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Recommendations from the Washington Council, Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunities for Military Students

2014

Authorizing legislation: Chapter [28A.705](#) RCW

Secondary Education and Student Support

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to review the implementation of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children, and recommend to the legislature that Washington's ongoing continue to participate in the Interstate Compact. Given the extensive military presence in the state, Washington initially joined the Interstate Compact in 2009 in an effort to support military connected student transfer between educational settings.

Washington State serves approximately thirty two thousand military connected students. The average length of assignment to a military installation is two to three years. The school transition issues that result from this movement are stressful and can be compounded if the sending and/or receiving educational institution are not supportive.

The decision to join the Compact was a result of recommendations from a Washington State Task Force in December, 2008. The Task Force was chaired by Senator Steve Hobbs and at that time, Vice-Chair Representative Christine Rolfes. The Task Force also recommended that a review of the Compact's implementation should be conducted in 2014 and recommend if Washington should continue to be a member of the Compact. In 2009 when legislation was passed, the above recommendation was accepted by the legislature.

When joining the Interstate Compact in 2009, Washington State agreed to form a Compact Council to promote, support and enforce compliance with the Interstate Compact. In 2009 Governor Gregoire appointed Superintendent Lynch, then Superintendent of Central Kitsap School District, as the state commissioner for the Compact; he also serves as Washington's representative at the national level relative to the Interstate Compact. The Washington State Council also chaired by Greg Lynch, now Superintendent of Olympic Educational Service District 114, has met for the past five years. The Council has responded to questions and issues relative to the implementation of the Interstate Compact.

In following with the initial methodology in 2008 used to determine if Washington state should join the Interstate Compact, in the spring of 2014 a survey of school districts with the highest population of military connected students was distributed to determine the level at which districts are currently implementing the Interstate Compact. The results show that the majority of districts are fully implementing the Interstate Compact. Survey respondents also indicated a need for maintaining and improving ongoing Interstate Compact support.

At the conclusion of the Washington Task Force work in 2008, approximately ten states agreed to join the Compact. Effective January 1, 2015 Oregon will become the fiftieth state to join the Compact. It is the recommendation of the Interstate Compact Council that Washington State continue to be a member of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children.

Background

The state of Washington has an extensive military presence. The number of students of military families currently exceeds 32,000¹. The average length of assignment to a military installation is two to three years. Therefore, every year approximately 30 percent of families are transferred into or arrive from another state or overseas. The school transition issues that result from this movement are stressful and can be compounded if the sending and/or receiving educational institutions are not supportive. Educational institutions include intra and inter-state transfers as well as international transfers. While the respective armed services have taken strides to ease the transition of service members and their families, Washington State, through the implementation of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children, has attempted to ensure children of military families are not penalized or delayed in achieving their educational goals by inflexible administrative and bureaucratic practices.

While not exhaustive, the Interstate Compact does address the key issues encountered by military families, including eligibility, enrollment, placement, and graduation. In addition, the Interstate Compact outlines a state and inter-state infrastructure to facilitate compliance and support.

During the 2008 Washington legislative session, the Interstate Compact was submitted to the Legislature for ratification in House Bill 2918 and Senate Bill 6426. After extensive debate, Substitute Senate Bill 6426 was amended to remove the adoption of the Interstate Compact and instead created a task force to analyze the Compact and to make recommendations to the Legislature regarding joining the Compact. From that work, a Military Compact Task Force was created, a survey of districts was completed regarding the feasibility of implementing the Compact, and a final recommendation was made to the legislature for Washington State to officially join the Compact. In 2009, the Washington State Legislature passed the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children (SSB 5248), with the primary goal of reducing the educational and emotional issues encountered when the children of military personnel are required to transfer from schools in one state to another.

Currently, all fifty (50) states are members or have agreed to join the Interstate Compact. Oregon will officially join the Compact in January 2015.

¹ Defense Management Data Center.

Update Status

Currently, the implementation of the Interstate Compact is enforced by a statewide council, chaired by Superintendent Greg Lynch. A complete list of Compact Council members and their respective organizations are included in Appendix A.

In 2008 when Washington was deciding whether or not to join the Interstate Compact, a survey was completed with high-impact school districts with the greatest number of military connected students to determine the level to which the provisions of the Compact were already being addressed. Results from that survey can be found on the OSPI webpage at the following link

<http://www.leg.wa.gov/Senate/Committees/EDU/documents/InterstateCompactTaskForceRpt.pdf>. The survey revealed that districts were sporadically implementing the intent outlined in the Compact. In an effort to determine the impact of Washington's involvement in the Compact, the survey was re-administered to the same group. A list of the districts surveyed and their participation in the initial survey in 2008, as well as their participation in the follow-up survey in 2014, is included in Appendix B.

A summary of the 2014 results are included in Appendix C. In general, the survey indicated there has been substantial implementation of the Interstate Compact in Washington State.

Provision Topic	Full Implementation	Partial Implementation	No Implementation
Hand-carried Records	100%	0%	0%
Kindergarten Entrance	90%	10%	0%
Course Placement	100%	0%	0%
Course Prerequisite Waivers	85%	15%	0%
Extended Excused Absences	95%	5%	0%
Enrollment Eligibility	90%	10%	0%
Course Waivers	90%	10%	0%
Alternatives for Graduation	95%	5%	0%
Sending State Graduation	95%	5%	0%
Official Records Transfer	90%	10%	0%
Immunization Waivers	85%	15%	0%
Educational Program Placement	95%	5%	0%

When asked about their adoption of the Compact, 95 percent of districts report using the Washington State School Directors Association (WSSDA) model policy and 95 percent report their school boards being aware of the Compact. Most districts (60 percent) include information about the Interstate Compact on their districts' websites, and 50 percent provide information regarding the Interstate Compact for families. When asked about ongoing support, many districts (40 percent) would like pre-packaged materials about the Interstate Compact to

distribute. Forty (40) percent of districts also requested standard language to include on their districts' webpages, with a link to state and federal resources.

Conclusion and Recommendations

1. Washington's participation in the compact resulted in students of military families experiencing a smoother transition.
2. The majority of school districts with the largest military connected student population are fully implementing the components of the Interstate Compact.
3. The Interstate Compact Council, as required by the Compact agreement, should continue to meet regularly to monitor implementation and respond to specific issues that develop as families' transition into and out of Washington State.
4. Washington State should continue membership in the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunities for Military Children.
5. OSPI, the Interstate Compact Council school districts and other educational stakeholders throughout WA should continue work on expanding awareness of the Compact, examples include: OSPI website; creation of district website content; presentations at various conferences; identification and dissemination of educational supports for students of military families.
6. In addition to the annual Compact dues, Washington must continue to fund the administrative costs required to lead and support the Compact to include support for the Commissioner and administrative OSPI support.

Appendix A

Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunities for Military Children

Council Members

Name	Title	Organization
Dan Newell	Assistant Superintendent	Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Sherry Appleton	State Representative	Washington State House of Representatives
Norma Smith	State Representative	Washington State House of Representatives
Joe Fain	State Senator	Washington State Senate
Steve Hobbs	State Senator	Washington State Senate
Christine Rolfes	State Senator	Washington State Senate
Debbie LeBeau	District Superintendent	Clover Park School District
Greg Lynch*	Superintendent	Olympic Educational Service District
Robbin Seeberger	Family Liaison	National Guard
Danielle Eidenberg-Noppe	Ombuds	Washington State Office of the Education Ombuds
Exfacto:		
Deborah Robins	School Liaison Officer	Navy Northwest
Norma Melo	School Liaison Officer	Joint Base Lewis McCord
Staff:		
Dixie Grunenfelder	Program Supervisor	Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

*Council Chair

Appendix B

School District Survey Results

Washington School Districts invited to submit survey on Implementation of Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

<i>District</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Superintendent</i>	<i>Submitted Survey (Yes/No)</i>	<i>Submitted in 2008 (Yes/No)</i>
<i>Anacortes</i>	<i>Anacortes</i>	<i>Mark Wenzel</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Bethel</i>	<i>Spanaway</i>	<i>Thomas G. Seigel</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Bremerton</i>	<i>Bremerton</i>	<i>Aaron Leavell</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Central Kitsap</i>	<i>Silverdale</i>	<i>David McVicker</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Cheney</i>	<i>Cheney</i>	<i>Debra Clemens</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Clover Park</i>	<i>Lakewood</i>	<i>Deborah LeBeau</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Coupeville</i>	<i>Coupeville</i>	<i>James Shank</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Everett</i>	<i>Everett</i>	<i>Gary Cohn</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Franklin Pierce</i>	<i>Tacoma</i>	<i>Frank Hewins</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Lakewood</i>	<i>Marysville</i>	<i>Dennis Haddock</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Marysville</i>	<i>Marysville</i>	<i>Becky Berg</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Medical Lake</i>	<i>Medical Lake</i>	<i>Pam Veltri</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Mukilteo</i>	<i>Everett</i>	<i>Marci Larsen</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>North Kitsap</i>	<i>Poulsbo</i>	<i>Patty Page</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>North Mason</i>	<i>Belfair</i>	<i>David L. Peterson</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>North Thurston</i>	<i>Lacey</i>	<i>Raj Manhas</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Oak Harbor</i>	<i>Oak Harbor</i>	<i>Lance Gibbon</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Puyallup</i>	<i>Puyallup</i>	<i>Timothy Yeomans</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Reardan-Edwall</i>	<i>Reardan</i>	<i>Marcus Morgan</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>South Kitsap</i>	<i>Port Orchard</i>	<i>Michelle Reid</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>South Whidbey</i>	<i>Langley</i>	<i>Jo Moccia</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Steilacoom</i>	<i>Steilacoom</i>	<i>Kathi Weight</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Tacoma</i>	<i>Tacoma</i>	<i>Carla Santorno</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Yelm</i>	<i>Yelm</i>	<i>Andy Wolf</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>

Appendix C

Washington State Task Force on the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

School District Questionnaire—Summary of Responses and Open-ended Comments

COMPACT PROVISION #1: Unofficial or "hand-carried" education records: In the event that official education records cannot be released to the parents for the purpose of transfer, the custodian of the records in the sending state shall prepare and furnish to the parent a complete set of unofficial educational records containing uniform information as determined by the Interstate Commission. Upon receipt of the unofficial education records by a school in the receiving state, the school shall enroll and appropriately place the student based on the information provided in the unofficial records pending validation by the official records, as quickly as possible. Identify the degree to which this provision of the compact is currently being implemented in your district.

	This provision is currently being SUBSTANTIALLY implemented.	This provision is currently being PARTIALLY implemented.	This provision is NOT AT ALL being implemented.
Identify the degree to which this provision of the compact is being implemented in your district.	100% (20)	0% (0)	0% (0)

COMPACT PROVISION #2: Kindergarten and First Grade entrance age: Students shall be allowed to continue their enrollment at grade level in the receiving state commensurate with their grade level (including Kindergarten) from a local education agency in the sending state at the time of transition, regardless of age. A student that has satisfactorily completed the prerequisite grade level in the local education agency in the sending state shall be eligible for enrollment in the next highest grade level in the receiving state, regardless of age. A student transferring after the start of the school year in the receiving state shall enter the school in the receiving state in their validated level from an accredited school in the sending state. Identify the degree to which this provision of the compact is currently being implemented in your district.

	This provision is currently being SUBSTANTIALLY implemented.	This provision is currently being PARTIALLY implemented.	This provision is NOT AT ALL being implemented.
Identify the degree to which this provision of the compact is being implemented in your district.	90% (18)	10% (2)	0% (0)

COMPACT PROVISION #3: Course Placement: When the student transfers before or during the school year, the receiving state school shall initially honor placement of the student in educational courses based on the student's enrollment in the sending state school and/or educational assessments conducted at the school in the sending state if the courses are offered. Course placement includes but is not limited to Honors, International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement, vocational, technical, and career pathways courses. Continuing the student's academic program from the previous school and promoting placement in academically and career challenging courses should be paramount when considering placement. This does not preclude the school in the receiving state from performing subsequent evaluations to ensure appropriate placement and continued enrollment of the student in the course(s). Identify the degree to which this provision of the compact is currently being implemented in your district.

	This provision is currently being SUBSTANTIALLY implemented.	This provision is currently being PARTIALLY implemented.	This provision is NOT AT ALL being implemented.
Identify the degree to which this provision of the compact is being implemented in your district.	100% (20)	0% (0)	0% (0)

COMPACT PROVISION #4: Placement flexibility: Local education agency administrative officials shall have flexibility in waiving course/program prerequisites or other preconditions for placement in the courses/programs offered under the jurisdiction of the local education agency. Identify the degree to which this provision of the compact is currently being implemented in your district.

	This provision is currently being SUBSTANTIALLY implemented.	This provision is currently being PARTIALLY implemented.	This provision is NOT AT ALL being implemented.
Identify the degree to which this provision of the compact is being implemented in your district.	85% (17)	15% (3)	0% (0)

COMPACT PROVISION #5: Absence as related to deployment activities: A student whose parent or legal guardian is an active duty member of the uniformed services, as defined by the compact, and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returning from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, shall be granted additional excused absences at the discretion of the local education agency superintendent to visit with his or her parent or legal guardian relative to such leave or deployment of the parent or guardian. Identify the degree to which this provision of the compact is currently being implemented in your district.

	This provision is currently being SUBSTANTIALLY implemented.	This provision is currently being PARTIALLY implemented.	This provision is NOT AT ALL being implemented.
Identify the degree to which this provision of the compact is being implemented in your district.	95% (19)	5% (1)	0% (0)

COMPACT PROVISION #6: Eligibility for enrollment: A military child, placed in the care of a non-custodial parent or other person standing in loco parentis who lives in a jurisdiction other than of the custodial parent, may continue to attend the school in which he/she was enrolled while residing with the custodial parent. Identify the degree to which this provision of the compact is currently being implemented in your district.

	This provision is currently being SUBSTANTIALLY implemented.	This provision is currently being PARTIALLY implemented.	This provision is NOT AT ALL being implemented.
Identify the degree to which this provision of the compact is being implemented in your district.	90% (18)	10% (2)	0% (0)

COMPACT PROVISION #7: Waiver requirements #1: In order to facilitate the on-time graduation of children of military families, states and local education agencies shall incorporate the following procedures: Local education agency administrative officials shall waive specific courses required for graduation if similar course work has been satisfactorily completed in another local education agency or shall provide reasonable justification for denial. Identify the degree to which this provision of the compact is currently being implemented in your district.

	This provision is currently being SUBSTANTIALLY implemented.	This provision is currently being PARTIALLY implemented.	This provision is NOT AT ALL being implemented.
Identify the degree to which this provision of the compact is being implemented in your district.	90% (18)	10% (2)	0% (0)

COMPACT PROVISION #8: Waiver requirements #2: In order to facilitate the on-time graduation of children of military families, states and local education agencies shall incorporate the following procedures: Should a waiver not be granted to a student who would qualify to graduate from the sending school (subject to waiver requirement described in question 14 above), the local education agency shall provide an alternative means of acquiring required coursework so that graduation may occur on time. Identify the degree to which this provision of the compact is currently being implemented in your district.

	This provision is currently being SUBSTANTIALLY implemented.	This provision is currently being PARTIALLY implemented.	This provision is NOT AT ALL being implemented.
Identify the degree to which this provision of the compact is being implemented in your district.	95% (19)	5% (1)	0% (0)

COMPACT PROVISION #9: Transfers during senior year: Should a military student transferring in his or her senior year be ineligible to graduate from the receiving local education agency after all alternatives have been considered, the sending and receiving local education agencies shall ensure that receipt of a diploma from the sending local education agency, if the student meets the graduation requirements of the sending local education agency. In the event that one of the states in question is not a member of this compact, the member state shall use best efforts to facilitate the on-time graduation of the student in accordance with Sections A and B of this Article (these 'sections' of the compact are represented by waiver requirements described in questions 14 and 16 above). Identify the degree to which this provision of the compact is currently being implemented in your district.

	This provision is currently being SUBSTANTIALLY implemented.	This provision is currently being PARTIALLY implemented.	This provision is NOT AT ALL being implemented.
Identify the degree to which this provision of the compact is being implemented in your district.	95% (19)	5% (1)	0% (0)

COMPACT PROVISION #10: Official education records/transcripts: Simultaneous with the enrollment and conditional placement of the student, the school in the receiving state shall request the student's official education record from the school in the sending state. Upon receipt of this request, the school in the sending state will process and furnish the official education records to the school in the receiving state within ten (10) days or within such time as is reasonably determined under the rules promulgated by the Interstate Commission. Identify the degree to which this provision of the compact is currently being implemented in your district.

	This provision is currently being SUBSTANTIALLY implemented.	This provision is currently being PARTIALLY implemented.	This provision is NOT AT ALL being implemented.
Identify the degree to which this provision of the compact is being implemented in your district.	90% (18)	10% (2)	0%(0)

COMPACT PROVISION #11: Immunizations: Compacting states shall give thirty (30) days from the date of enrollment, or within such time as is reasonably determined under the rules promulgated by the Interstate Commission, for students to obtain any immunizations(s) required by the receiving state. For a series of immunizations, initial vaccinations must be obtained within thirty (30) days or within such time as is reasonable determined under the rules promulgated by the Interstate Commission. Identify the degree to which this provision of the compact is currently being implemented in your district.

	This provision is currently being SUBSTANTIALLY implemented.	This provision is currently being PARTIALLY implemented.	This provision is NOT AT ALL being implemented.
Identify the degree to which this provision of the compact is being implemented in your district.	85% (17)	15% (3)	0%(0)

COMPACT PROVISION #12: Educational program placement. The receiving state school shall initially honor placement of the student in the educational programs based on the current educational assessments conducted at the school in the sending state or participation/ placement in like programs in the sending state. Such programs include, but are not limited to 1) gifted and talented programs and 2) English as a second language (ESL). This does not preclude the school in the receiving state from performing subsequent evaluations to ensure appropriate placement of the student. Identify the degree to which this provision of the compact is currently being implemented in your district.

	This provision is currently being SUBSTANTIALLY implemented.	This provision is currently being PARTIALLY implemented.	This provision is NOT AT ALL being implemented.
Identify the degree to which this provision of the compact is being implemented in your district.	95% (19)	5% (1)	0% (0)

Has your district implemented the WSSDA model policy relative to the Military Compact?

Yes 95% (19)

No 5% (1)

Is your school board familiar with the Military Compact?

Fully aware 50% (10)

May know 45% (9)

Not aware 5% (1)

Do you provide information about the Military Compact?

	Yes	No
On your district website	60% (12)	40% (8)
Flyer sent home to families	50% (10)	50% (10)
Other	40% (8)	60% (12)

Responses
All policies are on our website.
As needed.
Information given upon enrollment.
Information provided during Open House and other parent orientation programs/at school events
Notified principals and counselors of compact.
Our policy is posted on our website.
We have a military liaison, and our counselors and registrar inform families on a regular basis.

What help do you need to get information about the Military Compact to students and families?

Pre-packaged material, brochure? 40% (8)

Wording for district website? 40% (8)

Links to state and national resources 20% (4)

What are the needs of the military students in your district that are not covered in the Military Compact?

Responses
Brochures would be helpful to get out to the public, to inform them of the Military Compact.
Providing support through school liaison.
Counseling services.
Military families living off-post are sometimes unaware to all of the resources at their disposal both on and off post. We are teaming up with JBLM and other military organizations to better inform them of such assistance and opportunities.
Students of parents who are deployed need more counseling assistance and support that we simply cannot afford due to poor funding for Impact Aid

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