

**NAS Meridian School Liaison Officer
Military Family Handbook**

**Connecting Navy Families, Commands, and Kindergarten
through 12th -Grade Schools**

2012/13



Child and Youth Programs

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Dear Military Family:

Welcome to Naval Air Station Meridian! Quality education options are consistently identified as a priority quality of life concern of Navy families. Consequently, the goal of Navy Child and Youth Programs (CYP) is to assist commanders and families in balancing the competing demands of family life and military readiness.

Implementation of Navy Child and Youth Education Services (CYES) is assurance that Navy leadership considers a quality education a Navy priority by working to “level the playing field” for Navy families. School Liaison Officers (SLO) help to implement CYES.

School Liaison Officers help schools and installations respond to the complexities of transition and deployment while providing families the assurance that their children’s academic well being is a priority.

The SLO offers support to military families in seven core areas:

1. School Transition Support
2. Deployment Support
3. Special Education System Navigation
4. Command, School, and Community Communication
5. Home School Linkage and Support
6. Partnerships in Education (PIE)
7. Post-secondary Preparations

You are encouraged to visit the Parent Resource Room in office #173 (Bldg 255), next door to the school liaison’s office. There you will find an abundance of information relevant to K-12, school-related issues. Contact your School Liaison Officer for assistance with K-12 educational issues. Together we can maximize educational opportunities for your children.

Naval Air Station Meridian
255 Rosenbaum Ave
Bldg. 255; Office # 171
Meridian, MS 39309
(601) 679-2473 (office)
(601) 679-2174 (fax)
[**cynthia.h.mcdonald@navy.mil**](mailto:cynthia.h.mcdonald@navy.mil)

Contact Information for Local Public School Districts

Lauderdale County School District 410 Constitution Ave Meridian, MS 39302 601-693-1683 http://www.lauderdale.k12.ms.us/index.html	
**Northeast Elementary School	http://neetrojans.webs.com/
**Northeast Middle School	http://www.nemstrojans.org/
**Northeast High School	http://www.lauderdale.k12.ms.us/neh/index.html
Southeast Lauderdale Elementary	http://southeastelem.ms.lde.schoolinsites.com/
Southeast Lauderdale Middle	http://southeastmiddle.ms.ldm.schoolinsites.com/
Southeast Lauderdale High	http://southeasthigh.ms.ldh.schoolinsites.com/
West Lauderdale Elementary	http://westlauderdaleelem.ms.lde.schoolinsites.com/
West Lauderdale Middle School	http://westlauderdalemiddle.ms.lde.schoolinsites.com/
West Lauderdale High School	http://www.wlksknights.com/
Registration Requirements	http://www.lauderdale.k12.ms.us/?DivisionID=10754&ToggleSideNav=
Dress Code for Students	http://www.lauderdale.k12.ms.us/?PN=ParentInfo
Menus and Meal Prices	www.lauderdale.k12.ms.us/?DivisionID=9052&DepartmentID=9053&ToggleSideNav=
Curriculum Guides	www.lauderdale.k12.ms.us/?DivisionID=9052&DepartmentID=9053&ToggleSideNav=
School District/Assessment Data	http://www.msreportcard.com/dl/3800.pdf /

****Generally,** students who live on-base will attend the Northeast Lauderdale Schools.

Meridian Public School District 2320 32nd Street Meridian, MS 39301 601-482-3191 http://www.mpsd.k12.ms.us/mpsd/site/default.asp	
Crestwood Elementary School	http://crestwoodelem.ms.mde.schoolinsites.com/
Oakland Heights Elementary	http://oaklandheightselem.ms.mde.schoolinsites.com/
Parkview Elementary School	http://parkviewelem.ms.mde.schoolinsites.com/
Poplar Springs Elementary School	http://poplarspringelem.ms.mde.schoolinsites.com/
T.J. Harris Elementary School	http://tjharriselem.ms.mde.schoolinsites.com/
West Hills Elementary School	http://westhillselem.ms.mde.schoolinsites.com/
Carver Middle School	http://carvermiddle.ms.mdm.schoolinsites.com/
Magnolia Middle School	http://magnoliamiddle.ms.mdm.schoolinsites.com/
Northwest Middle School	http://northwestmiddle.ms.mdm.schoolinsites.com/
Meridian High School	http://meridianhigh.ms.mds.schoolinsites.com/
Ross Collins Career & Technical Center	http://rosscollinscareerandtech.ms.mdc.schoolinsites.com/

Checklist for Enrollment

<http://www.lauderdale.k12.ms.us/?DivisionID=10754&ToggleSideNav>

Elementary, middle and high school students should bring the following documents/information:

1. Birth certificate
2. Child's Social Security card
3. Mississippi immunization record
4. Last report card from former school
5. Mailing address of former school
6. High school students will need a copy of their transcripts.

All new students who live with their parents or guardian(s) will verify residency as follows. Parents must provide at least two of the following items:

1. State of Mississippi Road and Privilege Tax Registration Receipt (Vehicle Tag Receipt).
2. Mortgage documents or property deed
3. Apartment or home lease
4. Homestead Exemption application
5. One utility bill displaying the current address
6. Affidavit and/or personal visit by a designated school district official
7. Any other documentation that will objectively and unequivocally establish that the parent or guardian resides within the school district; and, in the case of a student living with a legal guardian who is a bona fide resident of the school district
8. Certified copy of filed petition for guardianship if pending and final decree when issued

Other procedures apply to students who are homeless or who live with adults other than parents or legal guardians.

NOTE: All new students who do not register during the designated times will not be allowed to register until **August 8, 2012.**

All other students who were enrolled in a Lauderdale County school the previous year will receive their class schedules on the first day of school, **August 7, 2012.**

REPORT CARD				
GRADING PERIOD	1	2	3	4
READING	A			
WRITTEN COMMUNICATION	A			
MATHEMATICS	C			
SCIENCE/HEALTH	B			
SOCIAL STUDIES	B			
ART	A			
MUSIC	A			
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	C			
Grade Average	B			
Attendance:	Present	100		
	Absent	0		
	Tardy	0		
<small>A = Excellent • B = Good • C = Satisfactory • N = Needs Improvement U = Unsatisfactory • I = Incomplete • Incomplete</small>				
Student:	Grade:	Year:		

SCHOOL CALENDAR 2012-2013
LAUDERDALE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
410 Constitution Avenue, P. O. Box 5498, Meridian, MS 39302

First Semester

August 2, 3, & 6	Professional Development Days
August 7	First Day of Classes for Students
September 3	Labor Day Holiday (Schools & Offices closed)
September 4-7	Mid-Term Test
September 12	SATP2 Retest (Writing)
September 17-21	SATP2 Retest
October 8 & 9	Fall Break (Schools closed)
October 10-12	Nine Weeks Test/ 1st Term Exams
November 13	SATP Testing-English II Writing & Retest
November 12-16	Mid-Term Test / CPAS2
November 19-23	Thanksgiving Holidays (Schools & Offices closed)
December 10-14	SATP Testing-Biology I, U.S. History (1877) Algebra I, English II
December 17-20	Exams
December 21 – January 3	Christmas Holidays (Schools & Offices closed)
STUDENT DAYS: 90	TEACHER DAYS: 93

Second Semester

January 4	Professional Development Day
January 7	Students Return to School
January 21	Dr. Martin L. King Holiday (Schools & Offices closed)
February 4-8	Mid-Term Tests
*February 18	Presidents' Day (*Schools closed*)
February 28	Writing Assessment Program – Grades 4 & 7
March 4-8	Nine Weeks Tests / 3rd Term Exams
March 11-15	Spring Break (Schools & Offices closed)
March 19-25	SATP Retest (SENIORS ONLY)
March 20	SATP Testing-English II Writing & Retest
March 29 & April 1	Easter Holidays (Schools closed) *Monday, 4/1/13
April 1-30	WIDA ACCESS for ELLs Testing
April 8-26	CPAS2
April 22-26	Mid-Term Tests
May 1	Science Test – Grades 5 & 8
May 6-10	SATP Testing-English II, Algebra I, U.S. History (1877), Biology
May 14-16	MCT2 – Grades 3-8 Language Arts & Math
May 20-23	Exams
*May 23	Last Day for Students (*If no make-up day needed)
May 24, 28, & 29	Professional Development Days
*May 24	Last Day for Students, if make-up day needed
*May 30	Professional Dev. Day, if make-up day needed
*Note: Monday, February 18 – Presidents' Day and / or Easter Monday, April 1, may be used for make-up day(s), if necessary.	
STUDENT DAYS: 90	TEACHER DAYS: 94
TOTAL STUDENT DAYS: 180	TOTAL TEACHER DAYS: 187

SCHOOL CALENDAR 2012-2013
MERIDIAN PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT
1019 25TH Avenue, Meridian, MS 39301

First Semester

August 1-3, 2012	Professional Development Days
August 6, 2012	First Day of Classes for Students
September 3, 2012	Labor Day Holiday (Schools closed)
September 11, 2012	Parent Teacher Conferences (Early Dismissal)
September 12-13, 2012	MWAP/SATP Retesting-English II Writing
September 17-21, 2012	SATP2 Retesting-Biology I, U.S. History (1877), Algebra I, English II Multiple-Choice
October 1-5, 2012	Nine-Week Tests
October 8-9, 2012	Fall Break (Schools Closed)
October 9, 2012	Teacher Professional Development
November 13-14, 2012	MWAP English II Writing Retest
November 19-23, 2012	Thanksgiving Holidays (Schools Closed)
November 29-30, 2012	SATP Retesting-English Writing
December 10-14, 2012	SATP2 Retesting-Biology I, U.S. History (1877), Algebra I, English II Multiple-Choice
December 17-20, 2012	Semester Exams
December 21, 2012 – January 3, 2013	Winter Break (Schools Closed)
Student Days: 91	Teacher Days: 95

Second Semester

January 4, 2013	Professional Development Day
January 7, 2013	Students Return to School
January 21, 2013	Martin L. King's Birthday (Schools Closed)
February 12, 2013	Parent Teacher Conferences (Early Dismissal)
February 18, 2013	Presidents' Day (Schools Closed)*
February 28 – March 1, 2013	MS Writing Assessment Program – Grades 4 and 7
March 4-8, 2013	Nine-Week Tests
March 6-7, 2013	SATP Retesting – English Writing
March 11-15, 2013	Spring Break (Schools Closed)
March 18-22, 2013	SATP2 Retesting-Biology I, U.S. History (1877), Algebra I, English II Multiple Choice
March 20-21, 2013	MWAP English II Writing Retest
March 29-April 1*, 2013	Spring Recess (Schools Closed) *Monday, 4/1/13*
April 1-30, 2013	ELL Assessment
April 8-26, 2013	MS-CPAS2 Testing (2 days only)
May 1-2, 2013	Science Test – Grades 5 and 8
May 7-13, 2013	SATP2 Testing-Biology I, U.S. History (1877), Algebra I, English II Multiple-Choice
May 14-17, 2013	MCT2 Grades 3-8 Language Arts & Math
May 20-23, 2013	Final Exams
May 24, 2013	Students Last Day
May 24, 2013	Graduation
Student Days: 91	Teacher Days: 92
Total: 182	Total: 187

*Note: Monday, February 18 and/or April 1, 2013, may be used for make-up day(s), if necessary. *Note: Testing dates are set by the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) and may be changed as MDE deems necessary.

Meridian Public School District 2012/13 Calendar Continued:

Professional Development (Students Do Not Attend School)	
August 1-3, 2012	Pre-Service Professional Development
October 9, 2012	Teacher Professional Development
January 4, 2013	Teacher Professional Development
	Total 5 days

Dates	Student Holidays
September 3	Labor Day
October 8-9	Fall Break
November 19-23	Thanksgiving
December 21 – January 4	Winter Break
January 21	Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday
February 18	Presidents' Day (Schools closed)*
March 11-15	Spring Break
March 29-April 1	Spring Recess*

*Note: Monday, February 18 and/or April 1, 2013, may be used for make-up day(s), if necessary.

Progress Report Dates	Report Card Dates
September 11, 2012*	October 15, 2012
November 13, 2012	January 14, 2013
February 12, 2013*	March 25, 2013
April 23, 2013	May 29, 2013*

Note: *Progress Reports will be distributed during Parent Teacher Conferences

Note: **Report Cards will be mailed.

Meridian, MS Private Schools

Lamar Elementary School

544 Lindley Road

Meridian, MS

601-693-8111

<http://www.lamarschool.com>

Lamar High School

544 Lindley Road

Meridian, MS

601-482-1345

<http://www.lamarschool.com>

Community Christian School

6256 Hwy 39 North

Meridian, MS

601-485-4515

Calvary Christian School

3917 7th Street Meridian, MS

601-483-2305

St. Patrick School

2700 Davis Street

Meridian, MS

601-482-6044

<http://www.stpatrickcatholicschool.org>

Russell Christian Academy

1844D HWY. 11 & 80

Meridian, MS 39301

Office Phone: 601-484-5888

Fax: 601-484-5722

<http://www.russellwarriors.com>



Home School Resources

A legal analysis of home schooling requirements in Mississippi can be found at the following web site: <http://www.hslda.org/laws/analysis/Mississippi.pdf>

Home School Laws, Policies, Forms

<http://www.hslda.org/hs/state/MS/>

Meridian Christian Home Educators

<http://www.meridianchristianhomeeducators.org/>

Home School Legal Defense Association

<http://www.hslda.org/hs/state/MS/>

Mississippi Home Educator's Association

<http://www.mhea.net/>

Home School-Life.com

<http://www.homeschool-life.com/>

Home School Central

<http://www.homeschoolcentral.com/>



Local Colleges and Universities

Meridian Community College

910 Highway 19 N

Meridian, MS

601-483-8241

601-679-2450 (NAS Meridian Campus)

<http://www.mcc.cc.ms.us/newhome/aneupage2.htm>



Mississippi State University Meridian Campus

1000 Hwy 19 N

Meridian, MS

601-484-0100

<http://www.meridian.msstate.edu/>

University of Southern Miss

Meridian Nursing Program

1000 Hwy 19 N

Meridian, MS

601-484-0400

<http://www.usm.edu/nursing>

East Mississippi Community College at NAS Meridian

255 Rosenbaum Ave

NAS Meridian, MS 39309

601-679-3570

<http://www.eastms.edu/Pages/Home.aspx>

Table of Online Resources

Autism Speaks	http://www.autismspeaks.org/
Boys and Girls Clubs of America	http://www.bgca.org/Pages/index.aspx
Boys and Girls Clubs of East Mississippi	http://www.eastmsbgc.org/
College Scholarship Information	http://www.militaryscholar.org/
Department of Defense Education Activity	http://www.dodea.edu/partnerships/index.cfm
*DoD Special Needs Parent Toolkit & EFMP Resources	*See below table.
eKnowledge.com	www.eKnowledge.com/MilNews
**Exceptional Family Member Program	**See below table.
Government Benefits	http://www.benefits.gov/
Help for ADHD	http://www.help4adhd.org/
***Home Schooling Resources for Military Families	***See below table.
Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004	http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/F?c108:1:./temp/~c1085H35rj:e615:
Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children	http://www.mic3.net/
Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC)	http://www.militarychild.org/
Military Impacted Schools Association	http://www.militaryimpactedschoolsassociation.org
Military Installations	http://apps.mhf.dod.mil/pls/psgprod/f?p=MHF:RELO:4175874473506504
Military Kids Connect	https://www.militarykidsconnect.org/
Military One Source	http://www.militaryonesource.com/Home/transition.aspx
Military Youth on the Move	http://apps.mhf.dod.mil/pls/psgprod/f?p=MYOM:HOME2:0
Mississippi Public Universities	http://www.mississippi.edu/universities/
National Association of Gifted Children	http://www.nagc.org/
National Home Education Network	http://www.nhen.org/home.html
National Home Education Research Institute	http://www.nheri.org/
National Military Family Association	http://www.nmfa.org/site/PageServer
Navy Child & Youth Programs	https://qol.navyaims.net/CYPWeb/Web/Home/Home.aspx?CSRT=7674825571405719619

Navy Knowledge Online Library/ MWR E-Library	https://wwwa.nko.navy.mil/portal/home/
Operation Autism Online	http://www.operationautisonline.org/
Operation Military Kids	http://www.operationmilitarykids.org/public/home.aspx
School Liaison Officers Directory	http://www.militaryk12partners.dodea.edu/index.cfm
Sittercity Childcare Program	https://www.sittercity.com/register_corp_1.html?corp=dod&client=67
Specialized Training of Military Parents (STOMP)	http://www.stompproject.org/
Student Aid/ Federal Financial Aid	http://studentaid.ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/students/english/index.jsp
Student Online Achievement Resources (SOAR)	http://www.soarathome.org/
Students at the Center	http://www.militaryk12partners.dodea.edu/studentsAtTheCenter/
The Education Directory for Children with Special Needs	http://apps.mhf.dod.mil/pls/psgprod/f?p=EFMP_DIRECTORY:HOME:0
Touching Base: U.S. Dept. of Ed. Newsletter for Military Communities	http://www2.ed.gov/news/newsletters/touchingbase/index.html
Tutor.com	http://www.tutor.com/military
USA4 Military Families	http://www.usa4militaryfamilies.dod.mil/pls/psgprod/f?p=USA4:HOME
U. S. Department of Education	http://www.ed.gov/index.jhtml
Wright's Law (Special Education Law)	http://www.wrightslaw.com/
Wright's Law Yellow Pages for Kids	http://www.yellowpagesforkids.com/help/states.htm

*Website for DoD Special Needs Parent Toolkit & EFMP Resources:

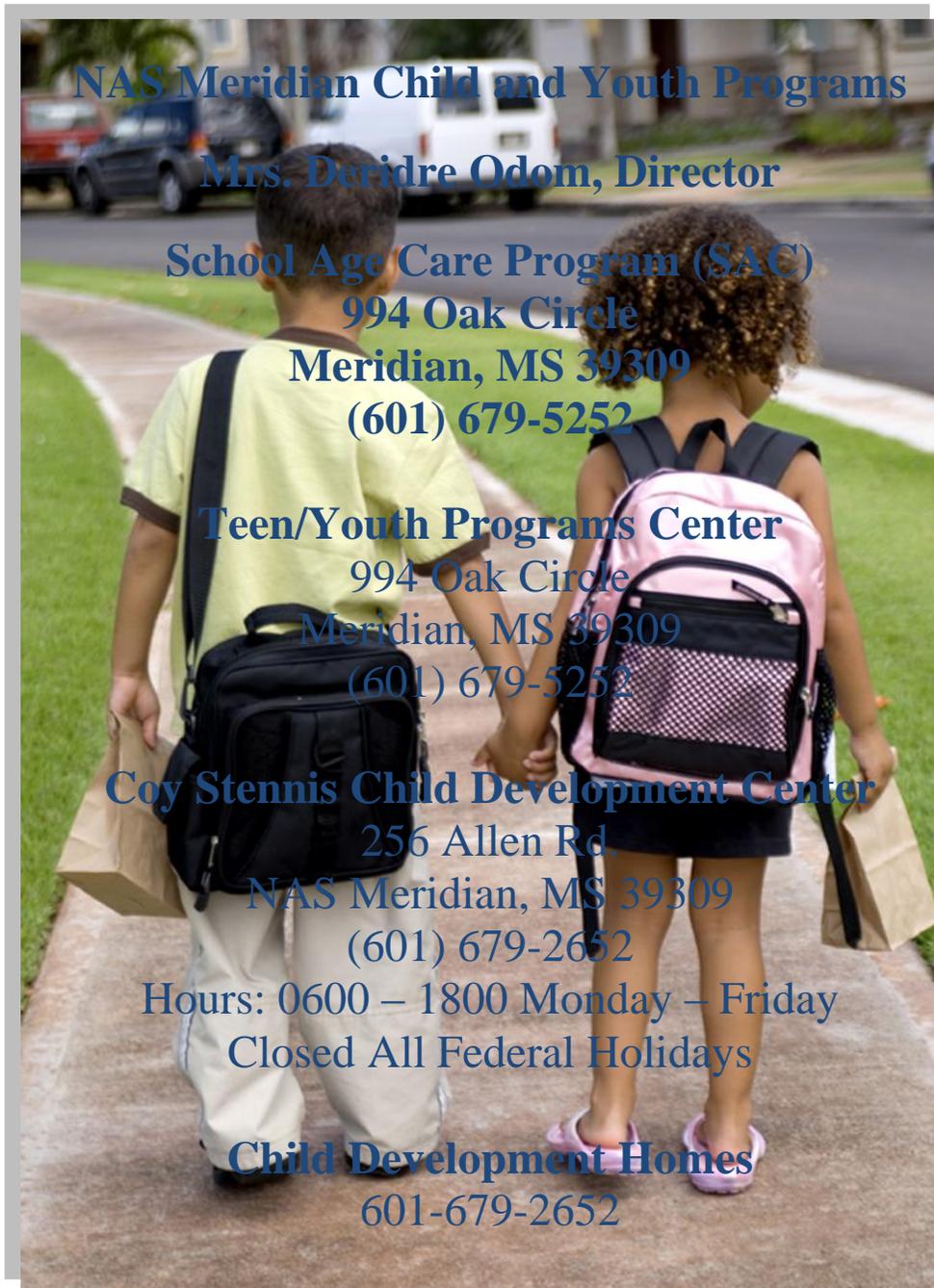
<http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/pls/psgprod/f?p=MHF:HOME1:0:::SID:20.40.500.565.0.0.0.0>

**Website for Exceptional Family Member Program:

http://www.cnic.navy.mil/CNIC_HQ_Site/WhatWeDo/FleetandFamilyReadiness/FamilyReadiness/FleetAndFamilySupportProgram/CNICD_A065893

***Website for Home School Resources for Military Families

http://www.militaryonesource.mil/MOS/f?p=MOS:CONTENT:0:::SV,UT,LG,CID,TID,COHE:Army%20Active,Member.EN,,23.50.10.20.0.0.0.0.262106#section_4



- ✓ NAS Meridian Child and Youth Programs; Mrs. Deridre Odom, Director
- ✓ School Age Care Program (SAC); 994 Oak Circle; Meridian, MS 39309; (601) 679-5252
Teen/Youth Programs Center; 994 Oak Circle; Meridian, MS 39309; (601) 679-5252.
- ✓ Coy Stennis Child Development Center; 256 Allen Rd; NAS Meridian, MS 39309;
(601) 679-2652; Hours: 0600 – 1800 Monday – Friday; Closed All Federal Holidays
- ✓ Child Development Homes; 601-679-2652

Mississippi Department of Education (MDE)

Contact Information

Street Address:

Mississippi Department of Education
359 North West Street
Jackson, MS 39201

Mailing Address:

Mississippi Department of Education
P.O. Box 771
Jackson, MS 39205-0771

Main Phone Number:

(601) 359-3513

Web Address:

<http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/mde-home>

Assessment and Accountability Reporting System State, District, & School Report Cards

<http://orsap.mde.k12.ms.us/MAARS/index.jsp>

MDE Curriculum and Instruction

<http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/curriculum-and-instruction>

Student Assessment Homepage; Practice Tests (MCT2, SATP2, etc.)

<http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/student-assessment>

Mississippi School for Mathematics and Science

The Mississippi School for Mathematics and Science (MSMS) is the state of Mississippi's only public, residential high school specifically tailored to meet the needs of the Magnolia State's most academically gifted high school juniors and seniors.

<http://www.msms.k12.ms.us/>



Navy Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP)

The Navy's Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) serves military families with special needs. The EFMP is a mandatory enrollment program for sponsors with qualifying family members. Enrollment in the EFMP ensures maximum provision of services to the family throughout the sponsor's career.

The EFMP includes identification of the family member's special needs and enrollment in the program, assignment coordination and family support. The Program assists Sailors during the assignment process by addressing the special needs of their exceptional family members (EFM) and ensuring they are assigned to areas where they can access necessary resources.

Special needs include special medical, dental, mental health, developmental or educational requirements, the requirement for adaptive equipment assistive technology devices and services and/or wheelchair accessibility.

The **Fleet and Family Support Program** is the Information and Referral (I&R) conduit for questions regarding EFM resources in the local community.

The **Military Treatment Facility** conducts overseas and suitability screening, and assists with EFMP enrollment.

EFMP Coordinators located at Military Treatment Facilities:

- ✓ Oversee the identification and enrollment of eligible service members and their families.
- ✓ Provide enrollment forms, offer help in the preparation of the forms, review completed forms for accuracy, and forward the enrollment package to the Central Screening Committee.
- ✓ At overseas MTFs, coordinate with the DoDDs and the local Educational and Developmental Intervention Services program.
- ✓ Partner with the FFSC EFMP Liaisons to provide EFM Program information, education and marketing.

EFMP enrollment is mandatory and required immediately upon identification of a special need. DD Form 2792 (PDF), Exceptional Family Member Medical and Educational Summary and DD Form 2792-1 (PDF), Exceptional Family Member Special Education / Early Intervention Summary are used for enrollment.

Exceptional Family Member Program Respite Care is specifically designed for Navy families who have children identified as Exceptional Family Members (EFM), category IV or V. This includes exceptional family members whose medical condition requires assignment near major medical facilities in the continental United States, or whose needs are complex and specialized requiring continuity of care.

Exceptional Family Member Program

367 Fuller Rd., Suite A-01
Branch Medical Clinic
Meridian, MS 39309
(601) 679-2633 ext. 104
1 (800) 527-8830

Go to

http://www.cnic.navy.mil/CNIC_HQ_Site/WhatWeDo/FleetandFamilyReadiness/FamilyReadiness/FleetAndFamilySupportProgram/CNICD_A065893 to read this article and learn more about EFMP.

Why Attendance Matters, Starting In the Early Grades

(Attendance Works is a national and state initiative that promotes awareness of the important role that school attendance plays in achieving academic success starting with school entry. This article was published by Attendance Works. Learn more at <http://www.attendanceworks.org/>.)

Succeeding in school requires developing good habits, and attendance is one of the most important. As early as kindergarten, too many absences can cause a child to start to fall behind academically, research shows. In the early grades, it is especially problematic for poor children whose families lack the resources to make up for time lost on task. For *all* children, learning to attend school regularly can help them develop the skills of persistence and perseverance which can help them succeed in school and, ultimately, in life.

Yet, research shows that one in 10 kindergarten and 1st grade students miss 10 percent of the school year, the point at which absences start to affect test scores. By middle school, chronic absenteeism can predict high school dropout rates. By 9th grade, it's a better predictor than past 8th grade test scores.

Sometimes it's hard for parents and teachers to recognize when a child is missing too much school. Absences don't always come in a row. Students can still get into trouble academically if they miss a day or two every few weeks.

Absences are not just a problem for the children who aren't in class. Whole classrooms can be affected if the teacher has to slow down learning to help children catch up. Schools can lose money when state funding depends partly on attendance. Parents play a key role in getting their children to school on time every day. Even with teenagers, parents should not underestimate the impact they can have by monitoring attendance and helping youth understand why going to school matters.

What Parents Can Do

1. **Send your children to school every day**, starting in kindergarten, to teach your children that attendance counts. Continue to monitor their attendance through high school
2. **Don't let your child miss school without a good reason**. Try to avoid medical appointments during the school day or vacations when school is in session.
3. **Create routines and stick to them**. Set a regular bed time and morning routine to get ready for school. For older students, be sure they get enough sleep.
4. **Keep an eye on what's happening with your children's education**. Look for signs that they are bored, struggling with school work or having trouble with friends. Seek out tutoring, talk with teachers. Nurture interest in being in school by finding engaging afterschool activities and encourage involvement in sports.
5. **Learn about the school's policies**. What incentives do teachers offer for good attendance? What counts as an excused or unexcused absence? What are the penalties?
6. **Find your own ways to reward good attendance**. You know best what motivates your child.
7. **Be open and honest with school officials**. Make sure the school has your up-to-date contact information. Work with the teacher, counselor and principal on problems your children are experiencing.
8. **Seek medical help when absences pile up**. Anything from asthma to a bad bout of head lice can keep kids out of school. Work with your doctor or school nurse.
9. **Turn to other families who can help you** with dropping off or picking up children and with babysitting.
10. **Seek help when you have a problem**. If absences result from family issue—a sudden illness, a lost job, foreclosure or a broken-down car—the school can connect you to other families or to social service providers.

The Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

When military families are happy and successful, service members are too. Strong military families help the retention and strength of our armed forces, so it is important to minimize the impact of the mobile military lifestyle on military families and their children. Frequent moves to new duty stations can be challenging, especially for parents with school age children. Parents want to provide a smooth transition from one school system to another, but often times are concerned that their children won't be enrolled in the classes they need, or be allowed to play their favorite sports, or even graduate on time. The Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children (the Compact) is designed to eliminate these concerns!

The Compact is an agreement among participating states to alleviate many of the school transition problems encountered by military families. As a military parent, you need to be aware of what school transition issues the Compact addresses and how to make sure your child benefits.

Overview of the Compact

Each state that has joined the Compact agrees to address specific school transition issues in a consistent way and minimize school disruptions for military children transferring from one state school system to another. The Compact consists of general policies in four key areas: eligibility, enrollment, placement, and graduation. It's up to member states to work together to resolve specific transition issues for individual students.

As of June, 2012, forty-three states have passed legislation to become members of the Compact, including most of those with large numbers of military residents. The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) cannot be a member of the Compact but is complying with its provisions in both overseas and domestic schools. In return, the Compact states have agreed to treat students coming from a DoDEA school as though they were transferring from a member state. You can go to <http://www.mic3.net/> or <http://www.usa4militaryfamilies.dod.mil/> to see the member states.

Enrollment

Military parents are accustomed to delays and frustrations in getting their children enrolled in a new school. The Compact has provisions for member states to facilitate enrollment in these areas:

- **Educational Records.** When a family leaves a school district in a member state, the parents may receive a set of "unofficial records" to carry to the new school in another member state. It will include all the information the new school needs to enroll and place the child until the official records are received. In addition, the Compact requires all "sending" school districts within member states to send official transcripts within ten days of a request from the "receiving" state school district.
- **Immunizations.** If a child transferring to a member state needs additional immunizations, he or she is allowed to enroll and begin school. Parents then have thirty days to see that the child gets the required immunizations. If a series of immunizations is required, it must be started within thirty calendar days of enrollment. Tuberculosis (TB) testing is not covered under the Compact since the TB test is not an immunization but rather a health screening.

- **Kindergarten and first grade entrance age.** If the entrance age requirement in the new school system is different, transitioning children may continue in the same grade if they have already started kindergarten or first grade in a school where the family was previously stationed. This provision also allows children to move up to first or second grade regardless of age requirements if they have completed kindergarten or first grade in another state.

Placement and Attendance

Students from military families often miss out on appropriate placement in required classes, advanced placement, and special-needs programs while awaiting evaluation at the new school. The Compact requires cooperation in these areas:

- **Course and educational program placement.** A receiving school district in a member state must initially honor placement of a student based on his or her enrollment in the sending state, provided the new school has a similar or equivalent program. The receiving school is allowed to evaluate the student after placement to ensure it is appropriate, but it may not put children into "holding classes" while they await assessment. The receiving school may allow the student to attend similar educational courses in other schools within the district if the receiving school does not offer such educational courses.
- **Special education services.** Students covered by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) will receive the same services (although not necessarily identical programs) identified in the individual education plan (IEP) from the sending state. This is a parallel requirement under federal law.
- **Placement flexibility.** School districts are encouraged to determine if course or program prerequisites can be waived for students who have completed similar coursework in the sending school district. Students in member states may request additional, excused absences to visit with their parent or legal guardian immediately before, during, and after deployment. Schools have flexibility in approving absences if there are competing circumstances such as state testing or if the student already has excessive absences.

Eligibility

The Compact asks school districts in member states to examine their rules for eligibility to allow children of military parents to have the continuity they need.

- **Enrollment.** When a child of a deployed parent is staying with a non-custodial parent, a relative, or a friend (officially acting in place of the parents) who lives outside of the home school district, the child may continue to attend his or her own school as long as the care provider ensures transportation to school. The Compact also stipulates that a power of attorney for guardianship is sufficient for enrollment and all other actions requiring parental participation or consent.
- **Extracurricular participation.** When children transfer to a new school, their participation in extracurricular activities will be facilitated -- provided they're eligible -- even if application deadlines and tryouts have passed. Schools must make reasonable accommodation but are not required to hold spaces open for military-related transferees.

Graduation

School transitions can be especially challenging for high school students. The Compact requires school districts to make the following accommodations to facilitate on-time graduation:

- **Course waivers.** School districts in member states may waive courses required for graduation if similar coursework has been completed in another school. Such waivers are not mandatory under the Compact, but a school district must show reasonable justification for denial of a waiver.
- **Exit exams.** Under the Compact, a school district may accept the sending state's exit exam, achievement tests, or other tests required for graduation instead of requiring the student to meet its own testing requirements. States have flexibility to determine what tests it will accept or require the student to take.
- **Transfers during senior year.** If a student moves during senior year and the receiving state is unable to make the necessary accommodations for required courses and exit exams, the two school districts must work together to obtain a diploma from the sending school so the student can graduate on time.

The parent's responsibility

If you have school age children, you'll want to understand all of the provisions of the Compact and also understand its limitations. For example, the Compact does not address the quality of education or require a state to change any of its standards or educational criteria. You can learn more about the Compact from the Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission at <http://www.mic3.net/>. You can also visit <http://www.usa4militaryfamilies.dod.mil/> to find out about all the ways the Department of Defense is working with the states to improve support for military families.

If you have a concern about a provision of the Compact as it relates to your child, it's best to contact the school first. But if your state is new to the Compact, don't be surprised if some local school personnel are not yet fully aware of the Compact's provisions. The School Liaison (SL) at your installation can help you work with the school to get your questions answered or give you information on next steps to take if your concern cannot be successfully resolved.

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IMPACT AID

The School Fundraiser: No Storage or Refrigeration Required

By Cynthia Haynes McDonald, NAS Meridian School Liaison

Every parent of a school-age child knows that sooner or later the child is going to come home with information about the dreaded “f” word—fundraising. You start targeting your neighbors, hoping to be the first one in the community to ask them to make a purchase. You call relatives and friends and invite them to browse through the brightly colored catalogs. So the ritual begins—another season of selling cookie dough, holiday ornaments, and magazine subscriptions.

But did you know that there is a way that you can make a financial contribution to your school district without competing with other families for customers? How? It’s simple. Just fill out and return the Parent-Pupil Survey that your child’s school sends home each year, usually during September or October. Survey results are used to assess the number of federally connected students enrolled in the district. This number is reported to the U.S. Department of Education in the form of an application requesting Impact Aid.

Impact Aid was passed into law by Congress in 1950 as a means of providing for the education of federally connected children—children of military service members and Department of Defense employees, among others. Ordinarily, school districts receive funding from property taxes paid by individuals and local businesses. However, military installations are exempt from property taxes, and often military service members claim their home state for purposes of taxation, not the state where they are temporarily stationed. Though beneficial for the service member, this contributes to a significant loss of revenue for local school districts.

To off-set this loss, the U. S. Department of Education provides a supplement that is paid directly to school districts. According to the official Impact Aid website, “The Impact Aid payment for these students is intended to match the taxes lost as a result of the federal ownership of property, exclusive jurisdiction and the Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Relief Act. The funds go directly into the school district’s general fund for operations such as purchase of textbooks, computers, utilities, and payment of staff salaries.”

To be eligible to receive Impact Aid, a school district must have at least 400 federally connected students in their Average Daily Attendance (ADA) or federally connected students must account for at least 3% of the district’s ADA. This is why your response to the Parent-Pupil Survey is so critical. Underreporting excludes districts from receiving funds and places a financial burden on districts to provide educational services to students.

Whether you live on base or work for the DoD in some other capacity, please take the time to complete and return the survey to your child’s school and contribute to this often overlooked fundraiser.

To learn more about Impact Aid and the formulas used to determine appropriations, visit the following sites: <http://www.militaryfamily.org/get-info/support-children/education/impact-aid.html> OR <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oese/impactaid/index.html> .