



## **Military Children Compact Commission: 2020 Report**

September 4, 2020

### **BACKGROUND**

“The Department of Defense, in collaboration with the National Center for Interstate Compacts and the Council of State Governments has developed an interstate compact that addresses the educational transition issues of children of military families.

Currently all 50 States and the District of Columbia participate in the interstate compact providing a uniform policy platform for resolving the challenges experienced by military children.

It is estimated that the average military family moves three times more often than the average non-military family. These frequent moves can cause children to miss out on extracurricular activities and to face challenges in meeting graduation requirements. The Compact will ensure that the children of military families are afforded the same opportunities for educational success as other children and are not penalized or delayed in achieving their educational goals by inflexible administrative and bureaucratic practices. States participating in the Compact would work to coordinate graduation requirements, transfer of records and course placement and other administrative policies” (<https://www.dodea.edu/Partnership/interstateCompact.cfm>; August, 2020)

### **PURPOSE AND WHO IS AFFECTED**

#### **BG (retired) HAL STEARNS**

Our rep, BG(R) Hal Stearns, served in the Montana Army Guard, 35 years of military service, and was a Department of Defense teacher in Wiesbaden, Germany for three years. He also taught high school and college-university students for over 30 years.

**Purpose:** The Compact's purpose is to remove any barriers to educational success faced by children of military families. The Compact facilitates families who must meet certain attendance requirements, scheduling sequencing, grading, course content, assessment, participation in extra-curricular, academic, athletic, and social activities.

The Compact also promotes flexibility and cooperation between the educational system, parents and the student, in order to achieve educational success for the student.

Montana has 4,135 children, ages 5-18, who are children of active duty and National Guard/Reserve members.

Transfers of students from out of state to Montana: Military 11.8%; Non-Military 3.7%; from Montana to other state: Military 17.4%; Non-Military 2.6%

Montana contributes \$2300/year to the national organization. Dues correspond to numbers in the military: active, guard, and reserve.

All the states and territories are members of the Compact. The Montana Commission meets between 2 to 4 times per year.

Montana Commission Members:

BG (retired) Hal Stearns - Compact Commissioner

State Superintendent Elsie Arntzen - Office of Public Instruction

Executive Director Mark Beckman - Montana High School Association

Captain Michelle Bogden - Service Member & Family Support Branch Chief, National Guard

Representative Ed Buttrey

Marjorie Hahn - Child & Youth Education Services School Liaison, Malmstrom Air Force Base

Superintendent Tom Moore - Great Falls Public Schools

### **REVIEW OF 2019/20:**

Supt Arntzen attended the national gathering of MIC3 in Colorado Springs in October 2019.

Major issues: Mitigating the negative impacts of deployments and changes of duty stations for active and reserve forces for children attending school. Most families have learned how to deal with moves. The various states and Department of Defense schools around the world know how to handle these disruptions for children of all ages. When there are issues, Montana's MiC3 steps in to help. The bottom line: we have a strong system in Montana.

National meeting this fall is in October in Little Rock, Arkansas.

### **LOOKING AHEAD**

Future proposals supporting our Military Children include:

- **Advanced Enrollment** allowing families to enroll their child prior to arrival;
- **In-State Tuition stabilization** where graduating seniors maintain their in-state tuition status even if their parents are stationed out of state.
- **Purple Star Award Program** where schools are awarded purple star status through an application process for their commitment to serving students in military families
- **Stars and Stripes** in the classrooms was initiated on Patriot's Day (9/11).

## ADVANCED ENROLLMENT,

Advanced enrollment allows districts to enroll children of military families based upon military transfer orders and prior to actually moving into the district. After arrival, the family will then have two weeks within which they verify residency with the district of residence. This program supports the seamless delivery of educational services to children of military families (Presentation to EDIC; 8/20/2020).

## INSTATE TUITION STABILIZATION

Currently, the in-state tuition status of a graduated HS student who has been accepted to a Montana College/University can be removed when a military parent(s) are stationed out of state while the college bound student remains in the state. A proposed rule change would allow college bound students to maintain their instate tuition status even when their parent(s) are stationed outside of Montana.

The OPI supports these initiatives and will continue to work with the Department of Defense and the Military Compact to better serve our children and families of the military.

## THE PURPLE STAR SCHOOL DESIGNATION

The Purple Star School Designation for military-friendly schools recognizes the schools that show a major commitment to students and families connected to our nation's military. Schools earning the award will receive a special Purple Star recognition to display onsite in honor of students of Military families. This designation is for three years.



A school will be honored with the Purple Star School Designation if it completes all the *required* activities, plus one *optional* activity, listed below. The Purple Star Advisory Board, formed by the Montana Office of Public Instruction, Superintendents, Military Representatives, and Montana Legislators helps decide a school's eligibility for the award.

### *Required Activities:*

#### School Liaison

The school must have a staff point of contact for military students and families who serves as the primary liaison between them and the school.

- The liaison completes professional development on special considerations for military students and families. The Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission has training available online or in-person which may be used to complete this requirement. Access this free training by emailing [mic3info@csg.org](mailto:mic3info@csg.org) or calling 859-244-8000.
- The liaison identifies and informs teachers of the military-connected students in their classrooms and the special considerations military families and students should receive.

### Military Support Resources

The school maintains a dedicated page on its website or in the school newsletter featuring resources for military families.

#### *Optional Activities:*

The school provides professional development for additional staff on special considerations for military students and families.

The local school board passes a resolution publicizing the school's support for military children and families.

The school hosts a military recognition event that demonstrates a military-friendly culture.

[RULES DOCUMENT](#)

[APPLICATION](#)

### **STARS & STRIPES**

The Montana American Legion is requesting donations to purchase US flags for every classroom in need of a flag or to replace worn flags throughout Montana. The Legion is responsible for collecting donations. This opportunity will kick off on 9/11, Patriots Day.