



REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

Educational Data on Students from Military Families

2017

Authorizing legislation: RCW 28A.300.505

(<http://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=28A.300.505>)

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Executive Summary

Beginning with the 2016–17 school year, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) began collecting a student-level identifier of military family status. This identifier allows educators and policymakers to analyze the academic performance of these students. Starting in December 2017, OSPI will report annually on the number of students from military families who received special education services.

In the 2016–17 school year, there were 1.9 percent of students (23,781) reported as a member of a military family. Of those students, 15.7 percent (3,733) received special education services.

Introduction

The 2015 Washington State Legislature passed Substitute Senate Bill 5163 (SSB 5163) which amended [RCW 28A.300.505](#) (Sec. 2) to direct OSPI to collect a student-level identifier of military families.

“(2) The superintendent of public instruction shall develop a reporting format and instruction for school districts to collect and submit data that must include: (b) Starting no later than the 2016-17 school year, data on students from military families. The K-12 data governance group established in [RCW 28A.300.507](#) must develop best practice guidelines for the collection and regular updating of this data on students from military families.”

SSB 5163 also adds a new section which requires OSPI to provide a report to the legislature on this information.

“(3) Using the definitions in RCW 28A.300.505, the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall conduct an analysis of the average number of students from military families who are special education students. The data reported must include state, district, and school-level information. To protect the privacy of students, the data from schools and districts that have fewer than ten students from military families who are special education students shall not be reported. The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall report its analysis to the appropriate committees of the legislature by December 31, 2017.”

Military Family Status

During the 2016–17 school year, there were 23,781 students reported as members of military families, which is 1.9 percent of the statewide student population. Designation of students as a member of a military family occurs if the student or family reports one of the following:

- A parent or guardian is a current member of the active duty U.S. Armed Forces,
- One parent or guardian is a current member of the reserves of the U.S. Armed Forces,
- One parent or guardian is a current member of the Washington National Guard, or
- More than one parent or guardian is currently either a member of the active duty U.S. Armed Forces, Reserves of the U.S. Armed Forces, or Washington National Guard.

Students reported in one of the following categories are not counted as a member of a military family:

- Data was not available,
- No response was received or the student or family refused to state, or
- Student/family reported no parent or guardian is currently serving as a member of the active duty U.S. Armed Forces, Reserves of the U.S. Armed Forces, or Washington National Guard.

For student counts by each of these groups, see Table 1.

Table 1: Military Family Students by Status

Military Family Status	Number of Students
Student/family reported having a parent or guardian who is a current member of the active duty U.S. Armed Forces	18,490
Student/family reported having a parent or guardian who is a current member of the reserves of the U.S. Armed Forces	2,178
Student/family reported having a parent or guardian who is a current member of the Washington National Guard	1,389
Student/family reported having more than one parent or guardian who is currently either a member of the active duty U.S. Armed Forces, Reserves of the U.S. Armed Forces, or Washington National Guard	826
Data Not Available	652,517
No Response/Refused to State	131,917
Student/family reported no parent or guardian is currently serving as a member of the active duty U.S. Armed Forces, Reserves of the U.S. Armed Forces, or Washington National Guard	405,259

Military Family Students Receiving Special Education Services

Of the 23,781 students reported as a member of a military family, 15.7 percent (3,733) received special education services compared to 14.8 percent of the total students enrolled in public K–12. Table 2 shows the counts of students identified in military families, along with those who received special education services. Appendices A and B report the same information by district and by school.

Table 2: Military Family Students and Special Education Enrollment

	Total Students	Special Education	Military Family	Special Education and Military Family
State	1,245,429	183,885	23,781	3,733

Conclusion and Next Steps

Over the next year, OSPI will shift its focus from implementation of the data collection to district outreach to improve data quality and reporting. Specifically, OSPI will target outreach around data collection requirements to districts with a high percentage of students reported as “data not available” for the military family indicator.

APPENDICES

Appendices A and B are available at: <http://www.k12.wa.us/LegisGov/Reports.aspx>.

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