

School Transitions during COVID-19: A Toolkit for Military-Connected Families

A Guide to Understanding MIC3

The Need

The Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children (“MIC3” or the “Compact”) was developed to facilitate easier school transitions for military-connected students, yet many families are unaware of the Compact or of the protections it offers their children.

While the Compact does not have any language that is explicitly directed at the unusual circumstances brought about by COVID-19-related Spring school closures, distance learning, and the uncertainties about school Fall re-opening, the Compact does provide a set of guidelines that encourages schools to be flexible in responding to the transition needs of military-connected children. With school administrators more taxed by the COVID-19 pandemic than ever before, it is especially critical for families to understand and, when needed, be positioned to advocate for the protections MIC3 provides military-connected children.

Tool Description

This guide explains who the Compact protects and the topics it covers, including how those topics may be especially relevant to families undertaking a PCS during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A Guide to Understanding MIC3

What is the Compact?

The Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children (“MIC3” or the “Compact”) is an agreement among all 50 states and Washington, D.C. intended to ease school transitions for military-connected children by creating consistency in how schools handle enrollment, course placement, extra-curricular activities, and graduation.

Who is Covered by MIC3?

The Compact applies only to children and families who are enrolled in, or plan to enroll in, public schools and Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) schools and live the household of:

- Active duty members of the uniformed services, including members of the National Guard and Reserve on active duty orders;
- Members or veterans who are medically discharged or retired, for one year;
- Members who died on active duty, for one year; or
- Uniformed members of the Commissioned Corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and United States Public Health Services (USPHS).

How Should I Use This Guide?

The purpose of this guide is to help you better understand MIC3 policies and know where to look within the Compact’s provisions for more information on any areas of particular concern. Some provisions may be especially relevant to a PCS during the COVID pandemic; these are notated in [blue](#). To make the most of this guide, familiarize yourself with the different components and how they may apply to your student and this PCS. If you need further information, explore the list of additional resources to support your specific needs.

What does MIC3 Cover?

There are four sections of MIC3: Enrollment, Placement & Attendance, Eligibility & Extra Curricular Activities, and Graduation, each of which are described below:

Enrollment

- **School Records:** In the event you are unable to get the official transcript from your sending school (the school that your child most recently attended), MIC3 allows families to use unofficial (or “hand-carried”) records for enrollment and grade placement in the receiving school (your child’s new school).
- **Kindergarten and First Grade Placement:** MIC3 recognizes that states do not have consistent age requirements for students entering Kindergarten and first grade. If there is a discrepancy in the age requirement between your sending and receiving schools, MIC3 mandates that your child be placed by your receiving school in the same way he/she would have been placed in your sending school, regardless of your child’s age. For example, if your child was enrolled in Kindergarten at the time of your move, you may enroll your child in Kindergarten in your receiving school, even if your child does not meet the age requirements of your new district. Additionally, if your

child completed Kindergarten in your sending district, you may enroll your child in first grade regardless of the age requirement in the new district.

- **Immunization:** Under MIC3, families have 30 days to provide immunization records, regardless of receiving school's policy. [This waiver may prove particularly important during this time when many doctors and school offices were closed or unavailable due to the COVID-19 pandemic.](#)

For more information, consult Section 3 of MIC3 (linked below).

Placement & Attendance

- **Placement:** The receiving school must initially place your child based on the information gathered from the sending school and the program or courses in which your child had been enrolled. This includes honor courses, programs such as gifted and talented, International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement, vocational, training, and career pathways courses. [The need for flexibility recommended by MIC3 may be particularly pertinent in light of the variety of school responses and school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic.](#)
- **Special Education Services:** The receiving school must initially provide comparable services to your child based on his/her current Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan until the school is able to conduct its own evaluation and develop a new plan.
- **Absences:** At the discretion of the receiving district superintendent, MIC3 grants your student excused absences to visit with a parent or legal guardian called for duty (but not for time lost during the PCS).

For more information, consult Section 5 of MIC3.

Eligibility and Extracurricular Activities

- **Sports and Extracurricular Activities:** Receiving schools must extend tryout deadlines for sports teams and other extracurricular activities. [Schools may make adjustments to their extracurricular offerings during the COVID-19 pandemic, though the protections offered by MIC3 still apply. Contact your school for the most up to date information on what activities are being offered.](#)

For more information, consult Section 6 of MIC3.

Graduation

- **Exit Exams:** The receiving school must accept state-or nationally-mandated exam results from the sending school in lieu of the receiving school's testing requirements. [This may have unique relevance in light of testing waivers and cancellations during Spring 2020 response to COVID. Note that all 50 states and Washington, D.C. cancelled state-run summative tests for 2020-21.](#)
- **Waivers:** Receiving school administrators must waive course requirements if your child has completed a similar course in a previously attended school.
- **Graduation Requirements:** MIC3 allows your child to graduate either from your sending or receiving school. If you find that your child is missing requirements to graduate from your receiving school, MIC3 ensures that your child will receive a diploma from your sending school, as long as your child meets the graduation requirements of your sending school.

For more information, consult Section 4 of MIC3.

Are there additional resources I can reference?

There are several helpful resources on the MIC3. Some of the best and most reliable are on the MIC3 website.

- **MIC3 Website:** <https://www.mic3.net/>
 - **MIC3 Compact:** <https://www.mic3.net/assets/rules-2018-re-print-single-page-rev-19-jul-2018.pdf>
 - **MIC3 Parent Guide:** http://www.mic3.net/assets/2018_parents_guide.pdf
 - **COVID-19 State-by-State School opening update information** (as of August 10, 2020):
http://www.mic3.net/assets/21-school-update_20200810_final.pdf (Check back on the MIC3 Website on the orange banner for more updated information.)
- **School Liaison Officer (SLO):** SLOs serves as your primary military point of contact for school-related matters.
Find yours here: <https://www.dodea.edu/Partnership/schoolLiaisonOfficers.cfm>
- **MIC3 Advocacy Script for Parents:** [See Toolkit Link]