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DPS: 2016-58

MEMORANDUM

TO: School District Superintendents

FROM: Hershel Lyons

DATE: May 6, 2016

SUBJECT: Military Dependent Children Transfer Student Placement

Military Dependent Children Reminders

The average military student faces transition challenges more than twice during high school and most military children will attend six to nine different school systems from kindergarten to 12th grade (K-12). Enrollment and placement of children of active duty military families is under the guidelines of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children. The compact seeks to make transition easier for the children of military families so they are afforded the same opportunities for educational success as other children, and are not penalized or delayed in achieving their educational goals.

The compact requires that upon receipt of education records by the school in the receiving state, the school shall enroll and appropriately place the student as quickly as possible based on the information provided, pending validation of the official education records.

Pending receipt of official education records, the student's receiving school must accept the unofficial education records. The compact provides that a transferring student must be allowed to continue in the academic program in which the student was enrolled at his or her former school, including, e.g., English as a second language, exceptional student education, gifted, honors, advanced placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) and career and technical courses. Program placement must occur based on prior participation or educational assessments conducted at the student's former school. Additional information is available on the Florida Department of Education's [Military Families](#) webpage.

In order to facilitate on-time graduation for transferring military children enrolled any time in high school, as specified in section [1000.36](#), Article VII, Florida Statutes (F.S.), the following provisions apply:

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- A school district must waive specific courses required for graduation if similar course work has been satisfactorily completed in another school district or shall provide reasonable justification for denial. If a waiver is not granted to a student who would qualify to graduate from a school of the sending state, the school of the receiving state must provide an alternative means of acquiring the required course work so that graduation may occur on time.
- States must accept exit or end-of-course (EOC) exams required for graduation from a school in the sending state.
- If a transitioning student who transfers in his or her senior year is ineligible to graduate from a school in the receiving state after all alternatives have been considered, both the sending and receiving state schools must ensure the receipt of the diploma from the sending state school if the student meets the graduation requirements of the sending state school. We encourage the receiving school to allow the student to participate in all local graduation activities.

In addition, if a transfer student's transcript shows a final course grade and course credit in Algebra I, Geometry, Biology I or U.S. History, the transferring course final grade and credit is honored without the student taking the requisite statewide, standardized EOC assessment, and without the assessment results constituting 30 percent of the student's final course grade (s. [1003.4282\(7\)](#), F.S.). However, in order for a student to earn a scholar diploma designation specific EOC assessments must be passed (s. [1003.4285](#), F.S.). For more information, please refer to the academic advisement flyers, "What Students and Parents Need to Know" on the [Graduation Requirements](#) webpage.

General Transfer Reminders

As school officials, we have a responsibility to ensure that students are immediately placed into the appropriate grade, courses and services. This is our role in welcoming students and families to our schools and communities and is of particular importance for students who are highly mobile. Students who are highly mobile move six or more times in the course of their K-12 education and include the children of migrant workers, families experiencing domestic violence, families in unstable work and home situations that result from high poverty, immigrant families and military families.

After initial school enrollment forms and documentation are completed, based on local school board policy, the student and parent(s) or guardian(s) meet with school personnel (e.g., school counselor) to determine the grade placement, course selection and services (if required). If official educational records are unavailable, a provisional placement is made with the understanding that further review may be necessary.

Often times, an unofficial education record or recent report card is provided for review. A new student is provisionally placed into the appropriate Florida Course Code Directory ([2015-2016 CCD](#)) PreK-12 course that most closely corresponds to the sending school's grade and course listing. In some cases, the receiving school may request a course description to better ascertain the appropriate course placement. Once the official educational records are received and reviewed at the Florida public school, modifications in grade, course and services placement may be made as needed. The [CPALMS](#) (Collaborate Plan Align Learn Motivate Share) website provides information on Florida Standards and course descriptions.

Individual Education Plan (IEP), Education Plan (EP) and Section 504

When a student transfers into Florida with a current in- or out-of-state IEP or EP, the district must provide a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) by including services comparable to those described on the student's IEP in the previous school until the Florida district develops and implements a new IEP (State Board of Education Rule [6A-6.0334\(2\)](#), Florida Administrative Code). Guidance regarding this requirement is provided in Question B-2 of [DPS: 2015-152](#).

Unlike the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 does not directly address out-of-state transfers; however, FAPE, under Section 504, requires that districts provide education and related services designed to meet the needs of students with disabilities as adequately as the district meets the needs of students without disabilities.

Please find attached a memorandum prepared for Florida Base Commanders, "Military Dependent Children Transfer Student Placement."

We appreciate your commitment to offer transfer students, and their families, immediate placement and transition services to integrate them into their new school community. For additional information, please contact Curtis Jenkins at 850-245-7851 or Curtis.Jenkins@fldoe.org.

HL/mvt

Attachment

cc: Curtis Jenkins

Exceptional Student Education and Student Services Directors

Mary Jane Tappen, Vice Chancellor of K-12 Public Schools

Monica Verra-Tirado, Bureau Chief of Exceptional Education and Student Services