Supporting Military-Connected Students and Families in Virginia Schools

AN OVERVIEW OF THE INTERSTATE COMPACT ON EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FOR MILITARY CHILDREN

PROVIDED BY:
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Virginia Military Student and Family Specialist

- Support Military Families With Transition Related Questions and Concerns
- Partner with Armed Services and Serve as a Conduit for Commands and VDOE (SLO’S and EFMP’s, etc.
- Help to Provide Subject Matter Expertise on Va. Interstate Compact Law and Unique needs of Military Connected Children
- Support Schools and Communities to Better Support Military Connected Students
How many military connected children are there?

**Nationally**
- Nearly 2.0 million military connected children (active duty, National Guard, and Reserve)
  - 37.4% are ages 0-5
  - 30.3% are ages 6-11
  - 25.1% are ages 12-18
  - 7.1% are ages 19+

**Virginia**
- Approximately 73,000 school age children of active duty members
Where are Military Connected Children?

There are military connected children in EVERY Virginia school division!!

- Guard and Reserve families
- Children living with guardians while parents are deployed
Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children
§ 22.1-360. Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

- Facilitates the timely enrollment of children of military families and ensures that they are not placed at a disadvantage due to difficulty in the transfer of education records from the previous school district(s) or variations in entrance/age requirements.
- Facilitates the student placement process through which children of military families are not disadvantaged by variations in attendance requirements, scheduling, sequencing, grading, course content, or assessment.
- Facilitates the qualification and eligibility for enrollment, educational programs, and participation in extracurricular academic, athletic, and social activities.
- Facilitates the on-time graduation of children of military families.
Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

Eligibility

Children of:

• active duty members of the uniformed services
• National Guard and Reserve on active duty orders
• Members or veterans who are medically discharged or retired for (1) year.

• Applies to public schools only.
Interstate Compact – Educational Records

What is covered?
- Parents can receive a copy of unofficial records
- Receiving school must accept the unofficial records to enroll and place the student pending validation by official records
- Sending school must send official records within 10 business days of receiving a request from the receiving school
- 30 day grace period for immunizations

What is not covered?
- Waiver of physical or TB test
## Interstate Compact – Kindergarten and First Grade Entrance Age

### What is covered?
- A student can continue in the same grade in the receiving state regardless of entrance age requirements if he or she has enrolled (registered) in kindergarten or 1st grade in a public school in the sending state and as long the student meets age requirements in the sending state.

### What is not covered?
- A student who has not registered for kindergarten, even though they are of eligible age to have started.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is covered?</th>
<th>What is not covered?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• A student may enroll in the next grade regardless of age requirements, if he or she has successfully completed the prerequisite grade level in the sending state</td>
<td>See <a href="http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/student_family/military/guidance_training/index.shtml">http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/student_family/military/guidance_training/index.shtml</a> for more information.</td>
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### Interstate Compact – Course and Educational Program Placement

#### What is covered?
- Receiving school shall initially honor placement in courses or programs based on the student’s enrollment/participation/placement in like programs in the sending school and/or educational assessments conducted in the sending school.
- Receiving school may subsequently perform an evaluation to ensure the appropriate placement and continued enrollment.

#### What is not covered?
- Although the receiving school must demonstrate reasonable accommodation, there is no requirement to create a program or additional space.
Interstate Compact – Special Education Services

What is covered?

- Receiving school shall initially provide comparable services identified in the students’ IEP or 504 from the sending school.
- Receiving state may subsequently perform an evaluation to ensure the appropriate placement of the student.

What is not covered?

- A requirement to provide the exact programs as sending school.
- Anything above the requirements in the IDEA.
Interstate Compact – Placement Flexibility and Absences

What is covered?
- Allowing flexibility to the school division to waive course or program prerequisites or other preconditions for placement
- Additional excused absences, at the discretion of the superintendent, due to parent’s deployment

What is not covered?
- Mandatory waivers of prerequisites or preconditions
Interstate Compact – Eligibility

What is covered?

- School division cannot charge tuition to military children placed in care of a non-custodial parent or person serving “in loco parentis”
- Special power of attorney for guardianship is sufficient for enrollment and all other actions requiring parental participation or consent
- Student can continue to attend his or her current school even if living with a non-custodial parent or person serving “in loco parentis”

What is not covered?
## Interstate Compact – Eligibility

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<td>• State and school division shall facilitate opportunities for military children’s inclusion in extracurricular activities regardless of application deadlines</td>
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<td>• State student athletic associations</td>
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Interstate Compact – Graduation

What is covered?
• School divisions shall waive courses required for graduation if similar course work has been completed in sending school, or if denied, must provide an alternative means for acquiring course work so graduation may occur on time
• For transfers during senior year when student is ineligible to graduate from receiving school, allowing the student to receive a diploma from the sending school if sending state graduation requirements have been met

What is not covered?
• Mandatory waivers of course work
• Changing graduation requirements in the receiving school division
If student received a passing score on an exit or end of course exam (as part of state’s accountability system), the student should be given credit and not required to take SOL.

If student received a passing score on a National norm-referenced achievement test (Terra Nova), the student should be given credit and not required to take SOL.

Substitute tests approved by the Board - http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/substitute_tests/
Room for Growth

- Division appointment of a point person for military student and family support
- Develop school based peer lead transition support teams
- Advocate for policies to assist families in temporary housing status
- Advocate for building more capacity in specialty center programs and formulate preferences for incoming military families
- Improve electronic and print communications supporting Military Families
- Develop internal MSPAT teams
Resources

Virginia Department of Education Website
www.doe.virginia.gov/support/student_family/military/

Includes:
- Guidance Documents & Training Materials
- Virginia Laws Related to the Education of Military Children
- School Liaison Officers Contact Information
- Model Programs & Initiatives
- Military Family Resources
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