

Army Reserve Child, Youth & School Services

Making a Smooth Transition to a New School

As military families move from one assignment to another, their children often transition to a new school. The average child in a military family will move six to nine times between kindergarten and high school, so it is important to plan in advance for these transitions. Careful preparation will help make the transition as smooth and comfortable as possible and limit adverse affects on the child's academic success.

Here are some ways parents can help:

1. Involve your child in the process. Talk to your child about the move and allow plenty of time to listen to questions and concerns. Be patient as you help your child find answers and solutions.
2. Gather as much information as you can about schools in your new location. If you have a choice of schools - charter schools, magnet schools, and others - you may wish to interview each school and ask questions about their academic and extra-curricular programs.
3. Make a Student Portfolio to carry to the new school - see checklist provided.
4. Contact the current school well in advance to get their help with the transition process. It may be helpful to have the current school communicate directly with the new school. Help share contact information between school counselors, coaches, special education teachers, and others.
5. When you arrive in your new city, visit the new school, meet key staff members, and hand-deliver the Student Portfolio. The former school will mail the official school records to the new school, but you can help by delivering the Student Portfolio in advance.

Valuable resources to explore for more information include:

Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC)

<http://militarychild.org/>

MCEC offers many resources to help military-connected children succeed in school.



School Quest

<https://www.schoolquest.org/>

This site has information for students and parents about schools in your new location, how to develop and safely store a Student Portfolio, how to plan a high school course schedule, how to search for information about colleges and scholarships, and more.

Military OneSource

<http://www.militaryonesource.mil/>

Type in search window:

- School Transitions (there are specific articles for transitions at each grade level)
- Moving (there are many topics, including Moving with an IEP)



Wuebker-Battershell, Robin

The Military Lifestyle and Children

Family Forum Library, 1993

CYSS Mission: To support readiness and quality of life by reducing the conflict between military mission requirements and parental responsibilities



This information has been provided by Army Reserve Child, Youth & School Services.
For more information on resources and programs, please visit:
WWW.ARFP.ORG/CYSS

Fort Family Outreach & Support Center assistance is available 24/7
at 866-345-8248 and/or WWW.ARFP.ORG



CHECKLIST FOR A STUDENT PORTFOLIO

You will not need to include all of these items but consider which items are best for your child's situation, grade level, extra-curricular activities, interests, and special needs.

Student Information Section

- Student Data: Name, address, phone number, parents names and contact info
- Current photograph
- Copy of Birth Certificate
- Copy of Military ID
- Health Records, including Immunization Record, allergies, special needs

School Contact Information

- Names and addresses of all former schools
- Consider including links to school websites

Transcript Section

- Copies of transcripts from all former schools
- Copies of report cards from all former schools
- Copies of state testing/assessment scores
- Copies of national testing/assessment scores
- SAT, ACT scores (for high school students who have taken these tests)

Special Needs Section

- Copies of current and previous IEP's (Individual Education Plans) and 504 Plans
- Copy of medical diagnosis of disabilities
- Medical care plan if applicable (medications, accommodations)

Academic Information (This is especially valuable if child has been homeschooled)

- List of textbooks completed and literary books read
- Writing samples
- Samples of other work--photos of art work, science projects, performance videos
- Course descriptions

Other Information

- Copies of awards or certificates
- Verification of community serve/volunteer hours
- List of sports, clubs, activities, hobbies, private instruction (video if available)
- Letters of reference from coach, counselor, principal, community leader, or others
- Anything not included above that helps tell a story about your child

Important Tasks Before You Depart

- Notify current school your child is leaving at least two weeks in advance
- Request official transcript to keep
- What date can your child withdraw and still get full credit for the semester?
- Return textbooks and library books and pay any fines and fees



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