



## Key Message

Military children experience many challenges as they relocate to new schools due to a parent's change in duty station. By establishing statewide Purple Star Schools programs, states can encourage local education agencies to implement practices that assist military children with transitions/deployments and also recognize military service and civic responsibility.

## Analysis

- Military-connected children often experience difficulties as a result of parents being on deployment or constantly on the move. The average school-aged, military-connected child will attend six to nine schools from kindergarten through 12th grade.
- Issues related to school transition have become a top priority for families and some schools. Mobile military students face challenges such as gaps and overlaps in curriculum, differing graduation requirements and course-placement disruption.
- These students also face social and emotional challenges that include leaving supportive friends and activities to start over at a new school.

## Best Practices

### **Texas Senate Bill 1557 (2019):**

Texas Education Code Section 2. Subchapter Z, Chapter 33, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 33.909 to read as follows:

### **Section 33.909. Purple Star Campus.**

<https://legiscan.com/TX/text/SB1557/2019>

“(a) In this section, “military-connected student” has the meaning assigned by Section 25.006.

“(b) The agency shall designate a school district campus as a Purple Star Campus if the campus applies and qualifies for the designation under this section.

“(c) To qualify as a Purple Star Campus, a campus must:

(1) designate a staff member as a military liaison, whose duties include:

(A) identifying military-connected students enrolled at the campus through the Public Education Information Management System;

(B) serving as the point of contact between the campus and military-connected students and their families;



- (C) determining appropriate campus services available to military-connected students; and
- (D) assisting in coordinating campus programs relevant to military-connected students;
- (2) maintain on the campus website an easily accessible webpage that includes resources for military-connected students and families, including information regarding:
  - (A) relocation to, enrollment at, registration at, and transferring records to the campus;
  - (B) academic planning, course sequences and advanced classes available at the campus;
  - (C) counseling and other support services available for military-connected students enrolled at the campus; and
  - (D) the military liaison designated under Subdivision (1) and the liaison's duties under that subdivision;
- (3) maintain a transition program led by students, where appropriate, that assists military-connected students in transitioning into the campus;
- (4) offer professional development for staff members on issues related to military-connected students; and
- (5) offer at least one of the following initiatives:
  - (A) a resolution showing support for military-connected students and their families;
  - (B) recognition of the Month of the Military Child or Military Family Month with relevant events hosted by the campus; or
  - (C) a partnership with a local military installation that provides opportunities for active-duty military members to volunteer at the campus, speak at an assembly or host a field trip)."

### **Ohio Department of Education: How to Qualify**

<http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Other-Resources/Ohio-Network-for-Military-Families-and-Veterans/Supporting-Ohio-s-Military-Families/Purple-Star-Award>

A school will be honored with the Purple Star Award if it completes all the required activities, plus one optional activity, listed below.

### **Required activities**

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



## BEST PRACTICES

# Purple Star Schools Program

- The liaison completes professional development on special considerations for military-connected students and families under federal law. The Military Children in Ohio's Schools course is available on the Ohio Department of Education learning management system and may be used to complete this requirement.
- The liaison identifies and informs teachers of the military-connected students in their classrooms and the special considerations military families and students should receive.
- The school maintains a dedicated page on its website 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.