

K-12 Education Program Content Guide

The following established style guidelines reflect the longstanding practices of developers and editors of content for the K-12 education program area. They are consistent with rules and guidance outlined in the Associated Press Stylebook and reflective of the Office of Military Community and Family Policy style and usage preferences.

DO

- Pay attention to the overall organization and flow of an article. Information and ideas should be logically organized and there should be some sense of continuity or “flow” from one idea to the next.
- Avoid redundancy.
- Write a concluding paragraph of two or three sentences.
- Write in gender-neutral terms.
- Flesh out and clarify statements and ideas.
- Ensure that subheads reflect the content in that section.
- Use “softening” or qualifying words, such as “generally,” “may be,” “can be” or “might” to avoid making blanket statements about how people feel or react in different circumstances. See the examples below:

WRONG: “Children **have** difficulties in school when one of their parents deploys.”

BETTER: “Children **may have** difficulties in school when one of their parents deploys.”

DO NOT

- Make assumptions.
- Tell people how they feel.
- Tell people what they should/need to/must/ought/can’t/won’t do.
- Tell people what they always/never do.

FORMATTING

- Keep bullets to seven or less for each section.
- “Less is more.” Be concise.

GENERAL

- Keep sentences short.
- Insert transitions between paragraphs.
- Make sure headings match body text.
- Include a conclusion at the end of each article.

PREFERRED TERMS

| Preferred | As opposed to |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| provided at no cost to leadership | free |
| free to service members and families | no cost |
| Army Community Service | Army Community Services |
| augment | adding to |
| military life | military lifestyle |

| | |
|--------------------|-------------|
| some or many | most or all |
| can, may or might | will or are |
| often or generally | always |
| tend to | usually |

DEFINITIONS

- **Accreditation** is a voluntary method of quality assurance developed by American universities and secondary schools. Accreditation involves external validation by a regional accreditation organization and requires documentation of improvement efforts, results and impact on student achievement.
- **Department of Defense Dependent Schools** are schools established by the Department of Defense in overseas areas to provide primary and secondary education for minor dependents of DOD sponsors.
 - **Department of Defense Education Activity–Europe** operates 64 schools within three districts throughout Bahrain, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, Turkey and the United Kingdom. The system serves over 24,000 school-age children of active-duty military and civilian employees.
 - **Department of Defense Education Activity–Pacific** operates 45 schools located in Japan, South Korea and Guam that serve more than 20,000 children of service members and eligible DOD civilian personnel families stationed throughout the Pacific theater.
 - **Department of Defense Education Activity–Americas** operates 50 schools located in the Mid-Atlantic and Southeast regions of the United States, Puerto Rico and Cuba, serving more than 18,000 school-age children of active-duty military and civilian employees.
- **Department of Defense Education Activity**, or DODEA, is a field activity of the Office of the Secretary of Defense that oversees DOD elementary and secondary schools. Schools within the DODEA system are divided into three areas: DODEA Americas, DODEA Europe and DODEA Pacific.
- **District** is a subdivision of several designated schools with defined geographic boundaries.
- **Educational services** are educational curriculum and services reasonably comparable to those normally provided without charge in public schools in the United States.
- **Eligible dependent** is an individual who either:
 - Is the child, stepchild, adopted child or ward of a DOD sponsor and is eligible for other command-sponsored benefits such as hospital, commissary, postal service privileges, installation access, etc.; has not completed secondary school; and who will reach their fifth but not twenty-first birthday by Sept. 1 of the current school year.
 - Has disabilities and is between 3 and 5 years of age by Sept. 1 of the current school year. This eligible dependent may be enrolled in DOD or non-DOD educational programs until the age of 22.

- **Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children** is an agreement among participating states to address specific school transition issues in a consistent way and minimize school disruptions for military children transferring from one state school system to another.
- **Overseas areas** are any areas situated outside the United States, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the possessions of the United States, excluding the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and Midway Island.
- **Regional accreditation organization** is an organization approved and certified by the U.S. Department of Education to conduct independent reviews of schools to ensure the quality and consistency of their educational programs.
- **School** is an organizational unit established to provide primary and secondary education for eligible minor dependents of DOD sponsors.
- **School liaisons** are located at each installation and are the main contact for military families, local school systems and installation leadership for school-related matters pre-K through 12. They provide information on the surrounding school districts, help relocating children smoothly adjust to their new schools and work with relocating families and local schools to assist with the transfer of credit to their new school districts for courses completed at their previous school districts.
- **Space-available** are pupil accommodations that may be made available in DOD schools if it is determined that a school operated by the DOD has adequate staff and other resources to permit the enrollment of space-available students.
- **Space-required** are pupil accommodations that must be provided by the DOD schools.