

October 2011

Florida Department
of Education

Florida Military
Compact Council

INTERSTATE COMPACT ON EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FOR MILITARY CHILDREN



Florida—Supporting Military Students On the Go!

Welcome Back

Shoal River Middle School, Okaloosa County School District, held Mustang Mayhem on Tuesday August 18. The Junior Student to Student (JS2S) club welcomed fresh horses to our arena including 7th Special Forces, Air Force transfers, and other recent move-ins. A brief orientation to Shoal River life kicked off the event. Afterward, the new Mustangs participated in interactive games designed to foster camaraderie. Then in groups of three, the students embarked on a scavenger hunt with a JS2S ambassador leading the way. Their quests familiarized them with different areas of the school such as the media center, the bus ramp, the clinic, the lunchroom, the attendance office, and a wide variety of elective classrooms. The fastest team received Mustang apparel and spirit items. At the end of the activity, the busy horses were fed and watered while they mingled with new friends. All in all, this engaging round-up successfully acclimated the latest herd of Mustangs to our friendly corral. Go Mustangs!

*Holly Tew, Math Teacher
Shoal River Middle School*

SCHOOLS AS PARTNERS IN A “CIRCLE OF SUPPORT” FOR MILITARY FAMILIES: DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE CELEBRATED MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

Each April, Americans pause to recognize the nation’s 1.8 million military children during the Month of the Military Child, which marked its 25th anniversary in 2011. Throughout the month, military installations worldwide hosted programs and activities for military children, including fairs, picnics, carnivals and parades. Military children’s sacrifices and contributions have risen to the forefront in recent years as people have become increasingly aware of the impact a decade of war is having on military families. Along with the typical military-related stressors of multiple moves and schools, children also have had to deal with long-term, multiple deployments and separations from one, or both, parents over the past 10-plus years.

*By Elaine Sanchez
American Forces Press Service*



DoD For School Leaders: Initiatives to Support Schools

In order to facilitate the transitions of military-connected students to new schools, the DoD has put a number of programs in place—not only to ensure that the children and young people involved have a level playing field, but also to help schools.

Former Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates, addressing a conference focused on supporting the educational needs of military children in 2008, said, “Our military children are awesome, just as their parents are, but they have extra hurdles to clear, burdens to bear— repeated moves, the absence of a parent at war, an injured parent, or the loss of a parent.” He went on to say, “Children of service members also make unique sacrifices during peacetime, including frequent moves that can require them to attend up to nine different schools between kindergarten and high school graduation.” He added that most teenagers of military members attend at least two high schools. “Because of the unique way the husbands and wives, the sons and daughters of our all-volunteer force serve this nation, we have a sacred responsibility to care for them,” Gates said.

To assist in communication between installations, families, and schools, School Liaison Officers have been assigned within all military branches on a permanent basis.

DoD IMPACT AID PROGRAM-

The Florida Department of Education facilitated a conference call this past June with school district student services directors, school finance officers, Military Installation School Liaison Officers and a representative from the USDOE office to discuss Federal Impact Aid and the process to determine school district eligibility for those funds. The majority of the school districts felt that the information from the call was useful. Callers were given a contact at USDOE in case they had further questions.

DoDEA’s PARTNERSHIP

This Initiative provides support to LEAs to transform the responsiveness of educators to children of military families and offers academic support to improve educational opportunities and outcomes of military students. A significant element of military family support is an educational system that provides not only a quality education but one that recognizes and responds to the unique needs of children of military families. To support the need, DoDEA’s Educational Partnership Initiative is working collaboratively with the Department of Education on any efforts to ease the transition of military students and providing resources to LEAs that educate military children.

PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH AND FAMILY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

The military has developed comprehensive programs that provide concrete services and referrals to support the social, emotional, and academic needs of family members and their children. Some of the programs intersect directly with public schools. These are listed below. Information on other programs, like academic tutoring, after-school programs, and programs for children with special needs, is provided to service members directly. For a complete list of these types of support, visit the Military Families chapter entitled “[Military Supports for Students.](#)”



RESOURCES

[Florida Department of Education Services to Military Families](#)

[DoDEA Partnership: Students at the Center For School Leaders](#)

[Army Reserve Child, Youth and School Services](#)

[Health and Family Assistance Programs Military One Source \(MOS\)](#)

[Militray Family Life Consultants \(MFLC\)](#)

[Services for Children with Special Needs](#)

