

An Overview of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

Summary: In 2009, Virginia joined the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children which addresses key transition issues encountered by military families including enrollment, placement, attendance, eligibility and graduation. Provisions in the Compact provide for a consistent policy across state lines for transitioning military students. While large military populations exist in Hampton Roads, Northern Virginia, and Central Virginia, there are children affected by the military in every school division across the Commonwealth whether they are living with a grandparent while a parent is deployed, or their parent has been activated by the Guard or Reserve.

Why the Interstate Compact? Most military children attend schools in six to nine different school divisions from kindergarten to 12th grade, and on average, a military student transfers more than twice during high school.

Key Components of the Interstate Compact:

<i>What is Covered?</i>	<i>What is not Covered?</i>
Educational Records	
Parents can receive a copy of unofficial records	Giving parents the right to request a copy of every paper in the student file
Receiving school must accept the unofficial records to enroll and place the student pending reception of official records	Receiving unofficial records free of charge
Sending school must send official records within 10 business days of receiving a request from the receiving school	
Kindergarten and First Grade Entrance Age	
A student can continue in the same grade in the receiving state regardless of entrance age requirements if he or she has enrolled (registered) in kindergarten or 1st grade in a public school in the sending state and as long the student meets age requirements in the sending state	A student who has not registered for kindergarten, even though they are of eligible age to have started
A student may go to the next grade regardless of age requirements, if he or she has successfully completed kindergarten or 1st grade in the sending state	
Course and Educational Program Placement	
Receiving state will initially honor placement in courses or programs based on the student's enrollment in the sending state	Guarantee of continued enrollment if not qualified
Receiving state may subsequently perform an evaluation to ensure the appropriate placement and continued enrollment	Although the receiving school must demonstrate reasonable accommodation, there is no requirement to create a course or additional space

Special Education Services	
Receiving state will initially provide the same services identified in the students Individual Education Plan from the sending state	A requirement to provide the exact programs as sending state
Receiving state may subsequently perform an evaluation to ensure the appropriate placement of the student	Anything above the requirements in the IDEA
Placement Flexibility	
Allowing flexibility to the Local Education Agency (LEA) to waive course or program prerequisites or other preconditions if similar course work has been completed in another LEA	Mandatory waivers of prerequisites or preconditions
Eligibility for Enrollment	
A LEA cannot charge tuition to military children placed in care of a non-custodial parent or person serving “in loco parentis.” The power of attorney for guardianship is sufficient for enrollment and all other actions requiring parental participation or consent	
A student can continue to attend his or her current school even if living with a non-custodial parent or person serving “in loco parentis”	
Graduation	
Flexibility in waiving courses required for graduation if similar course work has been completed in another LEA, or providing an alternative means for acquiring course work so graduation may occur on time	Mandatory waivers of course work
Flexibility in accepting sending state exit or end of course exams, national achievement tests, or alternative testing in lieu of testing requirements for graduation in the receiving state	Mandatory waiver of the exam or acceptance of alternative results
Allowing a student to receive a diploma from the sending school as an alternative to accommodations for exit exams and graduation requirements that the student doesn’t have time to meet	The right of parents to request a change of graduation requirements in the receiving LEA

Resources:

Interstate Compact Commission

<http://www.mic3.net>

Virginia Department of Education

http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/student_family/military/index.shtml

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