Military Students on the Move

A Toolkit for Military Parents

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About this Toolkit

Quality education for their children is a major Quality of Life issue for military families. Frequent moves create challenges for the entire family – particularly in the area of education. Selecting schools that are well matched to the needs of children and supporting them as they say good-bye to one community and adjust to another is a difficult part of moving. Parents are key players in ensuring school satisfaction and a positive transition for their children.

This Toolkit for Military Parents is one of three Toolkits prepared by the Department of Defense to help parents, installation commanders, and school leaders make the education transition for military children as smooth as possible.

The accompanying CD offers hyperlinks for quick access to information, forms and resources. The Toolkits can be found in their entirety at www.militarystudent.org and are constantly updated on this site. They may be shared with other parents, school districts, and with installation commanders.

Contents

The Toolkit for Military Parents is divided into 5 main sections:

1. **Introduction: Tasks and Tools**
2. **Before You Move: The Challenges of Change**
3. **Understanding School Choice**
4. **When You Arrive: Making a Difference in a New Community**
5. **Tools**

Click on the **Blue** words throughout the Toolkit for quick access to the Tools Section.

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Introduction

Tasks and Tools

So you're moving! There is a long list of things to do. Getting organized is the key. Below is a list of essential tasks and the tools to help you accomplish them. The links below will take you to tools that help make your move more efficient and productive. Some forms, marked in Red, will be available through your child's school or through your military installation. Essential tasks include:

1. **Complete a Moving Checklist**
2. **Separate Hand Carry Essentials**
3. **Have a Family Meeting**
4. **Inform Your Child's School about your PCS Move**
5. **Complete School's Checkout List**
6. **Request School Records (Parent Copies)**
7. **Request Form to send Official School Records to Gaining School**
8. **Teacher Conference Questions**
9. **Interview Questions for the Gaining School**
   http://www.militaryimpactedschoolsassociation.org/districts_template.html
10. **Record of Medical Information Form**

Assistance at Your Fingertips

There are many outstanding websites with information that can help you ask the right questions and make the right choices when planning for a move. The following websites stand out because they are user-friendly, up-to-date and address military family transition issues.

Military OneSource [http://www.militaryonesource.com]

Military OneSource is a 24-hour, seven-days-a-week information and referral service available worldwide via telephone or Internet. Active Duty, Reserve, National Guard military members and their families, and deployed civilians and their families are eligible for this free service. Military OneSource provides information about a variety of topics including education, parenting and childcare, relocation, deployment, finances, every day concerns, etc. Users may access the website to order educational materials (booklets, CDs, etc.) and download articles and audio tips at no charge.

Military OneSource can also provide a referral to face-to-face counseling for six sessions per issue with professional civilian counselors at no cost to the military or family member (please note in-person counseling is only available in the United States and Puerto Rico). Overseas, Military OneSource can help access those existing services provided through the Medical Treatment Facilities. Users can access the service toll free:

From the United States: (800) 342-9647
From overseas: (800)-3429-6477
From overseas collect: 1-484-530-5908

Department of Defense: The Military Child in Transition and Deployment

[http://www.militarystudent.org]

MilitaryStudent.org is the DoD website for parents, children, special needs families, installation commanders, and educators including:

- Toolkits for military families, installation commanders and school leaders
- Section for Children ages 6-12 and Teens on transition and deployment issues
- State Data Bank for Education Requirements
- Publications for Parents, Students and Teachers printable from the site including "Choosing a School for Your Child" from Dept. of Education.
- Best Practices for schools working with military children

The United States Department of Education

[http://www.ed.gov/parents/academic/involve/nclbchecklist.html]

This section of the Department of Education website provides an excellent, comprehensive list of questions to ask a prospective new school. The website also includes information on charter school grants and other education options.

…Being a father, there's nothing else—particularly today given the challenges— that makes you think about the kind of world you want to leave these children and grandchildren. And as the Chairman I can tell you that absolutely is what motivates me every day—not just my children and my grandchildren, but your children as well and our families.

General Richard B. Myers, Former Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
Fathers Day Speech, June 17, 2004

The Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC)

[http://www.militarychild.org]

MCEC is a non-profit organization that identifies the challenges that face the highly mobile military child, increases awareness of these challenges in military and educational communities and initiates and implements programs to meet the challenges. Website offerings include:

- Initiatives, Training and Workshops
- Publications on topics including Education, Parenting and Deployment
- Educational Resource Center
- MCEC National Annual Conference
- Information on Homeschooling, Virtual Schools and more

The Military Impacted Schools Association (MISA)

[http://www.militaryimpactedschoolsassociation.org]

MISA is a national organization representing school districts that serve high concentrations of military children. The organization works to provide a continuum of quality education through funding, legislation, partnerships and programs for military families on the move. The website provides:

- Checklists and questions to consider when your children are leaving one school and you are selecting a new one including:
  - Checklist questions for a new school
  [http://www.militaryimpactedschoolsassociation.org/checklist_newschool.html]
  - Checklist for leaving a school district
  [http://www.militaryimpactedschoolsassociation.org/checklists_leaving.html]
  - Interview questions for a new school
  [http://www.militaryimpactedschoolsassociation.org/district_template.html]
- Impact Aid Information

National Military Family Association (NMFA)

[http://www.nmfa.org]

NMFA, "The Voice for Military Families," is dedicated to providing information to and representing the interests of family members of the uniformed services. In addition to information on deployment, education, family life and health care, NMFA provides valuable links to other useful sites designed to give you the latest information available. They have a "Back to School" section which includes many links to valuable information on education for students and parents [http://www.nmfa.org/site/PageServer?pagename=2005_back_to_school] and are an excellent source of information for quality of life issues for military families.

Before You Move:
The Challenges of Change

Military Families on the Move

While moving is stressful for everyone, military families are generally very adept at dealing with change. They meet the challenges involved with making a PCS move with skill and organization. Developing an Action Plan with your family before you move taps into those strengths and skills and helps make the move easier for everyone.

Before you customize your own Action Plan, take time to review some ideas for a successful move and consider which suggestions will be most helpful for your family. Several military websites have excellent suggestions, tips, questions to ask, and convenient websites on moving with school-age children.

- http://www.militaryonesource.com
- http://www.militarystudent.org
- http://www.militarychild.org
- http://www.militaryimpactedschoolsassociation.org
- http://www.nmfa.org

The Homefront section of the website, Military Money [http://www.militarymoney.com], focuses on ways to help kids cope with the upcoming move. They offer three suggestions that make a difference in the successful PCS move:

- Keep a positive attitude
- Get advice when needed
  (relocation assistance advisors and school liaison representatives are available)
- Communicate—and include the kids in planning

"I was 7 years old when my dad told me we were moving.... I was really excited to finally be getting my own room and maybe even a dog. But I was also very scared I wouldn't make any friends or find my way around my new school."

Justine, now age 10, is only one of the many thousands of kids who move each year. And the way she felt about the move - scared, excited, and angry - are just a few of the feelings kids have about moving. Moving isn't easy for anyone, even for adults. And while moving can be a time for some great new things - like your own room or a new place to explore - it can also be a time that's sad and stressful, too. For some ways to make a move a little easier for you and your children, go to:

Adapted from: http://www.kidshealth.org/kid/feeling/home_family/moving.htm

Dr. David Fassler (2004), a practicing clinical and adolescent psychiatrist, offers 14 suggestions in "Children in Military Families: Tips for Parents and Teachers," which parents can use to their advantage at home and at school, whether dealing with a PCS move or deployment. Dr. Fassler's suggestions are listed in the Tools Section of this Toolkit.

In Times of Uncertainty

1. Talk to your family and create a plan.
2. Talk to professionals at your child's school.
3. Utilize the support structure within your family
4. Utilize the support systems on your installation.

Military Child Education Coalition, Academic Passport, 2001, p. 27

Action Plan: Customizing Your Family's Needs

A Family Meeting

Before a PCS move, making time to hold a family meeting allows every member of the family to offer suggestions or to express concerns and anxieties that everyone can discuss. An effective family meeting will vary based on individual needs, but in general should provide information, solve problems, and/or focus on "family building" and enjoyment (Gerlach, 2005).

- **Sample Family Meeting Agenda**
  This suggested agenda for a Family Meeting is based on providing information, problem-solving, and sharing family values and family traditions. Agendas should be modified based on family needs and circumstances.

- **Sample Interviews**
  Family members can interview each other to learn more about concerns and hopes they each have about the upcoming move.

- **Assignments in the Move: Things to Do**
  During your family meeting, you can work together to make a list of things that need to be accomplished before the move and ask family members to volunteer to tackle things on that list. Every family's list will be a little different, but here are some things everyone should think about doing:
  - Inform your child's school about your PCS date
  - Communicate regularly with deployed family members
  - Organize: pre-packing, buying, selling, donations
  - Use Requests for Letters and Letters to… (as needed)
  - Plan for pet care (transporting pets, veterinary certificates, rules regarding quarantine) http://myarmylifetoo.com
  - Arrange tryouts (sports, debate, drama, music…) with gaining school; requesting delayed selection or videoed performance with cooperating school
  - Arrange performance videos for students with current school (sports, debate, drama, music)
  - Create an academic and/or art portfolio for each student
  - Complete a Moving Checklist to ensure major tasks are done

- **Keeping in Touch: Address Book/Business card/We've Moved**
  - Give each family member an address book to record mailing and email addresses of the friends they are leaving behind.
  - Many websites offer free "business cards" which you can customize with your forwarding address and hand out to friends. You can also create your own business cards and print them for a nominal cost.
    - http://www.freewebs.com/vistaprintings
    - http://www.vista.com
  - You can use "We've Moved" post cards or send email messages to relatives and friends to stay in touch with the people who care about your family.

- **The Symbolism of Saying "Good-bye"**

  Part of your family meeting should address saying good-bye to friends, favorite places, and special community members who have made an impact on your lives. Taking the time to do this helps brings closure to family members and can help get them ready for the next stage of their adventure. Parents' positive attitudes about moving can frame children's behavior and their view of the move as a new opportunity. During a Family Meeting, the entire family can plan how they wish to "say good-bye" before they leave: tour of the town, dinner at a favorite restaurant, picnic in the park, dinner with close friends, pot luck at church or club.

  Occasionally, pets must be left behind when facing a move. Encouraging children to help find a new, loving home for pets can make them feel more comfortable about saying goodbye. If they also have the email address of the new owner, they can check in on how Rover or Muffin is doing when they arrive at their new home.

  With the right approach, every move can be viewed as the next step in life's adventure filled with new opportunities, friends, and even pets. Children often have unspoken feelings and concerns which they do not or cannot express. There are resources that can help parents to get their kids to talk through what they are feeling and fearing about the move.

  A very user friendly website, Kid's Health, has sections for parents, elementary students, and teens which provide information, raise serious questions about feelings, and help parents and children to open the lines of communication.

  - http://www.kidshealth.org/parent
  - http://www.kidshealth.org/kid
  - http://www.kidshealth.org/teen/

School Attendance is vitally important.

Taking children out of school earlier than the designated date for the end of the year or extending your vacation into the next school year can affect your child's academic success. Children need to know that their parents take school attendance seriously. Extended time out of school can affect student progress. Students need to consider school their "job" and know that parents expect them to do their job well.

Organizing Documentation

When preparing to move, there are a number of documents that you will want to gather and organize so they are easy to find once you are settled in your new home.

Official School Records

- **School to School Copies:** Most schools prefer to send official student records to the receiving school when a student transfers. In the event that your child's school has closed, ensure that you have the address of the location where the records will be stored. If you have the address of the gaining school, your current school may have "Request for Records" forms that can be completed before you leave to request the transfer of official records. http://www.dodea.edu/instruction/curriculum/curriculum.htm

- **Special Education Records:** Official special education records are also transferred from school to school. However, parents should have copies of all significant special education records for any child who participates in the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) to include the Individualized Education Plan (IEP), psychological testing, and progress reports. It is crucial that you hand carry special education records to the receiving school.

  Some parents withhold special education records to see if the receiving school will "notice the special needs." This places school personnel and your special needs student at a disadvantage when planning an appropriate educational program. Everyone's goal is to create a successful learning environment for all students.

- **Special Education Resources:**
  - **STOMP** (Specialized Training of Military Parents) is a federally funded Parent Training and Information (PTI) Center established to assist military families who have children with special education or health needs. STOMP is funded through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The staff of the STOMP Project includes parents of children who have disabilities and have experience in raising their children in military communities and traveling with their spouses to different locations.

  - **Military OneSource** has special needs experts on staff. They are familiar with the EFMP and STOMP programs and can also help you research services you may be eligible for in your new area and state-specific programs that may be beneficial to your child. From the US: (800) 342-9647. From overseas: (800)-3429-6477. From overseas collect: 1-484-530-5908

  - **Yellow Pages for Kids with Disabilities** lists educational consultants, psychologists, diagnosticians, health care specialists, academic tutors, speech language therapists, advocates, and attorneys in each state along with government programs, grassroots organizations, special education schools, and parent support groups. http://www.yellowpagesforkids.com/help/states.htm.

Helpful Websites for Families with Special Needs

http://www.stompproject.org/
http://www.militarystudent.org (click Special Needs Families)
http://www.dodea.edu/instruction/curriculum/special_ed/
http://www.lifelines.navy.mil/
http://www.militaryhomefront.org
http://www.militaryonesource.org
http://www.yellowpagesforkids.com/help/states.htm

Parent Copies

Do Not Include in Household Goods

Parents have the right to have copies of their children's current records, including special education records. These records should be maintained in separate files for each child and hand carried to the receiving school as noted above. In addition to personal school records, make sure you take copies of the following:

- Course descriptions
- The grading scale used by current school including weighted grading systems
- A list of all textbooks used in the current school
- Current course schedule
- http://www.dodea.edu/curriculum/

Informal School Files

Informal collections of your child's work and recognition of achievements provide valuable insights into your child's interests, skills, learning style, motivation, abilities, leadership and much more. Keeping a yearly record creates an invaluable method of preserving your child's accomplishments. These collections are particularly important to students who are juniors and seniors in high school and are applying for college.

- **Portfolios:** It is helpful to keep a collection of student work that represents the actual performance of your child in addition to the "reported" information as seen in a report card or transcript. A portfolio of selected essays or other writing assignments, art/graphic work, photography, musical compositions, math contest awards, technology programs, speeches written by the student, etc. will provide the receiving school with a more complete picture of your child's performance and strengths. Standardized testing can be included in the portfolio to complete the overview of your child's work.

- **Narratives and Awards:** Often teachers, principals, scout leaders, church officials, and other community leaders write letters, recommendations, or give awards and other commendations to acknowledge the outstanding achievements or service of your children. These can be included in the portfolio or maintained as a separate file as a collection of student work.

Develop a College Profile Now…

Beginning in middle school, MilitaryStudent.org provides an on-line downloadable student profile that will allow your child to preserve all the information necessary to complete college applications and write college admissions essays in the coming years. Start before your move occurs.

[http://www.militarystudent.dod.mil/portal/page?_pageid =115,108428&_dad=portal9x&_schema=PORTAL9X&COHE_ID =162381&LOCATION=TEENs]

Health Records

- **Official Copies:** Your installation or local hospital maintains official copies of your medical records, including immunizations. Depending on installation policy, official medical records may be sent directly to the new medical center or you may be able to hand carry these important documents. Do not include them in your household goods.

- **Personal Copies**
  Like school records, you are entitled to copies of your medical records. Even if official medical records are sent directly to a new medical center, you should have copies of medical records for all your children as well as for you and your spouse.

  Immunization records are generally required to enroll children in their new schools, but state laws vary widely and most states and school systems recognize waivers for both medical and religious reasons. If your children attended a DoDEA school, they were required to have six immunizations. They should be listed in your official immunization record, but you can find the list on the DoDEA website: [http://www.dodea.edu/communities/medical.htm]

Further Information

- The "Childhood and Adolescent Immunization Schedule" is produced by the National Immunization Program of the Center for Disease Control (CDC) in both English and Spanish:
  English [http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5351-Immunizational.htm]
  Spanish [http://cdc.gov/nip/recs/child-schedule_sp.pdf]

- **Parent's Guide to Childhood Immunization,** developed by the CDC, is available in both English and Spanish which you can print from the site or request by mail. This guide offers a rationale for immunizing your children and provides an extensive list of childhood diseases, their symptoms, and the long term effects of the illness. [http://www.cdc.gov/nip/publications/Parents-Guide/default.htm]

- **Getting Your Ducklings in a Row**, an MCEC publication, gives parents basic information regarding age and vaccination requirements of school systems serving the majority of military children. See the MCEC website for further information [http://www.militarychild.org].

- **List of Physicians/Addresses/Phone numbers**
  It may helpful to maintain an ongoing list of physicians' names, their addresses, phone numbers, and dates of service for each family member. Many states require this information, particularly if EFMP students wish to apply for Social Security benefits after graduation. An ongoing list eliminates the need to recreate the information, and applies only to treatment for chronic and ongoing conditions. A sample list is provided in the Tools Section. In the Special Needs Section of Militarystudent.org, you can create an online record of your children's health information. In addition, contact your military installation representatives to find out the latest information on Tricare.

Expect Differences from State to State

Remember that each state may have specific forms that must be used. Check with your gaining installation medical center to ensure that your immunization records are recorded on the proper form. See the Parent Section of www.MilitaryStudent.org for immunization requirements by state.

Hand Carry Essentials

Safeguard or hand-carry the following documents

- **Appropriate Power of Attorney**
  (Check with your JAG Office to determine your needs)
- **State and Federal Income Tax Records**
- **Insurance Policies**
- **Deeds/Mortgages**
- **Signed (and Witnessed) Wills for You and your Spouse**
- **Birth certificates and Passports**
- **School Records**
- **Immunization Records**

Essentials of School Choice

The Department of Defense has developed a comprehensive plan that provides military families with the tools and information needed to make informed choices regarding the appropriate educational setting for each child. Through publications, resources and websites listed below, parents can access information necessary to compare options, make sound education decisions, and become involved and informed advocates of quality education.

Upon learning of an impending move, parents can consult the following DoD initiatives as well as excellent resources from other agencies, the Services and national organizations.

- ❑ **"Military Students on the Move: A Toolkit for Military Parents"**
  - How to prepare for the move
  - How to select a school
  - Updated regularly on http://www.MilitaryStudent.org

- ❑ **"Choosing A School For Your Child"**
  - Department of Education workbook assists parents in selecting schools that match the educational needs of their children
  - http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oii

- ❑ **On-Line Data Bank of Available Education Options**
  - Lists names and locations of public, public charter, private, virtual and home schooling choices around major installations
  - Available in Parent Section of http://www.MilitaryStudent.org, Spring 2006

- ❑ **On-Line Performance Indicators of Local Schools**
  - Information on quality indicators and student performance in schools across the country
  - Standard and Poors' School Matters: http://www.schoolmatters.com/

- ❑ **On-Line Data-Bank of State Legislation**
  - Admission age for Kindergarten, immunization requirements, graduation requirements and other pertinent information
  - Parent Section of www.MilitaryStudent.org

- ❑ **Military OneSource**
  - Call center answers questions regarding education in the new duty station.
    From the United States: (800) 342-9647
    From overseas: (800)-3429-6477
    From overseas collect: 1-484-530-5908
  - http://www.militaryonesource.com

- **MilitaryStudent.org and "Military Teens on the Move (MTOM)"**
  - Tips for kids on moving, making new friends, learning about your new community and deployed parents
  - Children Ages 6-12 Section and Teen Section of www.MilitaryStudent.org
  - MTOM: www.dod.mil/mtom/

- **Military Child Initiative**
  - Sponsored by DoD and Johns Hopkins University for parents and schools
  - Connectedness Research (helping students feel a sense of belonging in school) and its impact on academic success
  - School/Home Partnership research and its impact on student success
  - Resources for military families
  - Best practices and resources for schools
  - Work with Parent and School Groups to improve educational opportunities
  - Advocate for military child education issues
  - www.jhsph.edu or email mci@jhsph.edu

- **On-line Teachers' Course: "Educating the Military Child"**
  - Sponsored by DoD and Johns Hopkins University
  - Inservice opportunities and graduate course of study for educators of military children
  - Research, strategies and best practices for addressing transition and deployment issues on district, school and classroom levels
  - www.militarystudent.org Available Summer 2006

Constant Update

As each portion of the DoD plan to help Military Families on the Move is completed, the on-line version of the parent toolkit will be updated. For the latest version, consult DoD's www.MilitaryStudent.org and Military OneSource.

Understanding School Choice

Whether you are assigned living quarters or have a choice of where to live, it is important to explore all educational options to discover the proper match for each child. All parents want the best possible education for their children. Students have different learning styles and needs. Children within the same family may not learn in the same way or at the same rate. Finding the right educational setting for each child requires a careful examination of various options that are available to students and their families.

Understanding expanded school choice is essential to selecting the best type of school setting for your children. The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) signed in 2002, gives parents additional options when considering how to educate their children. "Choosing a School for your Child," a publication of the U.S. Department of Education [http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oii] offers a series of checklists and pertinent questions to assist parents in making the right choices.

Remember that there are procedural and policy differences between states. The National School Boards Association website has state-specific information about school choice, including policy issues and legal requirements. [http://www.nsba.org/site/index.asp] Also consult the parent section of MilitaryStudent.org for state legislation that may affect your child's education such as entry age, graduation requirements, etc.

There are multiple user friendly websites that will give parents and students easy access to information about individual schools as well as their mission, curriculum, and academic/extra-curricular programs. Reviewing the sites listed below will help you make the most informed decision. Increasing options for students can have a positive influence on student motivation.

Discover Your Options

**DoD, with the help of the RAND Corporation,
is currently compiling a list of all school choices
surrounding heavily impacted military installations.
The results of this study will be posted
on the MilitaryStudent.org website and Military OneSource.**

http://www.militarystudent.org
Military OneSource 1-800-342-9647

Public Education

District Schools

District schools are often called "neighborhood schools" because they are within the town/city where the student lives. They provide a free, public education for all students who reside within the boundaries of the district and make special arrangements for students with special needs. Most offer transportation to students who are not within walking distance. Teachers must be certified by the state and meet testing requirements of the state. An elected board of education traditionally oversees the budget and policies of the district schools. Here are some user friendly websites which will allow you to look at schools by state:

- http://www.schoolmatters.com
- http://www.schooltree.org
- http://www.ed.gov/parents/schools/find/choose/index.html
- http://www.militaryonesource.com

Charter Schools

Charter schools are another way that communities can create new public education options and partnerships for their children. Chartering allows schools to run independently of the traditional public school system and to tailor their programs to community needs. However, the schools have increased autonomy in return for stronger accountability. Schools obtain charters only with the approval and oversight of their local school district or other state authorizing agency. They are required to be open to all students and to provide for students with special needs. A lottery system is used if there are more applicants than spaces available. Teachers must be certified by the state and meet testing requirements of the state. Currently, forty states and the District of Columbia have charter laws. Websites with helpful information about charter schools include the following:

- http://www.uscharterschools.org/pub/uscs_docs/index.htm US Charter Schools
- http://www.edreform.com/index.cfm?fuseAction=stateStats&pSectionID=15&cSectionID=44 Center for Education Reform
- http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/districtsearch/ or Education Statistics
- http://www.essentialschools.org CES Small Schools Project

Magnet Schools

Magnet Schools are publicly funded schools with an educational focus or theme. Students generally choose to attend a magnet school because of an interest in the school's theme, academic focus or unique programs such as science, technology, math, performing arts, foreign languages or International Baccalaureate. Magnet schools are operated by local districts, regional centers, and/or an agreement between school districts who share policy and curriculum decisions for the school. All students are eligible to attend magnet schools and may not be denied enrollment because of race, religion, economic status, or disability. However, school districts usually limit the number of students who may attend magnet schools and must use a lottery system to select students if there are more applications than spaces available. Transportation is usually provided by the local school district where the school resides. Teachers must be certified by the

state and meet all testing requirements of the state. Websites with information about magnet schools include:

- http://www.ed.gov/programs/magnet/index.html
- http://www.schooltree.org
- http://www.militaryonesource.com

Don't Miss the Date

Student Selections are often made in April or May for Charter and Magnet schools. Cut off and application dates apply. Be sure to contact the receiving district early (January or February) if you want your child considered for these programs.

Virtual Schooling

Virtual courses are often called "Distance Learning" since they utilize the school's Internet connections to make coursework available to students. Virtual coursework is available to both public and private school students and homeschoolers. The instructors for Virtual coursework may be anyone approved by the district and might be on the district faculty, on a college staff, or even in another country. Students may complete the coursework at school or at home and are responsible for completing all coursework and required exams in order to receive credit. Virtual coursework offers almost limitless possibilities for students who want to progress at their own rate, are homebound due to illness, and/or who have advanced to a level of coursework that is not offered by the school district. There may be costs associated with virtual coursework, but public school districts usually pay for distance learning or programmed studies designed to accommodate the learning needs of their students. There are many websites describing individual virtual schooling programs, however, one website, Distance Education and Training Council of the U.S. Department of Education, offers information and links to others:

- http://www.detc.org/
- http://www.detc.org/Fed_Mil.html
- http://www.militarychild.org/VirtulSchools.asp

Career Technology

Career Technology Centers are often provided for students in grades 9-12 who have an interest in specific vocational, technical, or technological training. These programs are often housed in separate buildings from the regular district high school while others are incorporated within the high school. Students who have interest in specific training offered by these schools should consult counselors, vocational teachers, and parents. Transportation is provided by the district and all teachers must have state certification as well as special training/experience in the areas taught. Websites with information about career technology centers include:

- http://www.schooltree.org
- http://www.schoolmatters.org

Department of Defense Schools

The Department of Defense Education Activity runs two school systems for children of American military families. All schools are accredited and are academically competitive with public school systems in the United States. http://www.dodea.edu

Department of Defense Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools (DDESS) provide comprehensive educational programs on military installations located in seven states and Puerto Rico. Military students living off military installations usually attend other schooling options. DDESS schools do not provide all grade levels at every location. Where the grade level program is not offered, students living on military installations attend schools in the civilian community.

Department of Defense Dependent Schools (DoDDS) operates in 13 foreign countries. Approximately 35 percent of DoDDS students have parents/guardians in the Army, and 29 percent have parents/guardians in the Air Force. An estimated 30,000 children in DoDDS will be part of the Global Rebasing effort and will be returning to schools in the United States beginning in 2005.

Advanced Placement

Advanced Placement Programs are generally offered within the public high school. Each district decides which courses to offer based on district needs and teacher availability. These courses offer a more rigorous curriculum and students take a standardized test at the end of the course which is given on the same date nationally. The tests are scored by Advanced Placement (AP) personnel on a 1-5 scale. Students must receive a 3 or higher on the test in order to transfer the course for college credit, although many colleges require a 4 or higher to give credit and some colleges will not accept AP courses for college credit. Teachers are required to be certified by the state and undergo special training before teaching AP courses. AP courses must be accessible to all students, although the coursework challenges students to perform at a high level academically. Websites with information about AP courses include:

- http://www.schooltree.org
- http://www.schoolmatters.org
- http://www.collegeboard.com/splash/parents

International Baccalaureate

International Baccalaureate Programs (IB) are offered by some public, international and other private schools, as part of their regular curriculum. Some IB programs are the "focus or theme" of a Magnet school and the entire curriculum centers around the IB curriculum. Like the AP coursework, the IB curriculum is coupled with challenging assessments as well as intellectual rigor and high academic standards. IB programs also foster ideals of international understanding and responsible citizenship. IB students are taught to think critically and to become informed about local and world affairs. If IB programs are offered through public schools, they must be accessible to **all** students within the district, although the coursework challenges students to perform at a high level academically. Teachers must be certified by the state and undergo special training sponsored by the International Baccalaureate Organization. IB Program websites include:

- http://www.ibo.org/index.cfm
- http://www.professorlamp.com/ed/TEA/IB.html

Non-Public Education

Religious schools

Religious schools are private schools which generally espouse a specific religious belief based on the denomination or faith established by the governing board. Often religious schools have open enrollment and do not require their student body to be members of the faith or denomination, although they do require that all students abide by the rules established by the school leadership.

In addition to academic coursework, religious schools usually require coursework in religious studies. Students must apply to attend the school and entrance exams may be required. Private religious schools can refuse admission to any student or dismiss a student after enrollment for an infraction of the rules. Teachers are not required to be certified by the state, though they may be required to be a member of the religious denomination. Teachers may hold a variety of degrees and certifications. Requirements vary by school. Tuition costs vary widely. Transportation may be included in the cost of tuition or may be a separate charge. Websites with information about religious school options include:

- http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oii
- http://www.parochial.com/
- http://www.sacs.org/pub/elem/links/acccom.htm

Private Secular Schools

Private Secular schools are schools without religious affiliation. Many secular schools have a long history and tradition while others are relatively new. Secular schools often give preference for admission to students whose relatives are alumnae of the school. Secular schools may offer a traditional education that centers on preparation for college while others focus on an educational philosophy or a specific approach to learning such as those that accommodate individuals with special needs, i.e., schools for deaf or blind students. Tuition costs vary widely. Transportation may be included in the cost of tuition or may be a separate charge. Teachers are not required to be certified by the state though they may hold a variety of degrees and certifications. Websites with information about private secular schools include:

- http://www.schoolmatters.org
- http://www.schooltree.org
- http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oii
- http://www.ibo.org/ibo/index.cfm
- http://www.professorlamp.com/ed/TEA/IB.html

Home Schooling

Home Schooling or Home Education is defined simply as “educating children outside the public-private-parochial school establishment" (Glueck, 2002). Parents may decide to Home School their children for a variety of reasons—religion, special needs, concern about physical conditions and danger in formal school settings, or concern for unacceptable teaching or religious curricula. Each state has specific mandatory requirements for parents who choose the home schooling option. Parents may decide to perform the schooling themselves in their own home or a relative, neighbor, professional tutor, or home schooling cooperative may perform the service. Parents who are considering this option should inform themselves completely about time commitments, curricula, relevant state laws, outside resources and available support groups. Websites with more information about home schooling include:

- http://www.militarychild.org/Homeschooling.asp
  (Specifics for military families)
- http://www.hsla.org/laws/default.asp
  (Home Schooling by state and state laws)
- http://www.nheri.org/
  (National Home Education Institute, making informed choices)

Home Schooling Tips

See the Family Service Center at your receiving installation for state laws pertaining to home schooling. Some states require exit testing or periodic updates for home schooled students. Also check with local schools to determine what services they offer to home schooled students including extra-curricular activities, field trips, text books, specific classes, etc.

Military OneSource

Military OneSource offers a variety of materials on school choice. The School Report is an excellent resource for this topic.

Through Military OneSource, you can access booklets, CDs, cassettes, audio tapes and articles about choosing a school, working with the school and the teachers, standardized tests, relocating (being the new kid when relocating and changing schools), and helping your child succeed in school.

http://www.militaryonesource.com

School Choice Snapshot:
Public Schools

	Who is Eligible?	Tuition	Transportation*	Admission	Certified Staff
District	All who reside in District	No	Usually	Registration Only	Required by State
Charter	Must reside in geographic boundaries of District.	No	Usually	Application & Successful in possible Lottery	Required by State
Magnet	Must reside in Participating District.	No	Usually	Application & Successful in possible Lottery	Required by State
Technical	Sponsored by District for 9-12 for Vocational, Technical and Technological Training	No	Usually	Application & Recommendation by parent, Teacher or Counselor.	Required by State
AP & IBP	Advanced Placement & International Baccalaureate Programs are offered within High schools or as separate Magnet schools depending on state requirements Usually for grades 10-12	Fees may apply	Usually Accessible to all students	Application & must pass final test with score of 3 or higher to receive College credit	Required by State Special training required for IB instructors
Virtual	Often called "Distance Learning" these courses are available by using a computer at home or school	Fees may apply, but usually paid by district	N/A	Arranged though school	Required by State Curriculum approved by school

***Transportation for all public schools depends on district policy. Check with local districts to determine transportation for your child.**

School Choice Snapshot:
Private Schools

	Who is Eligible?	Tuition	Transportation	Admission	Certified Staff
Religious	Private Religious Schools often have open eligibility; others require that students be members of the religious faith to attend. In either case, eligibility is determined by the school bylaws. They have the right to refuse admission to any student	**Yes $ to $$**	May be part of Tuition or separate fee. Parents may be required to transport students.	Enrollment is based on the specific requirements of each school. Entrance tests may be required before students are admitted.	Not Required by State
Secular	Private Secular Schools are schools without religious affiliation. Many secular schools have a long history while others focus on an educational philosophy or an approach to learning. Eligibility is determined by the school by-laws. They have the right to refuse admission to any student.	**Yes $ to $$$$**	May be part of Tuition or separate fee. Parents may be required to transport students.	Enrollment is based on the specific requirements of each school. Entrance tests may be required before students are admitted.	Not Required by State
Home Schooling	All parents may arrange for their children to be home schooled. Parents may perform the schooling or have a relative, neighbor, or even a professional tutor act as the "home" teacher. Each state requires an approved curriculum and program of studies.	**Yes**	N/A	N/A	Not Required by State

When you arrive

The All-Important First Two Weeks

The arrival at a new duty station is always filled with a variety of conflicting emotions for the entire family. Excitement may take a back seat to exhaustion and the desire to explore is often frustrated by the ever-present "to do" list. Whether you are in temporary quarters or have found your new home, the first two weeks in a new location are important to your family. Dividing tasks and ensuring that everyone understands their assigned roles can help make your family feel like a strong team, working together instead of placing the entire burden and lots of stress on the parents.

The Military Impacted Schools Association has provided a thorough checklist for departure and arrival issues surrounding school enrollment and other requirements [http://www.militaryimpactedschoolsassociation.org], including a suggested Board of Education policy that may assist School Boards in accommodating your children as they maneuver the requirements of a new school system [http://militaryimpactedschoolsassociation.org/board_policy.html]. Going through the District Superintendent to propose the policy or to see if there is already an existing policy may help school administrators to better understand issues specific to military children.

In your new location, Military OneSource can help make the entire relocating process easier for you and your family by helping with any number of problems or concerns. Military OneSource can help you locate needed services, find a new job, discover volunteer opportunities, or help you research licensing and certifications for your profession. You can visit Military OneSource online at http://www.militaryonesource.com or call toll-free at 1-800-342-9647. For further information for careers and connections for military spouses, consult www.Military.com/spouse.

Getting the Kids Settled

The task of getting your children enrolled in their new schools is one of the most important things you will need to do when settling into your new community. Each school may have some variation in enrollment procedures, but most will ask for parent copies of school and immunization records. Providing the receiving school with the address of your previous school will allow them to obtain official records promptly. After you finish registering your children, it may be helpful to make appointments with school personnel (depending on your children's needs) to introduce yourself and ask about any concerns you have. Consider whether it would be helpful to sit down and discuss any potential issues with:

- Counselor
- Principal
- Superintendent
- Special Education Representative
- Athletic Director/Coach
- Teacher(s)

Since the beginning of the school year is usually very hectic for school personnel, making an appointment to speak with them, rather than dropping in when you have a moment, will allow them to give you their full attention.

Promising Practices

Most schools have a variety of procedures and traditions geared towards welcoming and accommodating new and transferring students. A website of the Department of Defense, Military Student.Org [http://www.militarystudent.org] examines Promising Practices from many school districts that have proven successful in easing the transition to a new school for elementary and secondary school students. The website focuses on a variety of transferring student needs and concerns including:

- Deployment
- Social/Emotional Needs
- Logistical Procedures
- Special Programs
- Extracurricular Eligibility

The administration and counseling departments of receiving schools may welcome your suggestions for improving procedures for incoming students. If your new school does not use any of these Promising Practices you might consider offering them as suggestions to school officials. Check the school website in advance of your arrival to see what services are available to your children. Many schools have programs specifically designed to help new students transition into their new school more easily:

- **Mentor Programs**
  Many school systems have both adult and peer mentoring programs. Often new K-12 students are assigned to adult and/or peer contacts that they can rely on for information, tours, lunch partners, and academic and personal assistance. Many programs require special training for adult volunteers, peer counselors, peer mediators, peer buddies and peer educators who run informational groups for new students.

- **School-Based Sponsorship**
  School-based sponsorship programs offer peer assistance to students. Students are trained to assist their peers through the transition process.

- **Peer Buddy Programs**
  This practice is often used by elementary schools to ensure that transferring students have the right start in a new school. An elementary student, who has been trained by the administrative or counseling staff, becomes the “peer buddy” of a new student to provide a tour of the school, a lunch partner, and introductions to the office staff, the principal, the school nurse and the school counselor. This practice provides a welcoming environment to new students and teaches leadership skills to the Peer Buddies.

- **Adult Assistance**
  There are many sources of adult assistance for new students. Encourage your children to seek help immediately if they are concerned about any school related issue. Academic, scheduling or even personal issues are easier to resolve if students deal with them as soon as possible. They should feel free to contact all professional staff members, including:
  - Classroom Teacher(s)
  - Counselor/Guidance Office
  - Principal/Assistant Principal
  - School Psychologist
  - Youth and Family Community Resources
  - Peer Educators/Mediators/Mentors

  Anxious students may not feel comfortable in approaching adults first. If schools have trained Peer Educators, they have skills in active listening, and can give inquiring students needed information about additional resources, including where to go for further help.

Communicate with the School

Ask for a Parent Conference whenever you think it is necessary to help address school related issues or concerns for your child.

Dealing with Culture Shock

When military families move to or from another country, or from one part of the United States to another, they often face "Culture Shock." Dr. Carmen Guanipa from the Department of Counseling and School Psychology at San Diego State University defines "culture shock" as the "anxiety produced when a person moves to a completely new environment. This term expresses the lack of direction, the feeling of not knowing what to do or how to do things in a new environment, and not knowing what is appropriate or inappropriate. The feeling of culture shock generally sets in after the first few weeks of coming to a new place" (Guanipa, 1998).

Culture shock may take the form of physical or emotional symptoms when entering a new environment with different norms, systems (telephone, banking, transportation), languages or terminology, and even foods. The symptoms vary depending on the individual, but may include loneliness, depression, increased allergies or general aches and pains, anger, resentment, and a lack of confidence.

Parents may encounter some of these feelings themselves, but should be particularly aware of the symptoms in their children. Talking through the physical or emotional discomfort your family is experiencing will help your family to understand and overcome negative feelings. Scheduling regular family meetings after a move to allow open discussion about what is going well and what needs to be adjusted, can make all the difference.

[http://www.juliaferguson.com/shock.html]
[http://www.rit.edu/~306www/International/handbook/cultureshock.html]

Attributes of Military Children

Because of their mobile lifestyle and the opportunity many have to live in one or more foreign countries, military children are often labeled with a variety of names: TCKs (Third Culture Kids), MKs (Military Kids), Hidden Immigrants, and Military Brats. The term Global Nomad, coined by Norma McCaig, is an attempt to bring all these labels together to describe children who often demonstrate a variety of characteristics as verified by their parents and teachers: adaptability, flexibility, cooperative spirit, maturity, independence, strong family values, and an ability to relate to diverse groups of people. While these children may seem able to manage conflict, stress, and change better than the average person, parents should be aware that they may frequently combat feelings of loneliness, restlessness, and a sense of "rootlessness" because of the frequent moves away from friends and familiar environments. (Carlson, 1997)

Websites with further information:

- http://www.gnvv.org
- http://www.livingabroad.com
- http://www.tckworld.com/read/letters.html
- http://www.worldweave.com/procon.htm

"The hardest part, I think, is the emotional aspect…when you are moving around and you are leaving friends all the time. People say all the time that the most influential people in your life right now as a teenager are your friends. And when you don't have any, it is tough. But, just realize what they are going through and help them."

Student, at DoD Roundtable, "Education Issues of the Mobile Military Child," in Washington State

Studies and Programs for Military Families and Students

The DoD Military Child Initiative, located at Johns Hopkins University, is the collection and distribution center for transition information for parents and educators of military children. The University researches and prepares resources and best practices on such topics as parent involvement in the schools, student belonging (connectedness) and quality education. The Johns Hopkins Center works, upon request, with school districts on site to address the educational challenges of children of military families. Information regarding this program is available on http://www.jhsph.edu/mci.

The Military Child Initiative helps educators:

- Improve the quality of education in schools serving military families.
- Identify effective programs/practices that address academic, social, and emotional challenges of military children.
- Enable schools to establish and sustain programs that promote connectedness, parent involvement, and quality education.

The Military Child Initiative helps parents:

- Learn effective strategies for integrating children into a new school and community.
- Know their parental rights and authorities under the No Child Left Behind Act.
- Learn how to advocate for quality education and alternative educational opportunities.
- Become actively involved in their child's education.

Military Families on the Move is a DoD study by the Military Family Research Institute at Purdue University that examines military children and their families as they go through a Permanent Change of Station (PCS). The longitudinal study includes members of all Services and children from Kindergarten through 12th grade. The scope of the study focuses not just on children but also on their families. This study examines links between PCS experiences and outcomes of military interest such as members' job performance and intentions to remain, spouses' employment situations, and members' and spouses' commitment to the military. See http://www.militarystudent.org for complete information.

The Army Secondary School Transition Study (SETS) of 2001 was conducted by the Military Child Education Coalition. The purpose of the study was to increase the understanding of high school military students in transition by interviewing students, parents and educators at nine Army installations and surrounding schools.

Findings:

- Records transfer and interpretation systems are neither consistently efficient nor effective.
- Variations in school calendars add to the challenges of transition.
- Variations in school schedules increase the probability of transition challenges.
- The high school experience in the 21st century is even more complicated and challenging for the highly mobile, military connected student population. Problems include clear and timely information exchange, understanding/interpretation, coherent articulation of courses and credits, redundancy, and lack of formalized reciprocity.

- Extracurricular experiences are important to the "fitting in" process.
- Vigorous and dynamic partnerships make a real and additive difference for both military and school organizations.
- Each student is unique. Each new school situation brings unique opportunities and challenges. Being the "new kid" over and over is difficult.
- High schools with the professional capacity to give personal attention to students and their families are seen by all respondents as more efficient, responsive, and caring.

Outcomes:

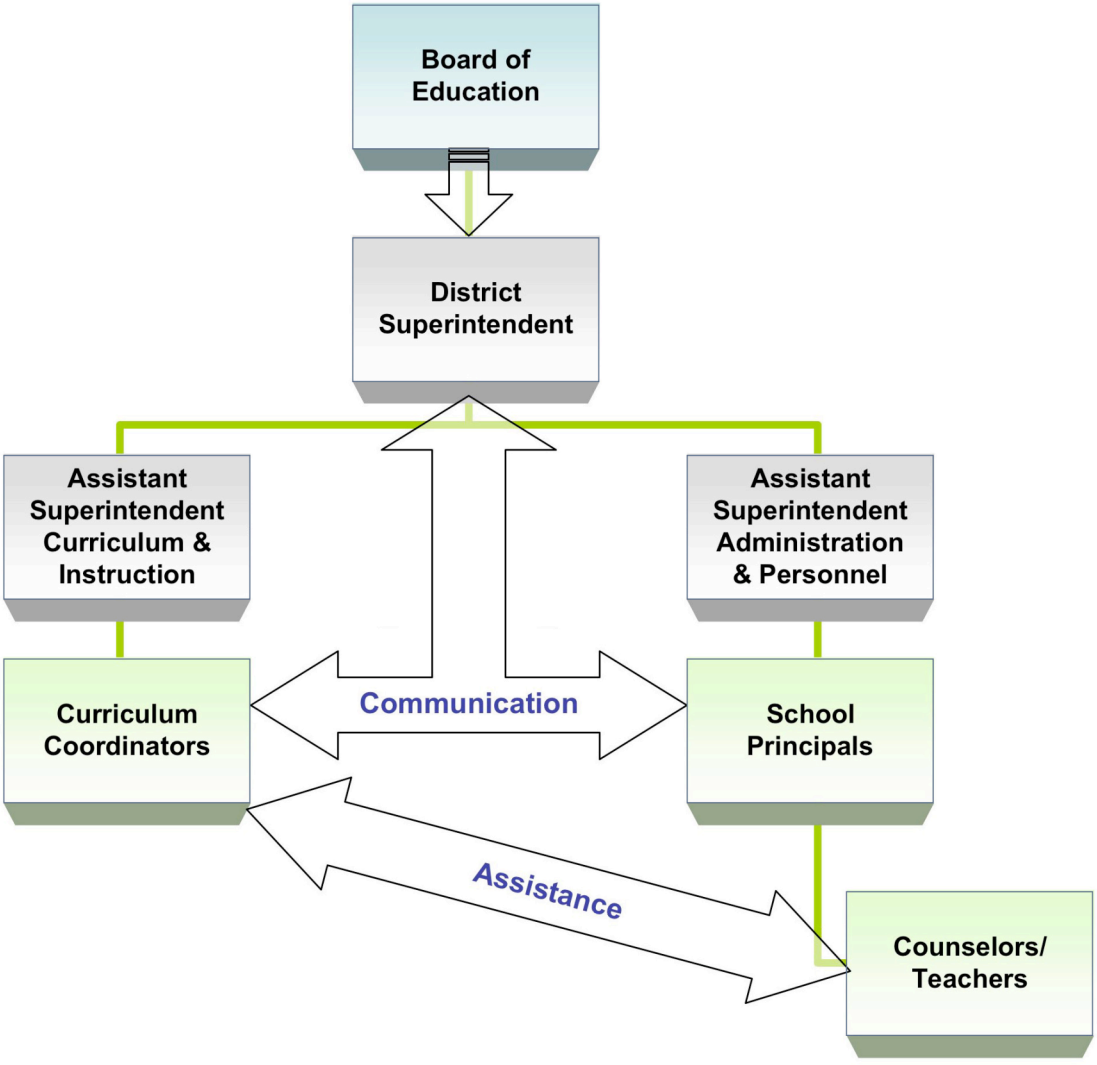
- **Memorandum of Agreement:** Invites school systems that serve military connected children to join together in committing to Guiding Principles designed to "encourage and support schools as they work together to increase the likelihood of predictability for mobile students." [http://www.militarychild.org]
- **Academic Passport:** Course combination and sequence proposed by MCEC students of mobile military families to ensure greatest possibility for meeting transfer and graduation requirements. [http://www.militarychild.org]
- Results and ideas gleaned have the potential to help all mobile students regardless of the Service affiliation of their parents.

RESOLVING PROBLEMS

Step 1. Teacher/Counselor
Step 2. Assistant Principal/Principal
Step 3. Superintendent
Step 4. Board of Education

Typical School District Chain of Command

Most school districts follow a similar chain of command, although there are variations specific to individual districts. School districts generally prefer that parents try to resolve problems or concerns at the lowest level possible. Keep in mind that your Installation **School Liaison Representative** is available to help if you need assistance.



Understanding Impact Aid

Impact Aid is the jurisdiction of the Department of Education. While the purpose of Impact Aid is very clear—to provide monetary compensation to civilian school districts for lost tax revenue due to a federal presence—the complicated distribution formula makes it confusing to military families and military leaders. Some frequently asked questions may help clarify the facts about Impact Aid.

Do all school districts educating military children receive Impact Aid? While the districts serving the largest number of military children receive Impact Aid, not all districts educating military children do. The enrollment of federally-connected children in the district must be at least 400 or 3 percent of the Average Daily Attendance. Some districts may decide not to apply for Impact Aid if they view the cost of doing the required attendance surveys as approximately equal to the projected cost of accommodating the federally-connected children.

Will the Impact Aid dollars the school district receives for my child be spent for his/her school? A school district's Impact Aid is based on the count of federally-connected children — including military children—who attend the schools in the district. Since the money is compensation for lost tax revenue, it is not designated for individual children or schools, but to support the district as a whole.

Will Impact Aid dollars cover the entire cost of educating my child in the district? No. The cost per student of educating children in a district is significantly more than the amount of the Impact Aid received by the district. Currently, school districts receive an average of $2,200 per student who live on base and $450 per student who live off base. These monies provided by Impact Aid make up only a fraction of what it costs to educate a child. The national average for educating a student in 2004 was $7,839 per year.

Primary Source: National Military Family Association, Inc. (NMFA) *Fact Sheet,* June, 2005.
For Additional Information:

- NMFA Website: http://www.nmfa.org
- Military Impacted Schools Association (MISA) http://www.militaryimpactedschoolsassociation.org
- National Association of Federally Impacted Schools (NAFIS): http://sso.org/nafis
- Department of Education Impact Aid Program: http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oese/impactaid/index.html
- Department of Defense Educational Opportunities Directorate: http://www.militarystudent.org
- Department of Defense Military HOMEFRONT http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/ (click on Troops & Families and DoD Impact Aid)

Understanding Boards of Education

Most public school districts operate with a governing body called a Board of Education. Boards of Education are made up of members elected (occasionally appointed) by the citizens in a general town/city election and are frequently subsidized by political parties. Candidates for the Board of Education, like other city offices, run for office as a Democrat, Republican, or Independent candidate. Unlike the "advisory role" of the School Advisory Committees (SAC) used in the Department of Defense schools, the Board of Education has full control over the selection and evaluation of the school superintendent, the school budget recommendations to the town/city, and all policies used by the school system.

The mission of the Board of Education is to provide high quality public education for all children through effective leadership and oversight of policy and budget issues. The National and State Boards of Education serve as advisory and support organizations for local Boards of Education. All local Boards must adhere to state and federal laws and statutes and no local policy can override or choose to ignore such laws and statutes.

There are convenient websites that allow quick access to specific state issues, procedures, and policies. The National School Board Association (NSBA) [http://www.nsba.org/site/index.asp] is a federation of state boards of education. You may go directly to individual states from this site to examine the specifics of the state where you live. The focus of NSBA is to:

- act as an advocate for legislation that affects education
- review and recommend school board policies
- conduct research and provide information
- inform boards about current school law

Board Policy Issues

Board of Education policies often affect military families directly. As noted above, The Military Impacted Schools Association (MISA) has provided a thorough checklist regarding school enrollment and other requirements [http://www.militaryimpactedschoolsassociation.org], including a suggested Board of Education policy that may assist local school boards in accommodating your children as they maneuver the requirements of a new school system. Parents may wish to ask the Principal or District Superintendent to see if there is such a policy in place.

Portable Careers and Post Secondary Preparation

One of the greatest challenges for the mobile military family is the impact that moving has on employment for the military spouse and, occasionally, on students.

The Job Search for Spouse and Student

Frequent moves often preclude military spouses from achieving career advancement. DoD partners with the private sector and other government agencies to enhance spouse employment and career opportunities.

There are numerous websites which focus on job search skills, such as resume/vita writing, job readiness, self-employment and volunteer opportunities as well as links to other useful sites. These sites list information about services available to spouses and students, such as classes offered on the installation, counseling, job coaching, and resume writing. These skills are useful in seeking employment as well as preparing for college interviews and the college application process. Other sites provide career advice and family support. The newest site, working with Monster.com, DoD has created a new spouse career network portal enabling employers to post jobs at no cost: www.military.com/spouse. The "Spouse to Teachers" program (next page), which is similar to the very successful Troops to Teachers program, helps military spouses achieve career goals, and addresses teacher shortages. DoD works with states to expand reciprocity for credentialing requirements and in-state tuition.

Department of Defense:

- [http://www.Military.com/spouse]
- [http://www.dod.jobsearch.org/]
- www.milspouse.org
- [http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/portal/page?_pageid=73,44033&_dad=itc&_schema=PORTAL&section_id =20.40.500.165.0.0.0.0.0]
- [http://www.dantes.doded.mil/sfd/index.asp] (Severely injured Service member and spouse scholarship opportunities)

United States Marine Corps:

- [http://www.usmc-mccs.org/employ/index.cfm]
- [http://www.usma.edu/cpac/jobs/Naf/spouse.htm]

United States Navy: The Fleet and Family Support Center, The Spouse Employment Assistance Program (SEAP)

- [http://www.ffsp.navy.mil/seap/seap.htm]
- [http://www.navy.mil/search/display.asp?stay_id=18802]

United States Air Force: Air Force Crossroads

- [http://www.afcrossroads.com/employment/index.cfm]
- This site lists the "hottest employment issues," and allows people seeking employment to register at a Job Bank, post resumes, and review jobs posted by employers.

United States Army: Army Community Service

- [http://www.armycommunityservice.org/vacs_employment]
- This site focuses on employment readiness and lists job fairs, resume writing and checklists of essential items to hand carry to the new location.
- [http://www.armycommunityservice.org/vacs_employment/data/modules/pbm/rendered/checklist.asp]
- [http://redstone.army.mil/asc/virtual2/portable_careers.html]

Spouse -To-Teachers (STT)

The STT program is designed to support the spouses of active duty military and Selected Reserves who wish to obtain Kindergarten through twelfth grade teaching positions in the United States. It is a pilot project in California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Texas, and Virginia. In addition, the Colorado office is now working with spouses in Kansas, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah as part of the program.

Eligibility for this program focuses on the spouses of active duty personnel, members of Selected Reserve and National Guard, and members of Individual Ready Reserve recalled to active duty. The STT program provides the following services:

- Information regarding state certification requirements , including alternative certification programs
- Counseling on certification options
- Application assistance for transferring teacher certification from one state to another
- Financial assistance to help meet expenses for examinations required for teacher certification
- Financial Aid resource assistance
- State employment guidance

[Source: http://www.spousestoteachers.com/pages/8/index.htm].

For complete information visit the Spouse-to-Teachers website (stt@voled.doded.mil) and the Spouse-to-Teachers State Office:

DANTES Troops to Teachers
6490 Saufley Field Road
Pensacola, FL 32509-5243
850-452-1151
Toll Free: 1-800-231-6282
DSN: 922-1151

National Teacher Certification

Relocation to a new area often means meeting different state requirements for certification and licensure.

- **The U.S. State Department of Education** [http://www.ed.gov] and many education associations are focusing on easing the transition for teachers in a variety of ways.
- **The National Education Association** website offers quick and easy information regarding public and private schools, state requirements, job searches, and National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification. [http://www.nea.org/jobsearch/ifc030617.html?mode=print].
- **The American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence** (ABCTE) offers a national passport certification and more states are adopting it. [http://www.abcte.org/].
- **The DoD Spouse-to-Teacher Program** can also help with certification requests at 1-800-452-6619 or STT@voled.doded.mil.

Getting Involved

When you arrive in your new location, you have the opportunity to get involved and to make a difference. Surprisingly, many communities are looking for people to take leadership roles and you may be able to offer a new perspective and new ideas. There are many ways to become involved and active in your new community.

Community Opportunities on Military Installations

On every military installation there are opportunities to become involved in Parent Advisory Groups, Military Forums, and Community Center or Family Support Center discussion groups. These groups allow you to add your voice to the decision-making process and to become an active member of the military community. The majority of family support centers have a web site providing information about their services and opportunities to get involved:

- Army Community Services
- Navy Fleet and Family Support Centers
- Marine Corps Community Services
- Air Force Family Support Centers
- National Guard Family Assistance Centers
- Reserve Family Assistance Centers

Volunteer

As noted in the Job Search section, every military installation has information on volunteer opportunities on and off the installation. Local schools are frequently looking for volunteers to act as tutors, mentors, and role models for their students. Volunteers can make a significant difference in the lives of all community members and volunteer experience can add appreciably to a resume when seeking later employment. For websites with more information please visit:

- http://www.volunteer.gov/gov/
- http://www.volunteermatch.org
- http://www.usafreedomcorps.gov/

Make a Difference in Your Child's Schooling - Become an Advocate for your Child

The Technical Assistance portion of the DoD Military Child Initiative at Johns Hopkins University focuses on strategies that enhance school, family and community partnerships. Building on the work of the National Network of Partnership Schools, MCI will assist districts and schools that enroll a large number of military families to develop, implement and sustain effective programs of family and community involvement to support student's success in school and improve the relationships of educators and parents. For more information see the Parent Section of www.MilitaryStudent.org or www.jhsph.edu/mci or email mci@jhsph.edu.

"Few things help an individual more than to place responsibility upon him, and to let him know that you trust him."

Booker T. Washington

PTA National Standards for Parent Involvement

The PTA has developed six national standards it believes are essential for any school or program in order to include parents in the learning process. These standards may serve to frame the manner in which parents volunteer and participate with schools:

1. **Communication:** Regular two-way communication between home and school
2. **Parenting:** Promotion and support of parenting skills
3. **Student Learning:** Active parent participation in student learning
4. **Volunteerism:** Parents as welcome volunteer partners in schools
5. **School Decision-making and Advocacy:** Parents as full partners in school decisions affecting children and families
6. **Collaborating with the Community:** Outreach to community for resources and to strengthen schools

For more information on this issue, please visit any of the websites listed below:

- http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content2/news2/pta.html
- http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content2/Involving_parents.html
- http://www.doe.state.de.us/AdvPlacementProgram/national_standardsPTA.htm
- http://www.ncpie.org

Ask for Help/Offer Assistance

When you decide that your children are not doing well —academically, emotionally, or socially— don't hesitate to ask for help from the professional staff at school or on your installation. There are many people ready and willing to offer the help you need to ensure that everyone is adjusting to the new environment.

In addition, YOU can offer your assistance to the numerous youth groups that focus on the well-being of school-age children. Ask the school administration, the teachers, the chaplain, or the scout leaders where you can make a difference.

Other Options for Community Service

There are many ways to make an impact on the community. The options below are often available to newcomers and many organizations are actively looking for volunteers to step forward to lend a hand. Check with local military installations to determine if restrictions or limitations apply to military members and/or federal employees wanting to do volunteer work.

- **Run for Office in a New Community**
  The idea of running for office may be foreign at first, but it is an excellent way to make a positive impact on your community and, in many cases, in the lives of your children.

  - **Parent Teacher Association (PTA):** Running for an office in the Parent- Teacher Association or Parent-Teacher Organization (PTS), Parent-Teacher-Student Organization (PTSO) allows you to make a direct impact on your children's schools. Being an officer in the PTA gives you consistent contact with the building principal and often the superintendent. While the PTA/PTO frequently takes on a fund raising role, you may also have input in policy, curriculum and facility decisions.

  - **Board of Education:** The BoE for the local public school system has members that are elected for two, four, and sometimes even six years depending on the town/city charter. The underlying mission of every Board of Education is to provide the best educational program for district students. Board of Education members have a direct impact on policy, curriculum, education costs, facilities, and public opinion.

  - **City/Town Council:** Like the Board of Education, the City or Town Council members are elected by the citizens of the Town during a general election and often run through their political parties. These town leaders have a direct impact on budget, taxes, education, and long term Town planning. When you arrive in your new location, contact the Chamber of Commerce to inquire about running for office.

- **Write for the Local Newspaper**
  The local newspaper can provide another often unexplored opportunity to express your ideas, concerns and opinions. While letters to the editor are generally accepted in response to specific articles, guest editorials or press releases are also common ways to inform the public about a point of view or an upcoming event, ceremony, or commendation.

- **Be Proactive**
  Taking the initiative to present information about the military family may provide valuable insights to community members who are otherwise unfamiliar with the mobile military family lifestyle. Helping others to have an understanding of your unique lifestyle and your accompanying family concerns will broaden their perspective of the "mobile demographic" in their community, particularly as it applies to military children in the school system. There are many ways to take a proactive role:

  - **Inviting People for Coffee**: In this casual home setting, you have a chance to meet your neighbors in a friendly atmosphere and learn about the volunteer and other opportunities in the community while giving your neighbors insights into your military family lifestyle.

- **Make a Presentation:** Request an opportunity to speak to various community groups to explain some of the unique issues facing military families. Possible interest groups: PTO, Board of Education, Town/City Council, Rotary Club, Chamber of Commerce, League of Women's Voters, Installation Commander, Officer's/Enlisted Spouses Clubs, Church Groups, School Faculties.

CONNECTIVITY:
Returning to the Family Meeting

With increasingly hectic schedules that affect every family member, returning to a Family Meeting format for regrouping and reconnecting is a valuable tool. After relocation to a new community, sitting down as a family to evaluate what is going well and what needs to be adjusted can be important. This is a time for even the youngest family member to be heard, communicate feelings, needs and viewpoints, and to present and help solve problems.

The success of your Family Meetings will depend on your approach. Here are a few tips (Hightower and Riley, 2002) that will help you set the right tone for your Meeting:

The Family Meeting

1. **Establish ground rules** (appropriate to your family)
    - Everyone's view will be respected
    - No one interrupts
    - No cell phones, television, etc.
    - No one criticized
2. **Meet at the same time every week** (if possible)
3. **Call emergency meetings** (as needed)
4. **Keep meetings short** (15-30 minutes)
5. **Everyone participates**
6. **Take turns leading—even the kids**
7. **Include fun activities or planning family activities**
   (card and board games or planning an outing)
8. **Review family schedules for the week**
   (everyone's schedule is important)
9. **Parents retain control** (on final policy decisions)
10. **Use the Kitchen Kard System:**

    Occasionally family members, especially children, are reluctant to bring up something that they want to discuss. The Kitchen Kard System will allow family members to write down their concerns on note cards privately and place them in a cardboard box (located in the kitchen, or location of your choice). Each Kitchen Kard will be read by the leader of the next Family Meeting and discussed by the whole group.

"My advice to a student new to a school is… (even when) just about everybody knows each other since the first grade, you must try to get in with groups of people…If you do fail, you have to try again."

Student, DoD Round Table in Washington State

"You have to be open to moving. If you're not open, then you're just going to shut yourself out, and then you won't have any fun."

Student, DoD Round Table in California

"I decided to make the most of my moves—not let school get in the way of my education."

Student, DoD Round Table in Texas

Tools

This section of the Toolkit is designed to provide parents with additional resources and information, to facilitate the transition of children. A downloadable version that can be modified to match your family's needs is found on the web at www.militarystudent.org. Tools include:

1. **Moving Checklist**
2. **Sample Family Meeting Agenda**
3. **Sample Interview and Family Meeting Topics**
4. **Record of Medical Information**
5. **To Do List form**
6. **Writing Letters**
7. **Parent-Teacher Conference Questions**
8. **14 Tips for Parents (Fassler, 2004)**
9. **Glossary**
10. **Resources**

Moving Checklist
for the _____ Family

Pack out Date _____

Scheduled Date of Arrival in New Location _____

Procedural Information/Documentation Before Moving:

- ❑ All immunizations are up-to-date and documented. (**Hand carry.**)
- ❑ All ID cards are up-to-date and/or plan to obtain new ID cards (This includes passports, if necessary).
- ❑ Know location of all bank books, account numbers, and addresses for each account (checking, savings, money market accounts, equity line of credit).
- ❑ Know location/address of safe deposit box and have keys with you or close safe deposit box before departure. (**Hand carry documents.**)
- ❑ Account for all credit cards; make a list of all account numbers.
- ❑ Inform Post Office of your address change.
- ❑ Make all final payments: rent, telephone, water, electricity, gas, trash pick-up, local taxes, other: _____, other: _____.
- ❑ Arrange all pet documentation; be informed about state law for new community regarding vaccination and possible quarantine.

Student Records, Regulations, and Placement:

- ❑ Have children's most recent school records, separate files per student. (**Hand carry**. **Do Not pack with household goods**.)
- ❑ Have address of current school (or address for the location of records if school has closed) and address of new school, if determined before departure.
- ❑ Contact housing office at the new installation re: housing availability or housing assignment to help determine possible areas to explore for educational options for children.
- ❑ Consult receiving installation website and SITES website for names and locations of surrounding schools.
- ❑ Consult SchoolMatters.com for school performance data.
- ❑ Consult "Choosing A School for Your Child," a Department of Education guide for further information regarding school selection.

- ❑ Contact Community Service for information on youth activity programs at your gaining installation/surrounding communities.
- ❑ Contact School Liaison Representative or school counselor for further information, if needed.
- ❑ Visit websites of the State Department of Education and local school district for information on Kindergarten entry age, entry and exit testing and graduation requirements.
- ❑ Understand process for transferring records, placement of students and school eligibility requirements for Kindergarten entrance.
- ❑ Understand receiving state's graduation requirements for high school students. Have copies of the grading system (including weighted grades) for current and receiving school which may affect your children's Grade Point Average and a copy of course descriptions.
- ❑ Give current school adequate notice of your departure and formally process out of current school. Deliver all hand carried records to receiving school according to school policy.
- ❑ Update immunization records if necessary. Check whether a state-specific immunization form is required. If so, obtain a copy and have your doctor transfer the data so that you are ready for school registration.
- ❑ Upon arrival, provide receiving school with address of previous school so that official student records can be sent.
- ❑ Arrange a school (or schools) walk-through with the administration of the receiving school(s) for you and your children.
- ❑ Make an appointment to meet with the receiving school administrators, teachers, and nurse (if your child has specific health/educational concerns).

Emotional Needs of Children during the Move:

- ❑ Involve children in the move; ask for their help, ideas and concerns.
- ❑ Answer their questions honestly. Address any concerns promptly. If you do not know the answer, say so; then research the answer with your child.
- ❑ Look at the websites of the new community and new schools with your children; older siblings can assist the younger children.
- ❑ Allow children to pack select items to hand carry to the new community.
- ❑ Recognize the efforts of children and continue to offer encouragement throughout the process.
- ❑ Acquire student sponsors for each of your children either through the receiving installation's Family Service or Youth Program or through the receiving school. Encourage your children to call, write or email their sponsor to talk about their new school and community and answer any questions.

Notes:

Adapted from:

http://www.militaryimpactedschoolassociation.org/checklist_leaving.html

http://www.militaryimpactedschoolassociation.org/checklist_newschool.html

http://www.MyArmyLifetoo.com (click “Making a Move,” then “Relocation Readiness”)

http://www.militarychild.org/Checklist.asp

http://www.militarystudent.org

http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/

http://www.ameriforce.net/relocation/

Sample Family Meeting Agenda

Informational

1. Announce PCS Move to family
2. Ask for children's opinions, feelings, and concerns
3. Provide a map and other information of new location

Problem Solving

4. Address concerns/work out potential solutions as group (if possible)

_____

Building the Family Team

5. Discuss new schools/school choices
6. Discuss new town/state and possible changes in culture
7. Discuss "things to do":
   - Letters of Recommendation/Appreciation
   - Scheduling tryouts/performance videos
   - Pet/vet & decisions
   - Items to pre-pack, buy, sell, give away
   - Address book/business cards to keep in touch
   - _____
8. Assign roles in Family Action Plan
9. Interviews of family members
10. Planning the next meeting (if necessary)

_____

Symbolism & Family Traditions

11. Planning "how to say goodbye" to friends, pet, school, town
12. Before you leave: Planning family trip, tour of town, favorite restaurant

Sample Interview and Family Meeting Topics

Open-Ended Questions that Lead to Further Discussion:

- The best part of being in our family is….
- Our most important family traditions are….
- One thing I will miss when we leave is….
- When we arrive, the main thing I am looking forward to is….
- Two things I contribute to the family are….
- I don't like it when people tell me to….
- I don't think it is fair when….
- The three most important rules in our family are….
- Two things that would improve our move are….
- It really scares me/concerns me when….

General Topics for Discussion:

- Family Emergency Procedures (phone numbers, fire, medical, strangers)
- Is it okay to talk to strangers? When it is not okay?
- How to handle bullies
- Never giving up vs. deciding when to cut your losses
- Cheating in school and work
- Being a team player
- Things our family does not like or approve of
- Keeping Secrets—Good or Bad?
- Ground rules for having friends over
- Does our family need to revise any rules?
- How do we deal with people who are different (race, religion, handicapping condition)?
- What if we turned off the television—what could we do instead?
- Something I wish I could do over/differently.
- What does making a difference for my family, my school, my town, and my country mean to me?
- Planning a family event together: each family member plans one part of the same event (i.e., picnic and a hike, dinner and a show, restaurant, etc.)

Your Topic: _____

Your Topic: _____

Record of Medical Information for_____

[See http://militarystudent.org, Special Needs Section for online medical forms]

SSN: _____

Address: _____

_____

Telephone: _____

Prescription and Non-prescription Medications

Name of Medication	How much do you take?	How often?
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

Medical Treatment

Doctor, HMO, Therapist or Other Person who treated condition, illness, and/or injury:

Physician Name, Address, Phone, and Patient ID Number (if available) Date(s)

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

4. _____

_____

5. _____

_____

Medical Tests

Name of Test	Place Where Tested	Referring Person	Date(s)
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Things to Do

Dates

1. _____ _____

_____

2. _____ _____

_____

3. _____ _____

_____

4. _____ _____

_____

5. _____ _____

_____

6. _____ _____

_____

7. _____ _____

_____

8. _____ _____

_____

9. _____ _____

_____

10. _____ _____

_____

Writing Letters

Samples

Requesting **Employment**

Requesting Information on **School District**

Requesting **Recommendation or Assistance** of Coach, etc.

Requesting **Recommendation for College**

Expressing **Appreciation**

Sample Letter: Requesting Information on Employment

Barbara Steward
PSC 561, FPO AP 96310
Home Phone:
Fax:
Email:

January 5, 2006

Dr. John Smith
Superintendent
Carteret County Public Schools
3263 Hwy., 70 East
Beaufort, NC 28576

Dear Dr. Smith,

I would like to be considered for the position of Elementary Teacher for the Carteret County Public Schools. I have enclosed my resume, letters of reference, and copies of transcripts. Original transcripts will be forwarded upon request.

I believe that my experience and skills will complement and enhance the goals of the Carteret County Public Schools. I place a high priority on student achievement, academic excellence, and personal success for every student. In addition, I work very well with my students' parents and believe that parents should be school partners in the education of their children.

Currently, I am a fifth grade teacher at a Department of Defense school in Iwakuni, Japan. As my resume indicates, I have worked for the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) from 1999 to the present where I have taught grades 4, 5, and 6. I have held several leadership positions in the School Improvement Program as well as on school committees for the North Central Association accreditation. In addition, I have been the sponsor of the Student Council. I have always tried to build academic and personal success for every student in my class. I look forward to the opportunity to discuss my qualifications with you in the near future. If I can provide additional information, do not hesitate to contact me at the numbers/address listed above. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Barbara Steward

Enclosures (3)

Sample Letter: Requesting Information on School District

Barbara Steward
CMR, 419, Box 333
APO AE 09120-0333
Home Phone:
Fax:
Email:

January 5, 2006

Dr. John Smith,
Superintendent
Florence Independent School District
306 College Avenue
P.O. Box 489
Florence, TX 76527

Dear Dr. Smith,

We recently received orders to return to the United States and will be stationed within the Florence Independent School District. We have three children in grades 5, 7, and 9 and would appreciate receiving the district handbooks that apply to those grade levels as well as any information about school choice within your district, such as magnet school participation or other choices that are available to your students.

At present, two of my children participate in the gifted and talented program and one attends special education classes. Please provide us with the names and contact information of the individuals in charge of those programs for your school system. We plan to hand carry copies of all school, health, and special education records for our children, but will be happy to provide any information in advance of our arrival if that will assist your personnel. Official records will be forwarded by their current schools.

We have always taken an active interest in our children's education and we are pleased that they have the opportunity to continue their education in your district. Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this request.

Yours truly,

[Signature]

Barbara Steward

Sample Letter:

Requesting Recommendations or Assistance from Athletic Coach (or Debate, Performing Arts, Cheer Leading Sponsors…)

Barbara Steward
CMR 419, Box 111
APO AE 09120-0333
Home Phone:
Fax:
Email:

April 5, 2006

Mr. Alan Jones
Basketball Coach
Heidelberg High School
APO AE 09120-0333

Dear Coach Jones,

As you probably know, we have received PCS orders to return to the United States and will be stationed at Ft. Hood, Texas. We want to ensure that Joanna has the same excellent opportunities in her new school that she has enjoyed as a member of your team. She has not only improved in every skill while playing basketball at Heidelberg High School, but she has developed an attitude of sportsmanship that will serve her throughout her life.

Since she will be entering her new school as a senior, she will be competing with other established players already on the team. Although she will have to try out for the team, the video tapes of the last two games along with a letter of recommendation from you will allow the receiving coach to better understand what she can contribute to the team. If you could send the tapes and recommendation to the address below, we would be happy to pay for any costs involved.

Florence High School
Attn: Coach Randy Smith
401 CR 270
Florence, TX 76527

Thank you in advance for your assistance to our daughter. We wish you and your team continued success.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Barbara Steward

Sample Letter:

Requesting Letter of Recommendation for College Application (from student to teacher)

John A. Steward
PSC 1003, Box 22
FPO AE 09728-0022
Home Phone:
Fax:
Email:

April 5, 2006

Dr. John Doe
Advanced Placement American History
A.T. Mahan High School
PSC 1003, Box 48
FPO AE 09728-0348

Dear Dr. Doe,

We recently received orders to return to the United States and will be stationed at NAS Jacksonville, Florida. Since I will be a senior next year, I will be applying for colleges after only three months at my new school and would like to include you among my academic references. If you would consider writing a letter of recommendation for me, I would appreciate it very much. Most colleges have specific forms for recommendations so I will send you the forms as soon as I receive them during next school year.

In addition, I wanted to say how much I have enjoyed AP American History. It was challenging, both academically and personally, making me stretch as a student and as a person. With the preparation I received in your class, I feel confident in my ability to handle any college class. I wish you continued success. You have certainly ensured the success of your students. Thank you for your time and concern on my behalf.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

John Steward

Sample Letter:

Appreciation to Principal (or Teacher, Church Leader, Scout Leader)

Barbara Steward
PSC # 2, Box 111
APO AP 96319-0111
Home Phone:
Fax:
Email:

April 5, 2006

Ms. Sarah Townsend
Principal
Robert D. Edgren High School
Unit 5040
APO AP 96319-5040

Dear Ms. Townsend (Sarah),

As you know, we recently received orders to return to the United States and will be stationed at Andrews AFB, Maryland. Before we leave I wanted to express my sincere appreciation for your continuous support of my children and our family. Your leadership at EHS has made a significant difference to your professional staff, your students and the community at large.

Your efforts in the area of special education have been particularly noteworthy, especially for my seventh grade daughter, Jane. She goes to school everyday with a positive attitude and an eagerness to learn. That is very gratifying for a parent. Your work with improving community relations made a difference for the school this year. Thank you for your professionalism and concern for all your families. You make a difference. We wish you continued success.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Barbara Steward

Teacher-Parent Conferences

You are the best advocate for your child. When you go to a Teacher-Parent Conference, you want an accurate assessment of how your child is performing and interacting with other students, information about the curriculum being taught, and how you can make a difference at home. The conference can be a reciprocal discussion since you can provide valuable information about your child that the teacher may not know. Go prepared with a series of questions and respond to the questions of the teacher openly and honestly. Parents and teachers are important partners in the education of children.

Questions to Consider

Affective Questions:

1. How does my child feel about school? At home, my child tells me that____.
2. How does my child interact with other students?
3. Is my child working hard?
4. Does my child complete work in a timely manner?

Academic Questions to Discuss:

1. Samples of your child's work (writing, art, math).
2. Standardized testing—have the teacher explain the results.
3. Papers that your child has brought home.
4. The grading system/policy used.
5. How grades are averaged to get the final grade for the quarter/semester.
6. Homework policies.
7. Long term projects.
8. Teaching methods used (direct instruction, group work, etc.)
9. Technology instruction and use during class.
10. Developing and promoting Study Skills.
11. Does the teacher have a website where assignments and student progress are posted?

Many websites exist that may help you prepare for a Parent-Teacher Conference:

http://www.childdevelopemntinfo.com/learning/school_conference.shtml

http://www.militaryimpactedschoolsassociation.org

http://www.militarystudent.org

http://www.militaryonesource.com

Tips for Parents

Dr. David Fassler (2004), a practicing clinical and adolescent psychiatrist, offers 14 suggestions in "Children in Military Families: Tips for Parents and Teachers," which parents can use at home and at school. These tips have been adjusted to reflect issues around a PCS move. [http://www.militarymoney.com/homefront/1101923157]. Dr. Fassler's suggestions are listed below:

1. **Keep in touch.** Help kids find ways to keep in touch with extended family and friends from past communities.

2. **Build a scrapbook.** Help kids keep a journal, scrapbook or photo album that serves as a bank of special memories of people, places and events.

3. **Leave comforting reminders.** Establish family traditions for ways to say good-bye and to leave part of you behind with friends and family.

4. **Kids need honesty.** Reassure, but don't make unrealistic promises about a new community, new friends and new school. Acknowledge concerns about the unknown.

5. **Kids need predictability.** Stability in times of change helps children to adjust. Establish routines and predictable schedules as quickly as possible. Work with the school to help establish routines, expectations and school rules.

6. **Schoolwork issues.** Children may experience a slight decline in classroom performance while adjusting to a new school. Other children may actually focus on schoolwork. Parents should keep in touch with teachers to determine how each child is adjusting to new challenges.

7. **Get in touch with other military families.** Help kids make contact with other kids in the community to give them a chance to talk about their thoughts and concerns, ask questions and find ways to "fit in."

8. **Limit TV.** Take time, even during hectic times of adjustment, to explore your new community. Comfort comes with "knowing what is out there" and becoming familiar with the culture of your new home.

9. **Be available.** Needs of children tend to be greatest at the very time that parents' time is limited by new demands of "settling in." Whenever possible, find time to be available. Have your child run errands with you and use the travel time to touch base and find out how things are going. Use errand running as an opportunity to orient your child to the community.

10. **Help kids express themselves.** Kids of all ages may have feelings about being the "new kid on the block." Allow them to call grandparents and old friends and share their new adventures as well as their concerns. Help them express themselves by sharing letters, poems or drawings.

11. **Take your cue from the child.** No two children respond the same to challenges. Each child will react, adjust and adapt in different ways and at his or her own pace. There's no right or wrong way to react or cope, and research indicates it's best not to push or force a child to deal with these issues until they're ready.

12. **Try to encourage kids to be kids.** Some children take the adjustments required in a move in stride while others find it to be a burden. Help children find ways to be with peers by encouraging them to attend church or community youth groups or youth events on the installation or school clubs and other extracurricular activities.

13. **Spot problems early.** Monitor your child's behavior and physical health. Be in touch with Scout leaders, teachers, youth directors and other adults that work with your child. Because the rest of the family is also busy adjusting and getting settled, others may be a helpful barometer regarding your child's wellbeing. Always ask for help if you believe your child is in need. School guidance counselors, chaplains, school nurse and Military OneSource counseling services are available if your child needs support.

Glossary

Defining Educational Terminology

The Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) has developed "A Lexicon of Learning: What Educators mean when they say…" to allow you to do an alphabetical search for most education terms. "Education, like all professions, has a specialized vocabulary that others may have a difficult time understanding. This online dictionary provides clear definitions of educational terms in everyday language." (ASCD, 2005)

Simply click on the first letter of the word for which you need a definition, (e.g. "Cooperative Learning", click "C", scroll down to the word).

http://www.ascd.org/portal/site/ascd/menuitem.4247f922ca8c9ecc8c2a9410d3108a0c/

Resources

Web Sites

Military Academies:

www.usafa.af.mil Air Force
www.cga.edu Coast Guard
www.usmma.edu Marines
www.usma.edu Army
www.usna.edu Navy

College Admission Tests and Advanced Placement:

www.collegeboard.com SAT
www.collegeboard.org/ap Advanced Placement
www.act.com ACT
www.militarychild.org/assessment

Special Needs Programs:

http://www.washingtonpave.org/programs.asp
http://www.stompproject.org/
http://www.militarystudent.org
http://www.dodea.edu/instruction/curriculum/special_ed/
http://www.lifelines.navy.mil/

School Choice:

http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oii Department of Education
http://www.ed.gov/parents/schools/find/choose/index.html
http://www.militarystudent.org DoD Military Student – Parent – Teacher website
http://www.militarystudent.dod.mil/portal/page?_pageid=115,108142&_dad=portal9x&_schema=PORTAL9X&COHE_ID=149157&LOCATION=ISSUES
http://www.militaryonesource.com Military OneSource
http://www.sacscasi.org/ Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
http://www.ncacasi.org/ North Central Association (NCA) of Colleges and Schools
http://www.ncacasi.org/parent NCA site for Parents
http://www.ncacasi.org/school-search NCA accredited school search assistance
http://www.accreditedschools.org Search for accredited schools
http://www.parochial.com/ Search for Parochial schools
http://www.heritage.lorg/schools/categories.html
http://www.nsba.org/site/index.asp National School Board Association
http://www.schoolmatters.com Standard and Poor's Schools by District or School Name
http://www.schooltree.org Schools by State (District, Magnet, Charter, and Private)
http://www.uscharterschools.org/pub/uscs_docs/index.htm Publications of Charter Schools
http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/districtsearch/ National Center for Education Statistics
http://www.essentialschools.org Publication of Charter Schools
http://www.collegeboard.com/splash/parents College Board Information for Parents

Homeschooling and Gifted Education:

http://www.militarychild.org/Homeschooling.asp Specifics for military families
http://www.hsla.org/laws/default.asp Home Schooling by state and state laws
http://www.nheri.org/ National Home Education Institute, making informed choices
http://www.home-school.com/GetStarted.html *Getting started in Home Schooling: The First Ten Steps*, by Mary Pride
http://www.homeschooltoday.com Produces a magazine on home schooling)
http://www.youcanhomeschool.org/starthere/default.asp
http://www.knowledgegeek.com/item/HomeSchool_299.aspx
http://www.nldontheweb.org/lines_l.htm Resources for parents and students: electronic sites, books, references on home schooling
http://www.nhen.org/ National Home Education Network: 55 Reasons to Home School
http://www.mensa.org/activities/giftedchildren.php3 Activities and programs for gifted children
http://www.nagc.org/ National Association of Gifted Children
http://www.hoagiegifted.org Resources for gifted and giftedness defined
http://www.dltd.org/public/ Davidson Institute for Talent Development. How to recognize, nurture, and support profoundly intellectual young people)
http://www.sengifted.org/ SENG: Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted
http://www.heritage.org/schools/categories.html
http://www.nhen.org/nhen/pov/military/faq_military.asp?id=206

Parenting:

http://www.tnpc.com The National Parenting Center
http://www.parentcenter.com Parent Center
http://www.parenting.com Parenting.com
http://www.parenting.org Parenting.org
http://www.parentingresources.ncjrs.org Parenting Resources for the 21st Century
http://www.searchinstitute.com Search Institute

Kid's Health and Immunization:

http://www.kidshealth.org/parent
http://www.kidshealth.org/kid
http://www.kidshealth.org/teen/
http://www.dodea.edu/communities/medical.htm
English: http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5351-Immunizational.htm
Spanish: http://cdc.gov/nip/recs/child-schedule_sp.pdf
http://www.cdc.gov/nip/publications/Parents-Guide/default.htm CDC Publication: *Parent's Guide to Childhood Immunization*
http://www.thinktwice.com/laws.htm
http://www.nmfa.org

Course Descriptions DoDEA:

http://www.dodea.edu/curriculum/
http://www.dodea.edu/instruction/curriculum/

Associations Offering Assistance:
http://www.militaryimpactedschoolsassociation.org
http://www.militarystudent.org
http://militarychild.org/
http://militaryonesource.com
http://nmfa.org

Job Search:
http://www.militaryonesource.com
http://www.usajobs.opm.gov/ei27.asp
http://www.dod.jobsearch.org/ Department of Defense
http://www.usmc-mccs.org/employ/index.cfm United States Marine Corps: The Transition Assistance Management Program (TAMP)
http://www.usma.edu/cpac/jobs/Naf/spouse.htm
http://www.ffsp.navy.mil/seap/seap.htm United States Navy: The Fleet and Family Support Center, The Spouse Employment Assistance Program (SEAP)
http://www.navy.mil/search/display.asp?stay_id=18802
http://www.afcrossroads.com/employment/index.cfm United States Air Force: Air Force Crossroads. This site lists the "hottest employment issues," and allows people seeking employment to register at a Job Bank, post resumes, and review jobs posted by employers.
http://www.armycommunityservice.org/vacs_employment United States Army: Army Community Service. This site focuses on employment readiness and lists job fairs, resume writing and checklists of essential items to hand carry to the new location.
http://www.armycommunityservice.org/vacs_employment/data/modules/pbm/rendered/checklist.asp
http://redstone.army.mil/asc/virtual2/portable_careers.html

Reciprocity Agreements for Teachers:
http://www.nasdtec.org/contract.tpl National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC)
http://www.abcte.org/ The American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence (ABCTE)

Volunteering:
http://www.military.com/spouse/cf/o,,cf_other_pop_volunteer,oo.html
http://www.volunteer.gov/gov/
http://www.volunteermatch.org
http://www.nmfa.org
http://www.militaryonesource.com

Global Nomads:
http://www.gnvv.org
http://www.livingabroad.com
http://www.foreignhelp.dk/magazine/article/index.asp?aid=45
http://www.tckworld.com/read/letters.html
http://www.worldweave.com/procon.htm

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Choosing a School for Your Child (March, 2005). Office of Innovation and Improvement, United States Department of Education.

Covey, Stephen R. (1998). *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Families,* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin).

Doherty, William J. (2000). *Take Back Your Kids: Confident Parenting in Turbulent Times*, (Notre Dame, IN: Sorin Books).

Hightower, E. and B. Riley (2002), Our *Family Meeting Book,* (New York, NY: Free Spirit Publishers)

Johnston Pawel, Jody (2000). *The Parent's Toolshop,* (Springboro, OH: Ambris Publishing).

Kavelin Popov, and John Kavelin (1997). *The Family virtues Guide: Simple Ways to Bring Out the Best in Our Children and Ourselves*, (New York: Plume).

Rosenfeld, Alvin and Nicole Wise (2001). *The Over-scheduled Child: Avoiding the Hyper-Parenting Trap,* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin).

Witkin, Georgia (1999). *KidStress: What it is, How it feels, How to help,* (New York: Viking Press).

Articles

ASCD (2005). "A Lexicon of Learning, What Educators Mean When They Say…" The Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Carlson, Debra (2004). "Being a Global Nomad: The Pros and Cons," *Foreign Help Magazine.*

Fassler, David (2004). "Children in Military Families: Tips for Parents and Teachers," Military Money [14 Suggestions]

Guanipa, Carmen (March, 1998). "Culture Shock," Department of Counseling and School Psychology, San Diego State University.

Hutton, Thomas (May, 2005). "Five Big Questions," *American School Board Journal*, (Volume 192, No.5, p.16). [Five big questions to ask about Charter Schools]

Pape, Liz (July, 2005). "High School on the Web," *American School Board Journal,* (Volume 192, No. 7, p. 12). [Going Virtual: What you need to know about offering online courses]

Shneyderman, Aleksandr and Terry Froman (July, 2005). "Matching Students with Schools," *American School Board Journal*, (Volume 192, No. 7, p. 30). [The fine art of student assignment]