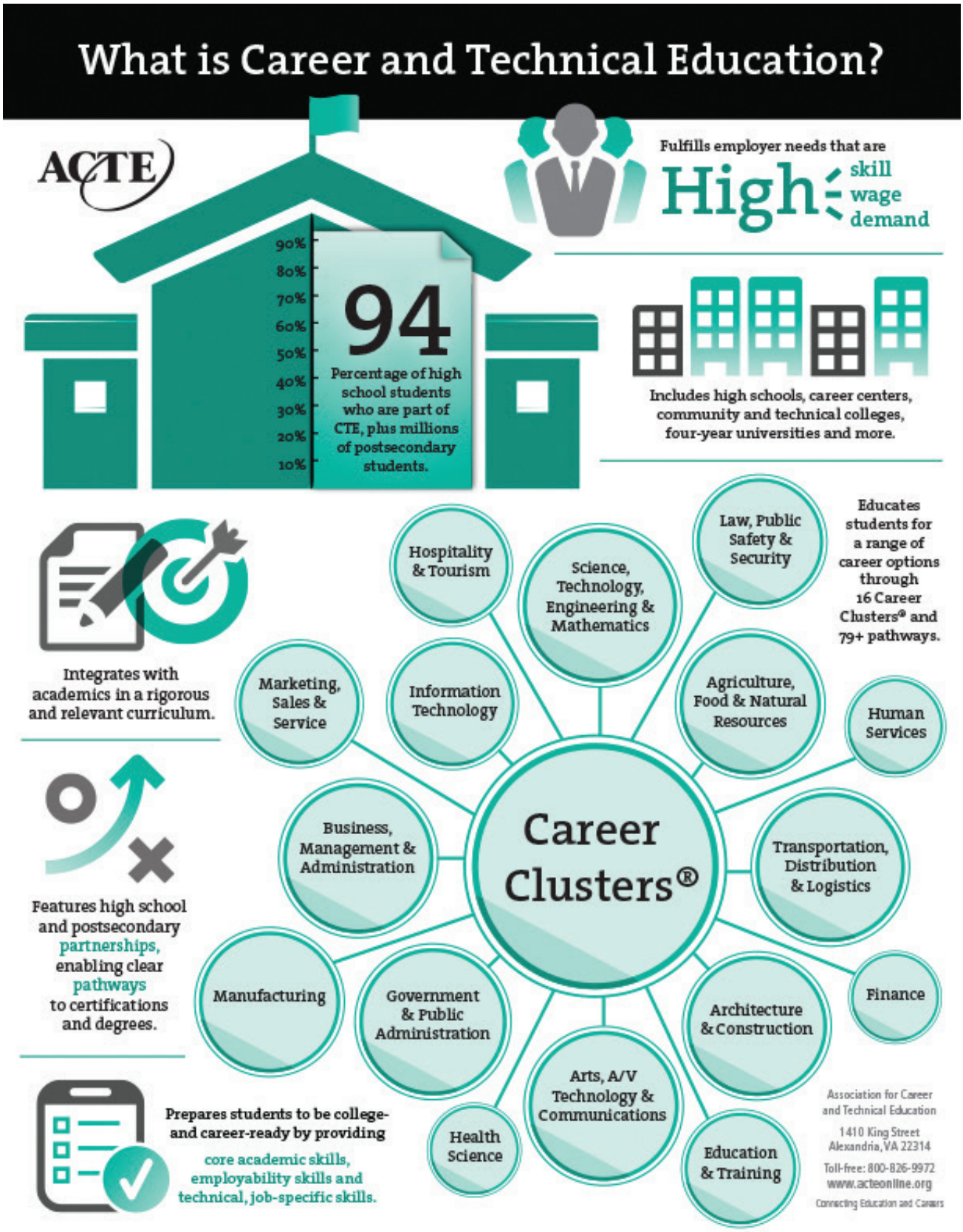
Delaware, Iowa, Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Tennessee, Vermont***, Virginia, Wyoming***

*** governor appoints chief from 3 candidates put forward by the state board

http://www.nasbe.org/wp-content/uploads/Governance-Models-Chart-March-2013.pdf

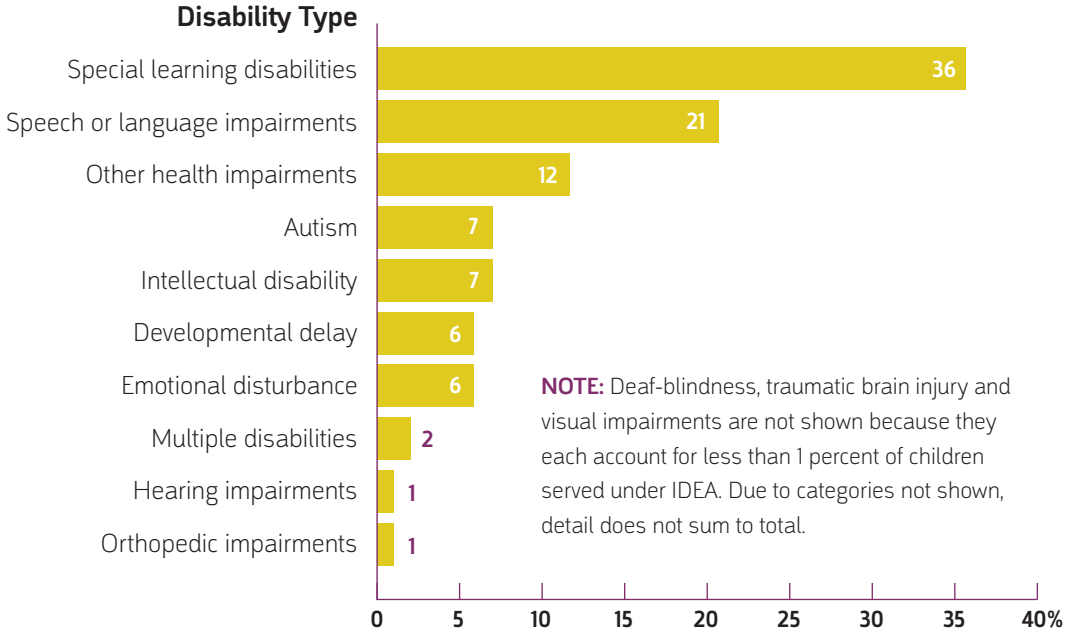
Other Models

Mix of appointed/elected state board members:	Louisiana (board appoints chief); Ohio (board appoints chief); Washington (chief elected, 5 members elected by local school boards); Guam (board appoints chief); Nevada (governor appoints chief from 3 candidates put forward by the state board)
Legislature appoints board:	New York (board appoints chief); South Carolina (chief elected)
Mixed appointment of board *(gov., lt. gov., speaker of the house)*:	Mississippi (board appoints chief)
Elected state board, governor/ mayor appoints chief:	Texas, District of Columbia
No state board:	Minnesota (gov. appoints chief); New Mexico (gov. appoints chief); Wisconsin (chief elected)



https://www.acteonline.org/cte/#.VP5B7JtQCaw

Percentage distribution of children ages 3-21 served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B, by disability type: School year 2011-12



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) database, retrieved March 21, 2013, from **http://tadnet.public.tadnet.org/pages/712**. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2013*, table 204.30.

Common Characteristics of Gifted Individuals[1]

Because gifted children are so diverse, not all exhibit all characteristics all of the time. However, there are common characteristics that many gifted individuals share:

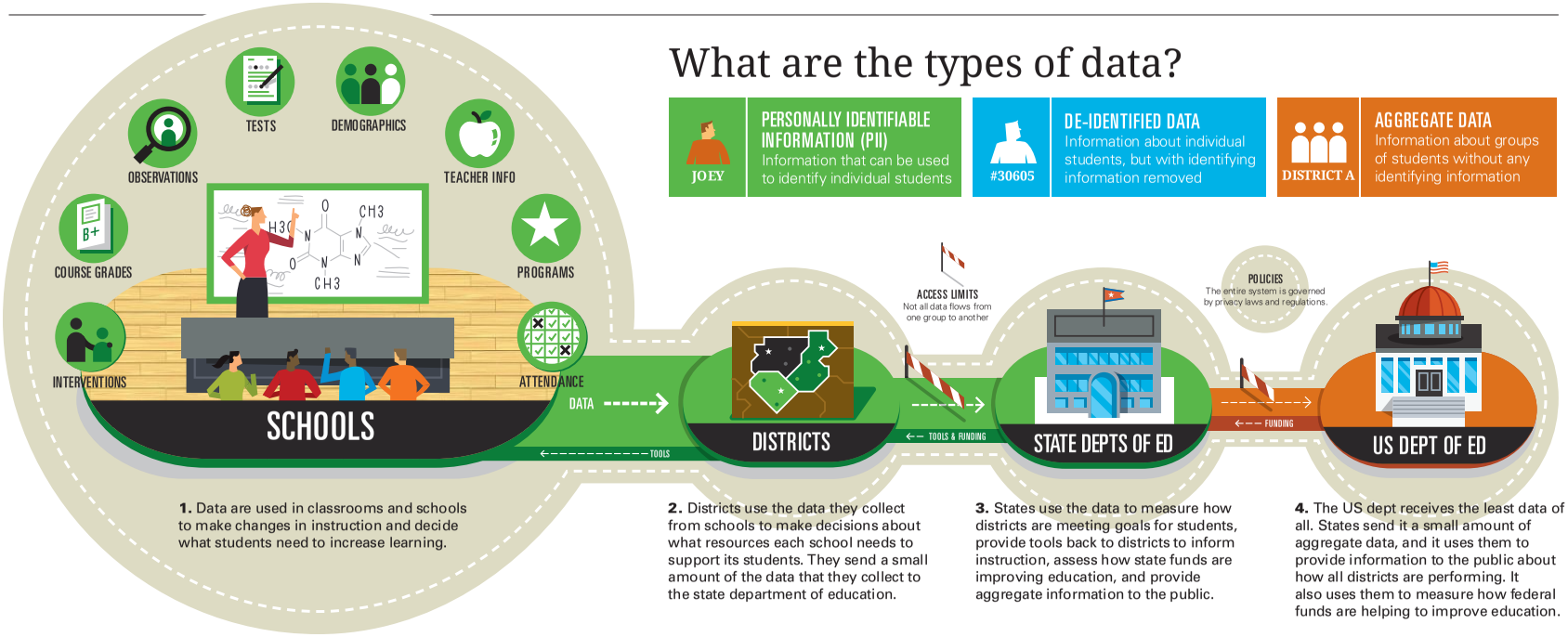
- Unusual alertness, even in infancy
- Rapid learner; puts thoughts together quickly
- Excellent memory
- Unusually large vocabulary and complex sentence structure for age
- Advanced comprehension of word nuances, metaphors and abstract ideas
- Enjoys solving problems, especially with numbers and puzzles
- Often self-taught reading and writing skills as preschooler
- Deep, intense feelings and reactions
- Highly sensitive
- Thinking is abstract, complex, logical and insightful
- Idealism and sense of justice at early age
- Concern with social and political issues and injustices
- Longer attention span and intense concentration
- Preoccupied with own thoughts—daydreamer
- Learns basic skills quickly and with little practice
- Asks probing questions
- Wide range of interests (or extreme focus in one area)
- Highly developed curiosity
- Interest in experimenting and doing things differently
- Puts idea or things together that are not typical
- Keen and/or unusual sense of humor
- Desire to organize people/things through games or complex schemas
- Vivid imaginations (and imaginary playmates when in preschool)

1 Webb, J., Gore, J., Amend, E., DeVries, A. (2007). A parent's guide to gifted children. Tucson, AZ: Great Potential Press, www.greatpotentialpress.com.

Who uses student data?

Most personal student information stays local. Districts, states, and the federal government all collect data about students for important purposes like informing instruction and providing information to the public. But the type of data collected, and who can access them, is different at each point. From schools to the U.S. Department of Education, see how student data are—and are not—accessed and used.

Produced by DQC DATA QUALITY CAMPAIGN dataqualitycampaign.org



What are the types of data?

JOEY — **PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION (PII)**
Information that can be used to identify individual students

#30605 — **DE-IDENTIFIED DATA**
Information about individual students, but with identifying information removed

DISTRICT A — **AGGREGATE DATA**
Information about groups of students without any identifying information

1. Data are used in classrooms and schools to make changes in instruction and decide what students need to increase learning.

2. Districts use the data they collect from schools to make decisions about what resources each school needs to support its students. They send a small amount of the data that they collect to the state department of education.

3. States use the data to measure how districts are meeting goals for students, provide tools back to districts to inform instruction, assess how state funds are improving education, and provide aggregate information to the public.

4. The US dept receives the least data of all. States send it a small amount of aggregate data, and it uses them to provide information to the public about how all districts are performing. It also uses them to measure how federal funds are helping to improve education.

PARENTS
Parents have access to information about their own children, using it to help them learn.

TEACHERS & PRINCIPALS
Teachers have access to information about the individual students in their classroom. They use it to understand how their students are learning and help each student be successful.

SERVICE PROVIDERS
Schools and districts rely on service providers to manage instructional tools and some critical functions, like transportation. These third parties sometimes need PII, but only get access to the data directly relevant to their work.

RESEARCHERS
With a clear plan, researchers can get access to de-identified and aggregate data to study what is helping students learn in a district or state.

THE PUBLIC
Members of the public, including neighbors, future employers and elected officials, only get to see aggregate reports—never information about individual students. They use the information to understand how districts and schools in their community are performing.

www.dataqualitycampaign.org/find-resources/who-uses-student-data

CHAPTER 8: SCHOOL RATINGS AND STUDENT ASSESSMENTS

PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment

Snapshot of Performance in Mathematics, Reading and Science, 2012

	Mathematics				Reading		Science	
	Mean Score in PISA 2012	Share of low achievers in mathematics (Below Level 2)	Share of top performers in mathematics (Level 5 or 6)	Annualised change in score points	Mean Score in PISA 2012	Annualised change in score points	Mean Score in PISA 2012	Annualised change in score points
OECD average	**494**	**23.1**	**12.6**	**-0.3**	**496**	**0.3**	**501**	**0.5**
Shanghai-China	613	3.8	55.4	4.2	570	4.6	580	1.8
Singapore	573	8.3	40.0	3.8	542	5.4	551	3.3
Hong Kong-China	561	8.5	33.7	1.3	545	2.3	555	2.1
Chinese Taipei	560	12.8	37.2	1.7	523	4.5	523	-1.5
Korea	554	9.1	30.9	1.1	536	0.9	538	2.6
Macao-China	538	10.8	24.3	1.0	509	0.8	521	1.6
Japan	536	11.1	23.7	0.4	538	1.5	547	2.6
Liechtenstein	535	14.1	24.8	0.3	516	1.3	525	0.4
Switzerland	531	12.4	21.4	0.6	509	1.0	515	0.6
Netherlands	523	14.8	19.3	-1.6	511	-0.1	522	-0.5
Estonia	521	10.5	14.6	0.9	516	2.4	541	1.5
Finland	519	12.3	15.3	-2.8	524	-1.7	545	-3.0
Canada	518	13.8	16.4	-1.4	523	-0.9	525	-1.5
Poland	518	14.4	16.7	2.6	518	2.8	526	4.6
Belgium	515	18.9	19.4	-1.6	509	0.1	505	-0.8
Germany	514	17.7	17.5	1.4	508	1.8	524	1.4
Viet Nam	511	14.2	13.3	m	508	m	528	m
Austria	506	18.7	14.3	0.0	490	-0.2	506	-0.8
Australia	504	19.7	14.8	-2.2	512	-1.4	521	-0.9
Ireland	501	16.9	10.7	-0.6	523	-0.9	522	2.3
Slovenia	501	20.1	13.7	-0.6	481	-2.2	514	-0.8
Denmark	500	16.8	10.0	-1.8	496	0.1	498	0.4
New Zealand	500	22.6	15.0	-2.5	512	-1.1	516	-2.5
Czech Republic	499	21.0	12.9	-2.5	493	-0.5	508	-1.0
France	495	22.4	12.9	-1.5	505	0.0	499	0.6
United Kingdom	494	21.8	11.8	-0.3	499	0.7	514	-0.1
Iceland	493	21.5	11.2	-2.2	483	-1.3	478	-2.0
Latvia	491	19.9	8.0	0.5	489	1.9	502	2.0
Luxembourg	490	24.3	11.2	-0.3	488	0.7	491	0.9
Norway	489	22.3	9.4	-0.3	504	0.1	495	1.3
Portugal	487	24.9	10.6	2.8	488	1.6	489	2.5

	Mathematics				Reading		Science	
	Mean Score in PISA 2012	Share of low achievers in mathematics (Below Level 2)	Share of top performers in mathematics (Level 5 or 6)	Annualised change in score points	Mean Score in PISA 2012	Annualised change in score points	Mean Score in PISA 2012	Annualised change in score points
OECD average	**494**	**23.1**	**12.6**	**-0.3**	**496**	**0.3**	**501**	**0.5**
Italy	485	24.7	9.9	2.7	490	0.5	494	3.0
Spain	484	23.6	8.0	0.1	488	-0.3	496	1.3
Russian Federation	482	24.0	7.8	1.1	475	1.1	486	1.0
Slovak Republic	482	27.5	11.0	-1.4	463	-0.1	471	-2.7
United States	481	25.8	8.8	0.3	498	-0.3	497	1.4
Lithuania	479	26.0	8.1	-1.4	477	1.1	496	1.3
Sweden	478	27.1	8.0	-3.3	483	-2.8	485	-3.1
Hungary	477	28.1	9.3	-1.3	488	1.0	494	-1.6
Croatia	471	29.9	7.0	0.6	485	1.2	491	-0.3
Israel	466	33.5	9.4	4.2	486	3.7	470	2.8
Greece	453	35.7	3.9	1.1	477	0.5	467	-1.1
Serbia	449	38.9	4.6	2.2	446	7.6	445	1.5
Turkey	448	42.0	5.9	3.2	475	4.1	463	6.4
Romania	445	40.8	3.2	4.9	438	1.1	439	3.4
Cyprus[1,2]	440	42.0	3.7	m	449	m	438	m
Bulgaria	439	43.8	4.1	4.2	436	0.4	446	2.0
United Arab Emirates	434	46.3	3.5	m	442	m	448	m
Kazakhstan	432	45.2	0.9	9.0	393	0.8	425	8.1
Thailand	427	49.7	2.6	1.0	441	1.1	444	3.9
Chile	423	51.5	1.6	1.9	441	3.1	445	1.1
Malaysia	421	51.8	1.3	8.1	398	-7.8	420	-1.4
Mexico	413	54.7	0.6	3.1	424	1.1	415	0.9
Montenegro	410	56.6	1.0	1.7	422	5.0	410	-0.3
Uruguay	409	55.8	1.4	-1.4	411	-1.8	416	-2.1
Costa Rica	407	59.9	0.6	-1.2	441	-1.0	429	-0.6
Albania	394	60.7	0.8	5.6	394	4.1	397	2.2
Brazil	391	67.1	0.8	4.1	410	1.2	405	2.3
Argentina	388	66.5	0.3	1.2	396	-1.6	406	2.4
Tunisia	388	67.7	0.8	3.1	404	3.8	398	2.2
Jordan	386	68.6	0.6	0.2	399	-0.3	409	-2.1
Colombia	376	73.8	0.3	1.1	403	3.0	399	1.8
Qatar	376	69.6	2.0	9.2	388	12.0	384	5.4
Indonesia	375	75.7	0.3	0.7	396	2.3	382	-1.9
Peru	368	74.6	0.6	1.0	384	5.2	373	1.3

Source: OECD, PISA 2012 Database; Tables I.2.1a, I.2.1b, I.2.3a, I.2.3b, I.4.3a, I.4.3b, I.5.3a and I.5.3b. - **www.oecd.org/pisa/**

APPENDIX D

Resources for Military and Community Leaders

Books

America's Military Youth: Towards A Study of Positive Development in the Face of Challenge. (Executive Summary): Richard M. Lerner, Jonathan F. Zaff, Jacqueline V. Lerner. **www.militarychild.org/parents-and-students/resources**
Building Resilience in Children and Teens. Kenneth R. Ginsburg, MD, MS Ed, FAAP. American Academy of Pediatrics: Elk Grove, IL, 2014.
Finding My Way: A Teen's Guide to Living with a Parent Who Has Experienced Trauma. Michelle D. Sherman, Ph.D. and DeAnne M. Sherman. Seeds of Hope Books: Edina, MN, 2005.
The Future of Children: Military Children and Families. Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University and the Brookings Institution, Fall, 2013. **www.princeton.edu/futureofchildren/publications/journals/journal_details/index.xml?journalid=80**
The Military Family's Parent Guide for Supporting Your Child in School. Ron Avi Astor, Linda Jacobson, Rami Benbenishy. Teachers College Press, New York and Military Child Education Coalition, Texas, 2012.
The Pupil Personnel Guide for Supporting Students from Military Families. Ron Avi Astor, Linda Jacobson, Rami Benbenishty. Teachers College Press, New York and Military Child Education Coalition, Texas, 2012.
Raising an Emotionally Healthy Child When a Parent is Sick. Paula K. Rauch, MD and Anna C. Muriel, MD, MPH McGraw-Hill: New York, 2006.
Risk and Resilience in U. S. Military Families. Shelley MacDermid Wadsworth and David Riggs. Springer: New York, 2011.
Serving Military Families in the 21st Century. Karen Rose Blaisure, Tara Saathoff-Wells, Angela Pereira, Shelley MacDermid Wadsworth, Amy Laura Dombro. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group: New York, 2012.

College and Career Ready Standards

Name	*Website*	*Information Type*
Association for Career & Technical Education	**www.acteonline.org**	2014 Review of College & Career Ready Policies by State
Achieve, Inc.	**www.achieve.org/college-and-career-readiness**	Overview
The National High School Center, based at the American Institutes for Research	**www.betterhighschools.org/CCR/overview.asp**	Overview
U.S. Department of Education	**www.ed.gov/k-12reforms/standards**	Overview
College Board	**http://nosca.collegeboard.org/eight-components**	Overview – Counselor Perspective
College & Career Readiness & Success Center at the American Institutes for Research	**www.ccrscenter.org**	Overview

Common Core State Standards

Name	*Website*	*Information Type*
Common Core State Standards Initiative	**www.corestandards.org**	Overview
Partnership for Assessment of CCSS	**http://parcconline.org/parcc-assessment**	PARC Assessments
Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium	**www.smarterbalanced.org**	Smarter Balanced Assessments

Career and Technical Education

Name	*Website*	*Information Type*
Association for Career & Technical Education	**www.acteonline.org**	Overview
National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium (NASDCTEc)	**www.careertech.org/CTE**	Overview

Impact Aid

Name	*Website*	*Information Type*
Military Impacted Schools Association	**http://militaryimpactedschoolsassociation.org/207/impact-aid-law**	Overview
The National Association of Federally Impacted School	**www.nafisdc.org**	Overview
Senate Impact Aid Coalition	**www.ciclt.net/sn/pol/poc_detail.aspx?P_ID=&ClientCode=gaelleg&LegComID=21216**	List of Senate Impact Aid Coalition Members
House Impact Aid Coalition	**www.ciclt.net/sn/pol/poc_detail.aspx?P_ID=&ClientCode=ncagbc&LegComID=20975**	List of House Impact Aid Coalition Members
Department of Education	**www.ed.gov** *Search for Impact Aid resources*	Overview

Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

Name	*Website*	*Information Type*
Interstate Compact Commission	**www.mic3.net**	Website
Military Child Education Coalition	**www.militarychild.org/the-interstate-compact-on-educational-opportunity-for-military-children-see**	Overview

Military Child Data Identifier

Name	*Website*	*Information Type*
Military Child Education Coalition	**www.militarychild.org/military-student-identifier**	Overview
Department of Defense Liaison	**http://www.usa4militaryfamilies.dod.mil/MOS/f?p=USA4:ISSUE:0::::P2_ISSUE:9**	One of top 10 Issues
Dept of Defense Military Compensation & Retirement Modernization Commission Report	**www.mcrmc.gov/index.php/reports**	One of 15 Recommendations – page 192
Data Quality Campaign	**www.dataqualitycampaign.org**	Education Data Experts

Parent

Name	*Website*	*Information Type*
Council of Great City Schools	**www.cgcs.org/Page/1**	Parent Roadmaps & other great resources
PTA (National)	**www.pta.org**	Parent Guides to Student Success & other great resources

Professional Educator Organizations

Name	*Website*	*Information Type*
The School Superintendent Association (AASA)	**www.aasa.org**	National association of school district and school building administrators
National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP)	**www.naesp.org**	Professional association representing the heads of primary schools
National Middle Schools Association (NMSA)	**www.amle.org**	The organization serving the professional educators who work in middle schools and parents whose children are enrolled in such schools
National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP)	**www.principals.org**	The national association for heads of secondary schools
National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE)	**www.nasbe.org**	Resources for school board members
National School Boards Association	**www.nsba.org**	School Law and other resources

School Choice

Name	*Website*	*Information Type*
Friedman Foundation	**www.edchoice.org**	Overview
Alliance for School Choice	**allianceforschoolchoice.org**	Overview

SCHOOL PROGRAMS AND TYPES

Private Schools

Name	*Website*	*Information Type*
Private School Review	**www.privateschoolreview.com**	School Search
National Center for Education Statistics	**http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pss/privateschoolsearch/**	School Search
Department of Education Office of Non-Public Education	**www2.ed.gov** *Search for non-public education*	Resources

Charter Schools

Name	*Website*	*Information Type*
Military Child Education Coalition	**www.militarychild.org/library#charter-schhols-and-military-communities-a-toolkit**	Charter School Overview
Department of Education	**www2.ed.gov/programs/charter/index.html**	Charter Grant Information
National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA)	**www.qualitycharters.org**	Info about authorizing and quality
Charter Schools Leaders Council	**www.edreform.com/take-action/charter-school-leaders-council**	Ed reform resources

Magnet Schools

Name	*Website*	*Information Type*
Magnet Schools of America	**www.magnet.edu**	Resources and descriptions

Homeschools

Name	*Website*	*Information Type*
Home School Legal Defense Association	**www.hslda.org**	Homeschool Advocacy, Resources
National Home Education Research Institute (NHERI)	**www.nheri.org**	Homeschool research

DoDEA

Name	*Website*	*Information Type*
Department of Defense Education Activity	**www.dodea.edu**	Website
DODEA Partnership Programs	**www.dodea.edu/Partnership/index.cfm**	Website

School Programs

Name	*Website*	*Information Type*
International Baccalaureate	**www.ibo.org**	Website
Advanced Placement (College Board)	**apcentral.collegeboard.com/home?navid=ap-apcentral**	Website
Dual Enrollment Education Commission of the States	**http://www.ecs.org/html/educationissues/highschool/highschooldb1_intro.asp?topic=de**	Advocacy for Dual Enrollment

Special Needs

Name	*Website*	*Information Type*
Military Community & Family Policy Special Needs Education Directory	**http://apps.militaryonesource.mil/MOS/f?p=EFMP_DIRECTORY:HOME:0::::EKMT:37.20.15.0.0.0.0.0.0**	State by State Resources
IDEA Partnership	**www.ideapartnership.org**	Special Education Partnership Resources
National Association of State Directors of Special Education, Inc. (NASDSE)	**www.nasdse.org**	Special Education Professional Org. Website
Specialized Training of Military Parents (STOMP)	**http://wapave.org/programs/specialized-training-military-parents-stomp**	Special Needs Advocacy Training for Military Parents
Wrightslaw	**www.wrightslaw.com**	Legal and Advocacy Resources
Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP)	**www.militaryonesource.mil/f?p=MOS2:SEARCH:0::::P10_SEARCH:efmp**	EFMP resources

Gifted Education

Name	*Website*	*Information Type*
National Association for Gifted Children	**www.nagc.org**	Website & Resources
Council of State Directors of Programs for Gifted CSDPG	**http://csdpg.weebly.com**	Website & Resources

Testing/Assessments

Name	*Website*	*Information Type*
College Board	**www.collegeboard.org**	Website
ACT	**www.act.org**	Website

MILITARY FAMILY, CHILD AND YOUTH PROGRAMS

Air Force	**http://myairforcelife.com/youth**
Army	**www.myarmyonesource.com/default.aspx**
Army Reserve	**www.arfp.org**
Coast Guard Family	**www.uscg.mil/worklife/ready.asp#**
Marine Corps	**www.marines.mil/Family.aspx**
National Guard	**www.jointservicessupport.org/FP/Youth.aspx**
Navy Family Programs	**https://qol.navyaims.net/CYPWeb**

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College, Career and Life Readiness

for Military and Veteran Children

A Military and Community Leaders' Guide

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Harker Heights, Texas 76548
www.**MilitaryChild**.org

GE Foundation

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