Policy

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FOR MILITARY STUDENTS

*Code* **JFABG\*** *Issued* **DRAFT/19**

As a member of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children, the state and the school district are committed to removing barriers to educational success experienced by children of military families because of frequent moves and deployment of their parents/legal guardians.

Therefore, the district will facilitate the following:

* timely enrollment of children of military families
* appropriate student placement
* timely determination of eligibility for enrollment and participation in extracurricular academic, athletic, and social activities
* timely graduation
* uniform collection and sharing of information between and among member states, schools, and military families

**Definitions**

For purposes of this policy, *children of military families* means school-aged children, enrolled in K through 12th grade, in the household of an active duty member of the military.

*Active duty member* means full time duty status in the active uniformed service of the United States, including members of the National Guard and Reserves on active duty orders pursuant to federal law.

**Applicability**

This policy will apply to children of the following:

* active duty members of the uniformed services as defined in this policy
* members or veterans of the uniformed services who are severely injured and medically discharged or retired for a period of one year after medical discharge or retirement
* members of uniformed services who die on active duty or as a result of injuries sustained on active duty for a period of one year after death

The district will not deny admission to any student on the basis of race, religion, sex, color, disability, national origin, immigrant status, English-speaking status, or any other applicable status protected by law.

**Areas of Responsibility**

This compact will impact educational decisions and processes at the district and school level in the following areas:

*Educational records and enrollment*

If there is a delay in the release of student records for a transfer, the district will enroll and appropriately place the student in school based on information in unofficial or “hand-carried” records as quickly as possible. The district will request the official record from the school in the sending state. These records should be received within ten (10) days.

The district will give a student thirty (30) days from the date of enrollment to obtain any required immunizations. For a series of immunizations, the initial vaccination must be obtained within 30 days from the date of enrollment.

A student will be allowed to continue his/her enrollment at grade level in the district (including kindergarten) commensurate with his/her grade level in a sending state at the time of transfer, regardless of age. A student who has satisfactorily completed a grade level will be eligible for enrollment in the next highest grade, regardless of age.

*Placement and attendance*

In order to continue a student’s academic program from a previous school and promote placement in academically and career challenging courses, when a student transfers before or during the school year, the district will initially honor placement of the student in courses based on prior placements or assessments. However, the district may perform subsequent evaluations to ensure appropriate placement and continued enrollment, if needed. This process also applies to educational program placement (e.g. gifted and talented, EL).

The district will initially provide comparable services to a student with disabilities based on his/her current IEP. Also, in compliance with applicable federal laws, the district will make reasonable accommodations and modifications to address the needs of students with disabilities, subject to an existing 504 or Title II plan, in order to provide the student with equal access to education.

The district administration will have flexibility in granting waivers for placement of students in courses/programs offered in the district.

The superintendent may grant additional excused absences to a student whose parent/legal guardian is an active duty member as defined in this policy and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting for the purpose of visiting with the parent/legal guardian relative to such leave or deployment.

*Eligibility*

Special power of attorney will be sufficient for the purposes of enrollment of a student as well as for all other actions requiring parental participation and consent.

The district will not charge tuition to a transitioning military student placed in the care of a noncustodial parent or other person standing in loco parentis who lives in a jurisdiction other than that of the custodial parent.

A student as described above may continue to attend the school in which he/she was enrolled while residing with the custodial parent.

The district will facilitate the inclusion of a transitioning military student in extracurricular activities, regardless of application deadlines, to the extent the student is otherwise qualified.

*Graduation*

The district will waive specific courses required for graduation if similar course work has been satisfactorily completed in another school or will provide reasonable justification for denial of such a wavier. Should a waiver not be granted, the district will provide an alternative means of acquiring required coursework so that graduation may occur on time.

Should a student transferring at the beginning or during his/her senior year be ineligible to graduate from a district school after considering all alternatives as described above, the sending state and the district will ensure the receipt of a diploma from the sending state if the student meets the graduation requirements of the sending state.

Adopted ^

Legal References:

A. S.C. Code of Laws, 1976, as amended:

1. Section 59-46-10*, et seq.* - Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children.