

Fallen warrior dependents school opportunity guidelines change

Frank O'Gara Department of Defense Education Activity

ARLINGTON, Va. - The Department of Defense Education Activity announced it has changed a policy regarding the education of the dependents of fallen military members. The new policy states that currently-enrolled students in Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools who are dependents of a fallen military member may continue in DDESS schools without limitation, regardless of their physical residence or upcoming school transition points. The policy change is effective immediately.

The prior policy allowed currently-enrolled DDESS students who were dependents of a Fallen Military Member to continue in DDESS schools until the end of the school year without any special permission. It allowed for students to stay in the DDESS school until they would normally transition to another school level - i.e. elementary school to middle school or middle school to high school.

"This change in policy will mean so much to military Families who have had a loved one make the ultimate sacrifice for our nation," said Shirley Miles, director Department of Defense Education Activity. "It gives me a great deal of peace to know that we are taking care of the education of the Families of our fallen military members for as long as they need our assistance. It's the right thing to do."

After reflecting on the previous policy and with input from Families and commanders, DoDEA reevaluated the policy to ensure the organization was doing everything it could to assist Families who lost their loved one in service to the nation.

Continued enrollment requires a one-time parental request to the respective school. Yearly registration is required and students will need to meet all other requirements for enrollment - student conduct standards, etc. The student's Family will have to assume responsibility for transportation.

DoDEA plans, directs, coordinates, and manages the education programs for DoD dependents who would otherwise not have access to a high-quality public education. DoDEA consists of the Department of Defense Dependents Schools located overseas, and DDESS schools located in the United States and its territories and possessions. DDESS operates 64 schools on 17 installations, organized into 5 districts with a total of just over 2,300 education professionals serving about 25,000 students.

There is a separate policy for dependents of Fallen Military Members enrolled in DoDDS. This policy allows the dependents of deceased active duty military members and DoD civilians to be able to enroll in DoDDS schools on a space available, tuitionfree basis.

DoDEA provides education to eligible DoD military and civilian dependents from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. DoDEA also provides support and resources to Local Education Activities throughout the U.S. that serve children of military Families.