

2018

EDUCATIONAL
PERFORMANCE OF
MILITARY-
CONNECTED
STUDENTS

Report



SC EDUCATION
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

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Educational Performance of Military-Connected Students, 2018
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Introduction

June 11, 2018

In 2014, the General Assembly passed Act 289, the Military Family Quality of Life Enhancement Act. The Act's purpose is to "enhance many quality of life issues for members of the armed forces" (Act 289 Preamble). Part V requests the SC Education Oversight Committee (EOC) to develop an annual report on the educational performance of military connected children:

The Education Oversight Committee, working with the State Board of Education, is directed to establish a comprehensive annual report concerning the performance of military connected children who attend primary, elementary, middle, and high schools in this State. The comprehensive annual report must be in a reader-friendly format, using graphics wherever possible, published on the state, district, and school websites, and, upon request, printed by the school districts. The annual comprehensive report must address at least attendance, academic performance in reading, math, and science, and graduation rates of military connected children.¹

The EOC evaluation team worked closely with the military and education community as it developed this report. Both the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) and Defense Manpower Data Center provided data. The 2018 report provides:

- Details regarding the demographics of military-connected students;
- An update on the academic performance and school attendance of military-connected students in school year 2016-17; and
- A summary of the trainings for educators and families to enhance support of military-connected students at home and in school.

¹ Section 59-18-900(H)

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Summary of Findings and Recommendations

1. National, state and local school district collection of military-connected student (MCS) data is inconsistent. Federal numbers provided by the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) indicate 12,762 MCS during the 2016-17 school year had active-duty parents. District data provided to the SC Department of Education (SCDE) indicate there were 10,115 MCS whose parents were active-duty. Approximately 2,647 military-connected students were reported by DoDEA than by the South Carolina school districts, representing a 26 percent more MCS reported at the federal level than at the district and state levels.
2. Data reported by SCDE regarding military-connected students are based on district entry of student information into PowerSchool. As a state, South Carolina continues to underreport the number of military-connected students, but the difference in numbers reported at the state and national level is closing. Over time, the number of military-connected students reported by SCDE with at least one active-duty parent has steadily increased, from 7,763 military-connected students during the 2015-16 school year to 10,115 during the 2016-17 school year, a 23 percent increase in number of MCS reported.
3. Overall the number of military-connected students with at least one active duty parent or a parent in the National Guard or Reserves increased from 9,622 in 2016 to 10,115 in 2017.
4. While ESSA requires the identification and collection of military-connected student data, South Carolina has an established mechanism for collecting this information. The SC Department of Education (SCDE) manages PowerSchool, the student data information system that is provided to school districts. It is the primary source for student data and is often used for state and federal reporting requirements. In PowerSchool a “Parent Military Status” field includes a list with eight possible student status options, as shown in Figure 1.² This field remains unchanged since the 2015 EOC report on military-connected students.
5. Data reported by SCDE regarding military-connected students are based on district entry of student information into this field. It does not appear that information regarding federally-connected students is collected in PowerSchool. As noted in earlier EOC reports, districts may also receive federal Impact Aid funding for students who have at least one parent who is federally-connected.
6. On April 10, 2018 SCDE posted an Education Associate position to generate reports and data related to military families and student engagement. This position will also train district and school personnel how to use the South Carolina Occupation Information System to improve college and career readiness and student engagement.
7. Of the 14,070 military-connected students reported by school districts to SCDE (including National Guard, Reserves and Active Duty), approximately 90 percent of the students attend

² SC Department of Education, “PowerSchool Data Collection Manual, Fall 2016-17,” p. 127. May be accessed at: <http://www.ed.sc.gov/data/information-systems/power-school-administration/powerschool-manuals-for-s-c-pages/powerschool-data-collection-manual-2016-2017/>.

one of the eleven school districts listed in Table 1 below. Appendix B provides additional detail for all school districts.

Table 1
Districts with Highest Military-Connected Student Populations, 2017

District	Frequency	Percent
Richland 2	3,831	27.23
Dorchester 2	1,583	11.25
Berkeley	1,575	11.22
Beaufort	1,138	8.09
Horry	1,024	7.28
Lexington 1	1,010	7.18
Kershaw	724	5.15
Sumter	717	5.10
Lexington 5	563	4.00
SC Public Charter School District	326	2.32
Charleston	226	1.61
Total	12,717	90.44
Other	1,343	9.56

Source: SC Department of Education, February 2018 reported to EOC.

8. Military-connected students continue to outperform their peers on state-administered standardized tests. During the 2016-17 school year, on SC READY, in English language arts, 57.7 percent of third grade military-connected students scored “Meets or Exceeds Expectations,” compared to 42.1 percent of their peers who scored “Meets” or Exceeds Expectations.” In math, 70.8 percent of military-connected students scored “Meets or Exceeds Expectations” and 52.5 percent of their peers scored “Meets or Exceeds Expectations,” representing an 18.3 percent difference.
9. The most significant variation is in the eighth grade SCPASS Science test during the 2016-17 school year. While 49.5 percent of the state’s eighth graders scored “Meets or Exceeds Expectations” in science, almost 62 percent of military-connected students scored “Meets or Exceeds Expectations,” representing a 12.4 increase above the state average.
10. During the 2016-17 school year, military-connected students continued to outperform all students statewide on End-of-Course Examination Program exams. On average, military-connected students’ mean scores were 4.6 points higher, with the largest difference in Biology where their mean scores were 6.2 points higher than students statewide.

11. During the 2016-17 school year, the high school graduation rate for military-connected students was 94.1 percent, including National Guard and Reserves. The state on-time graduation rate was 84.46 percent, representing a four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate.³
12. Under Proviso 1A.75, MCEC received \$300,000 for FY 2017-18. As of April 26, 2018, 874 educators, school staff, parents, students and community members participated in MCEC events and initiatives. MCEC facilitated eight SPARC trainings with 250 participants. About 76 percent of participants responded to the survey with 78 percent reporting that after the training they were “very knowledgeable” or “could teach the class.”

As of April 18, 2018, 109 students and 37 adults were trained in the Student 2 Student Program. Surveys of the Student 2 Student Programs were also positive, with 98 percent of student respondents agreeing to model acceptance at their school and 97 percent agreeing to connect with new students and connect them to other people. Adult participants reported the training enabled them understand challenges and identify key issues of transitioning students. Adult participants also created mission statements and drafted campus action plans. Prior to April 12, 2018, 97 participants participated in the parent workshops, and 100 percent of participants agreed the training enabled them to support children’s educational and social/emotional needs.

³ <https://ed.sc.gov/data/report-cards/state-report-cards/2017/data-files-for-researchers-2017/>

I. Recent Developments

SC Collection of Military-Connected Student Data

While ESSA requires the identification and collection of military-connected student data, South Carolina has an established mechanism for collecting this information. The SC Department of Education (SCDE) manages PowerSchool, the student data information system that is provided to school districts. It is the primary source for student data and is often used for state and federal reporting requirements. Student level data are input, validated and maintained by local school districts. The data are then transferred (pushed from districts) electronically to SCDE through the Enrich Data Collection Tool. In PowerSchool a “Parent Military Status” field includes a list with eight possible student status options, as shown in Figure 1 below.⁴ This field remains unchanged since the 2015 EOC report on military-connected students. In its most recent PowerSchool Data Collection Manual for January-February 2018, SCDE emphasizes “verifying all foster, homeless, migrant or military-connected students are data accurately indicate their status. If any student meets the definition at any point during the school year, that student should be counted for the entire year.”⁵

Data reported by SCDE regarding military-connected students are based on district entry of student information into this field. As noted earlier in this report, districts may also receive federal Impact Aid funding for students who have at least one parent who is federally-connected. With the input of districts and other stakeholders (such as school liaison officers), additional discussion and analysis of the process for collection of this data should be considered to enhance identification of federally- and military-connected students. In the 2015 EOC report on military-connected students, the EOC recommended this field be revised to reflect criteria for qualification for federal Impact Aid funding and provide more information about students that may be useful for district and school staff, so they can enhance their support of military-connected students.

⁴ SC Department of Education, “PowerSchool Data Collection Manual, Fall 2016-17,” p. 127. May be accessed at: <http://www.ed.sc.gov/data/information-systems/power-school-administration/powerschool-manuals-for-s-c-pages/powerschool-data-collection-manual-2016-2017/>.

⁵ SC Department of Education, “PowerSchool Data Collection Manual, January-February 2018,” p. 7. May be accessed at: https://ed.sc.gov/scdoe/assets/File/DataCollectionSched/SC_PS_Data%20Collection-Specific_Fields_Combo%202017-18%20Winter%20Final.pdf, p. 145.

Figure 1
Military-Connected Student Data Collected in PowerSchool, 2017-18⁶

<p>Parent Military Status <i>(ParentsMilitaryStatus)</i> [S_SC_STU_X]</p>	<p>Select from the drop-down list the appropriate status for your student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (blank) – Neither Parent nor Guardian is serving in any military service. • 01 – A Parent or Guardian is serving in the National Guard but is not deployed. • 02 – A Parent or Guardian is serving in the Reserves but is not deployed. • 03 – A Parent or Guardian is serving in the National Guard and is currently deployed. • 04 – A Parent or Guardian is serving in the Reserves and is currently deployed. • 05 – A Parent or Guardian is serving in the military on active duty but is not deployed. • 06 – A Parent or Guardian is serving in the military on active duty and is currently deployed. • 07 – The student’s Parent or Guardian died while on active duty within the last year. • 08 – The student’s Parent or Guardian was wounded while on active duty within the last year.
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Source: SC Department of Education

New Education Associate Position

SCDE posted for an Education Associate position for April 9 through April 20, 2018. The position is located organizationally in the Division of Federal, State, and Community Resources, Office of Student Intervention Services. Position responsibilities include:

- compile and analyze data and generate local, district and statewide reports related to services for military families and student engagement;
- collaborate with Research and Data Analysis and other offices to ensure thorough collection and reporting of all data related to military families and student engagement; and
- train district and school personnel on how to use the South Carolina Occupation Information System to improve college and career readiness and student engagement.

⁶ SC Department of Education, “PowerSchool Data Collection Manual, January-February 2018,” p. 145. May be accessed at:

https://ed.sc.gov/scdoe/assets/File/DataCollectionSched/SC_PS_Data%20Collection-Specific_Fields_Combo%202017-18%20Winter%20Final.pdf.

II. Demographics of Military-Connected Students

National, state and local district collection of military-connected student data continues to be inconsistent. ESSA requires the disaggregation of student-level data, including military-connected students. When this requirement is fully implemented, data collection should become more consistent and accurate. Currently, there is no state law that requires collection of federally- or military-connected student data.

Number of Military-Connected Students

Table 2 details the estimated number of military-connected students with at least one active-duty parent. It includes data reported by two sources, the federal Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) and data reported by districts to the SC Department of Education (SCDE). As a state, South Carolina continues to underreport the number of military-connected students, but the difference in numbers reported at the state and national level is closing. Data related to military-connected students are collected and reported by districts in PowerSchool. However, the overall number of military-connected students has increased, as documented by the federal government. Data about South Carolina students provided by the DoDEA indicate there were 12,762 military-connected students in South Carolina with at least one active-duty parent in 2017-18 school year.⁷

During the 2016-17 school year, DoDEA reports 13,094 MCS.⁸ District data provided to the SC Department of Education (SCDE) indicate there were 10,115 MCS during the 2016-17 school year. Approximately 2,979 military-connected students were reported by DoDEA than by South Carolina school districts, representing 22.8 percent more MCS reported at the federal level than at the district and state levels.

Data reported by SCDE regarding military-connected students are based on district entry of student information into PowerSchool. As a state, South Carolina continues to underreport the number of military-connected students, but the difference in numbers reported at the state and national level is closing. Over time, the number of military-connected students reported by SCDE with at least one active-duty parent has steadily increased, from 7,763 military-connected students during the 2015-16 school year to 10,115 during the 2016-17 school year, a 23 percent increase in number of MCS reported.

⁷ The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) is a civilian agency of the United States Department of Defense that manages all schools for military children and teenagers in the United States and overseas at American military bases worldwide. DoDEA data include students ages five – eighteen.

⁸ The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) is a civilian agency of the United States Department of Defense that manages all schools for military children and teenagers in the United States and overseas at American military bases worldwide. Student statistics were reported to the SC Education Oversight Committee in April 2018. DoDEA data include students ages five – eighteen.

The number of state-reported South Carolina military-connected students continues to increase. Based on the 2016-17 Average Daily Membership of 719,879 students, approximately 1.3 percent of South Carolina’s students are military-connected.

Table 2
Estimated Number of Military-Connected Students
with Active-Duty Parent, School Years 2012-2018

School Year	2014-15	2016-17	2017-18	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Active Duty	DODEA	DODEA	DODEA	SCDE	SCDE	SCDE
Air Force	4,766	3,751	3,782	7,763	9,622	10,115
Army	3,832	5,365	5,108			
Marines	2,275	1,925	1,875			
Navy	1,462	3,751	1,997			
TOTAL	12,335	13,094	12,762	7,763	9,622	10,115

Sources: SC Department of Education March 2018 reported to EOC; DoDEA April 2018 reported to EOC
 Note: DoDEA data for 2014-15 collected in November 2015, for 2016-17 in January 2017 and for 2017-17 in September 2017.

Table 3 below details the number of military-connected students by parental military branch and deployment status for the past two school years. Including National Guard, Reserves and active duty military personnel, 1,155 military-connected students had at least one parent who was deployed, representing a slight increase from 2016. In addition, 49 military-connected students were reported to have a parent who was on active duty but died within the last year; another 275 military-connected students have a parent who was on active duty and wounded within the last year. While it is a small percentage of the overall number of military-connected students, the number of military-connected students with a parent who was wounded in 2017 more than quadrupled from 2016. About 73 percent of military-connected students have at least one guardian or parent who is on active duty or deployed.

Reporting of military-connected students by districts from 2016 to 2017 school years increased by almost 10 percent (1,399 students). Families and educators need to continue assisting with the reporting of this data, so district and school staff can identify students who may need additional support services and identify opportunities for military-connected students to become engaged in their school community (such as extracurricular clubs and sports). Military-connected students live with perpetual challenges presented by frequent moves, parental and sibling deployments, and additional transitions that include reintegration and dealing with profoundly changed parents. The well-being of these children depends heavily on a network of supportive adults who are trained to identify early signs of emotional, physical and academic challenges.

Table 3
Military-Connected Students,
by Parental Military Branch and Deployment Status, School Years 2015-2017

School Year	2015-16		2016-17	
Military Connection	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
National Guard - Not Deployed	1,546	12.20%	1,839	13.08%
Reserves - Not Deployed	1,231	9.72%	1,628	11.57%
National Guard - Deployed	161	1.27%	315	2.24%
Reserves - Deployed	111	0.88%	168	1.19%
Active Duty Military - Not Deployed	8,649	68.26%	8,837	62.83%
Active Duty Military - Deployed	883	6.97%	954	6.78%
Active Duty Military - Deceased in last year	24	0.19%	49	0.35%
Active Duty Military - Wounded in last year	66	0.52%	275	1.96%
Subtotal Active Duty	9,622		10,119	
Total	12,671		14,070	

Source: SC Department of Education, February 2018 reported to EOC.

School districts report there are 14,070 military-connected students, including National Guard, Reserves and Active Duty. Approximately 90 percent of the students attend one of the eleven school districts listed in Table 4 below. Appendix B provides additional detail for all school districts.

Table 4
Districts with Highest Military-Connected Student Populations, 2017

District	Frequency	Percent
Richland 2	3,831	27.23
Dorchester 2	1,583	11.25
Berkeley	1,575	11.22
Beaufort	1,138	8.09
Horry	1,024	7.28
Lexington 1	1,010	7.18
Kershaw	724	5.15
Sumter	717	5.10
Lexington 5	563	4.00
SC Public Charter School District	326	2.32
Charleston	226	1.61
Total	12,717	90.44
Other	1,343	9.56

Source: SC Department of Education, February 2018 reported to EOC.

South Carolina's largest military installations are in Charleston, Beaufort, Richland and Sumter counties. The Charleston Air Force Base and the Naval Weapons Station in Goose Creek comprise Joint Base Charleston (JB CHS). The Charleston Air Force Base houses C-17 aircraft, and the Naval Weapons Station houses several programs, including the Nuclear Power Training School, Space and Naval Systems Warfare Systems Command and some other tenant units. There is a Naval Health Clinic at the Weapons Station and a Military Treatment Facility on the Air Base.

Both the Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort and Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island/Eastern Recruiting Region are in Beaufort County. MCAS Beaufort supports establishment operations for 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing, attached II MEF units, and MCRD PI to set the conditions for the enduring success of our supported commands and their missions. The air station is home to Marine Aircraft Group 31, which is comprised of six F-18 squadrons that constantly deploy to support training and combat operations. Also, MAG-31 houses an F-35B Lighting II training squadron; the only one of its kind for the Marine Corps in the Eastern Region. MCRD PI was established in 1916 and is responsible for the training of more than 19,000 Marines per year; men Eastern of the Mississippi River and all women in the country.

Fort Jackson and Shaw Air Force Base are in the Midlands. Located in Richland County, Fort Jackson is the Army's main production center for Basic Combat Training. Approximately 50

percent of the Army's Basic Combat Training is completed at Fort Jackson, with more than 36,000 troops trained each year. Fort Jackson is home to the U.S. Army Soldier Support Institute, the Armed Forces Army Chaplaincy Center and School, the National Center for Credibility Assessment (formerly the Department of Defense Polygraph Institute, and the Drill Sergeant School, which trains all Active Duty and Reserve instructors.

Shaw Air Force Base in Sumter County is home to Air Force's largest combat F-16 wing, the 20th Fighter Wing. Shaw also serves as home to Headquarters Ninth Air Force, U.S. Air Forces Central, Third Army, U.S. Army Central and many other tenant units.

III. Student Performance

This section provides academic and attendance data for military-connected students for 2016-17 school year including:

- student achievement as measured by SC READY for third through eighth grades in English language arts and mathematics;
- student achievement as measured by SCPASS on science for students in grade four through eight;
- student achievement as measured by the End-Of-Course Examination Program (EOCEP);
- high school graduation rates; and
- student attendance.

Academic Data

The academic achievement of military-connected students was compared to the academic achievement of all students in South Carolina for students in third through eighth grades on SC READY for English language arts and mathematics and SCPASS for science. For high school students, student performance on the South Carolina End-of-Course Evaluation Program (EOCEP) was considered.

Student Achievement in Grades Three through Eight

According to SC Department of Education's website for the 2016-17 school year:

The South Carolina Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (SCPASS) is a statewide assessment administered to students in grades four through eight. All students in these grade levels are required to take the SCPASS except those who qualify for the South Carolina Alternate Assessment (SC-Alt). SCPASS includes tests in two subjects: science and social studies. The South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Assessments (SC READY) are statewide assessments in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics that will meet all the requirements of Acts 155 and 200, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), and the Assessments Peer Review guidance.⁹

Tables 5 and 6 below show military-connected students' performance on state-administered tests during the 2015-16 and 2016-17 school years. Military-connected students continue to outperform their peers in English language arts, mathematics and science in all subjects and grades. The performance of military-connected students is most significant in third through fifth grades. During the 2016-17 school year, in English language arts, 57.7 percent of third grade military-connected students scored "Meets or Exceeds Expectations," compared to 42.1 percent

⁹ <https://ed.sc.gov/tests/middle/south-carolina-college-and-career-ready-assessments-sc-ready/>

of their peers who scored “Meets or Exceeds Expectations.” In math, 70.8 percent of military-connected students scored “Meets or Exceeds Expectations,” and 52.5 percent of their peers scored “Meets or Exceeds Expectations,” representing an 18.3 percent difference. The most significant variation is in the eighth grade SCPASS science test during the 2016-17 school year. While 49.5 percent of the state’s eighth graders scored “Meets or Exceeds Expectations” or in science, almost 62 percent of military-connected students scored “Meets or Exceeds Expectations,” representing a 12.4 increase in over the state average.

Table 5**2015-16 SC READY and SCPASS Performance of Military Connected Students and All Students in South Carolina**

Grade Level	SC READY English Language Arts			SC READY Mathematics			SCPASS Science		
	Number MCS Tested	Percent MCS Meets or Exceeds	State Percent Meets or Exceeds	Number MCS Math	Percent Meets or Exceeds	State Percent Meets or Exceeds	Number MCS Science	Percent Met or Exemplary	State Percent Met or Exemplary
3	1,118	58.9	43.7	1,122	68.0	53.6	0	0	0
4	952	55.8	43.4	954	61.4	46.7	957	79.6	65.0
5	941	55.9	41.2	943	57.4	44.3	942	78.5	65.7
6	880	51.9	41.0	882	48.5	39.5	879	76.0	62.1
7	950	50.6	40.7	951	41.1	34.7	951	81.5	70.6
8	877	53.6	44.7	876	38.6	32.4	874	77.1	66.2

Source: SC Department of Education, February 2017 reported to EOC.

Table 6**2016-17 SC READY and SCPASS Performance of Military Connected Students and All Students in South Carolina**

Grade Level	SC READY English Language Arts			SC READY Mathematics			SCPASS Science		
	Number MCS Tested	Percent MCS Meets or Exceeds	State Percent Meets or Exceeds	Number MCS Math	Percent Meets or Exceeds	State Percent Meets or Exceeds	Number MCS Science	Percent Met or Exemplary	State Percent Meets or Exceeds
3	1,160	57.7	42.1	1,159	70.8	52.5	0	N/A	
4	1,166	55.1	40.9	1,166	61.8	46.4	1,168	63.4	48.4
5	1,068	50.9	38.3	1,070	44.2	40.0	1,070	61.6	46.1
6	991	53.1	39.7	991	52.1	41.5	993	61.8	48.0
7	1,006	46.6	36.4	1,006	41.7	33.3	1,004	58.8	46.5
8	1,009	47.8	40.1	1,009	42.5	34.5	1,008	61.9	49.0

Source: SC Department of Education, February 2018 reported to EOC.

Student Performance in End-of-Course Exams

Table 7 below compares performance on end-of-course exams. During the 2016-17 school year, military-connected students continued to outperform all students statewide on the End-of-Course Examination Program exams. On average, military-connected students' mean scores were 4.6 points higher, with the largest difference in Biology where their mean scores were 6.2 points higher than students statewide.

Table 7
End-of-Course Assessment Performance of
Military Connected Students and All Students in South Carolina

School Year	Military Connected Students		All South Carolina Students
	Number of Students	Mean	Mean
Algebra 1			
2012-13	398	83.5	78.2
2013-14	535	85.7	79.8
2014-15	668	85.7	82.6
2015-16	857	85.2	81.9
2016-17	1,000	72.2	69.4
English 1			
2012-13	350	81.3	75.3
2013-14	537	82.2	76.0
2014-15	636	83.6	79.4
2015-16	827	83.7	79.8
2016-17	1,024	75.9	71.4
Biology			
2012-13	310	84.2	78.1
2013-14	451	85.4	79.2
2014-15	580	86.5	82.3
2015-16	795	86.9	81.6
2016-17	943	81.5	75.3

Source: SC Department of Education, March 2018 reported to EOC.

High School Graduation Rate

The federally-approved on-time graduation rate identifies a cohort of students who were ninth grade students in a specific year and calculates the percentage of that cohort that graduates four years later. Students are removed from the cohort when they transfer to other degree-granting institutions or programs. Students who transfer into a district are added to the cohort.

For military-connected students this process was not possible because enrollment history of these students was not available. The EOC evaluation team could not determine when students were initially in the ninth grade and could not document transfers into or out of a cohort of students who were initially enrolled in the ninth grade four years prior. Available data identifies students by grade level and graduation status. For students who were identified as being in twelfth grade during the 2016-17 timeframe, the EOC evaluation team could identify: (1) those students who graduated, (2) those who received a certificate or did not graduate, and (3) those students who transferred to other degree-granting institutions and were removed from the graduation cohort. Based on this information, the graduation rates for military-connected students are included below. Table 8 shows that during the 2016-17 school year, the high school graduation rate for military-connected students was 94.1 percent, including National Guard and Reserves. The state on-time graduation rate was 84.56 percent¹⁰, representing a four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate:

The four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate (hereafter referred to as ‘the four-year graduation rate’) is the number of students who graduate in four years with a regular high school diploma divided by the number of students who form the adjusted cohort for the graduating class. From the beginning of 9th grade, students who are entering that grade for the first time form a cohort that is subsequently “adjusted” by adding any students who transfer into the cohort later during the 9th grade and the next three years and subtracting any students who transfer out, emigrate to another country, or die during that same period.¹¹

Table 8
High School Graduation Rates for Military-Connected Students (MCS) and Statewide Graduation Rates, School Years 2012-2017

Year	Total Number of MCS	Percent MCS Graduates	Percent Statewide Graduates
2012-13	237	96.5	77.5
2013-14	309	97.4	80.1
2014-15	407	95.3	80.3
2015-16	536	96.6	82.6
2016-17	657	94.1	84.6 ¹²

Source: SC Department of Education, February 2018 reported to EOC.

¹⁰ <https://ed.sc.gov/data/report-cards/state-report-cards/2017/data-files-for-researchers-2017/>

¹² Ibid.

Attendance Data

School districts want to maximize student instructional time. However, due to deployments and subsequent returns from deployments, there are instances when a military-connected student may need to be excused for absences. Some states, such as Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, Michigan and Georgia, have detailed guidance for excusing absences for military-connected students.¹³

Student attendance rates were computed using information provided by SCDE. Within any year, the number of students reported as military connected by school districts is only 73 percent of the number reported by the Defense Manpower Data Center. During the 2016-17 school year, average number of days absent was 4.4 days. Table 9 lists the 14 districts reporting military-connected students were absent for more than 4.4 school days. Aiken and Colleton had the highest average absence rate (6.1 days) and the SC Public Charter School District the lowest absence rate of three days. Districts in **bold** exceed the average of 4.4 days absent.

Table 9
Average Number of Days Absent in School Districts with
at least 30 Military-Connected Students (MCS), 2016-17 School Year

District	Number of MCS	Average Number of Days Absent
Aiken	73	6.1
Colleton	79	6.1
Lexington 2	40	6
Pickens	143	5.9
Orangeburg 5	44	5.5
Spartanburg 7	94	5.2
Florence 1	108	5
Hampton 1	74	5
Horry	1,024	5
Greenville	78	4.9
Lexington 1	1,010	4.8
Sumter	717	4.6
Oconee	133	4.5
Richland 2	3,831	4.5
Beaufort	1,138	4.4
Kershaw	724	4.4
Spartanburg 2	50	4.4
Dorchester 2	1,583	4.3
Edgefield	64	4.1
York 3 (Rock Hill)	60	4.1
Berkeley	1,575	3.9
Charleston	226	3.8
Lancaster	97	3.7
Lexington/Richland 5	563	3.6
SC Public Charter District	326	3

Source: SC Department of Education, February 2018 reported to EOC.

¹³ For more information, refer to Military Child Education Coalition’s “Military-Connected Students and Public School Attendance Policies.” May be accessed at <http://www.militarychild.org/public/upload/files/SchoolAttendancePoliciesFINAL.pdf>.

IV. Support and Engagement of Military-Connected Families and Educators

Proviso 1A.75 of the Fiscal Year 2017-18 Appropriation Act directed the Education Oversight Committee to expend \$300,000 of the funds for Partnerships for Innovation to:

“initiate in at least two school districts with high military density, a pilot program that will provide trainings, services, resources and research to teachers, counselors, mental health professionals, school nurses, service providers and military parents. The objective of the pilot is to increase the level of educational quality and support for military-connected children...Pursuant to its responsibilities under Act 289 of 2014, the Education Oversight Committee will report on the expenditure of these funds and post-training evaluation in its annual report on the educational performance of military-connected children.”

During the 2017-18 school year, EOC staff worked closely with the Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) to ensure the intent of the proviso was met. School liaison officers also provided support and guidance about workshop content and family engagement. MCEC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, world-wide organization, focused on ensuring quality educational opportunities for all military children affected by mobility, family separation, and transition. MCEC is also an Authorized Provider by the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET).

Due to the expansion of the military support from \$100,000 in FY 2016-17 to \$300,000 in FY 2017-18, MCEC worked directly with multiple districts to customize military support to local communities utilizing various MCEC programs and activities. Table 10 details program implementation. Beaufort, Charleston, Richland 2 and Sumter school districts received approximately \$50,000 each and worked with MCEC to deliver customized programming that would address the unique needs of each districts’ military-connected students and families. MCEC expended the remaining \$100,000 and facilitated eight statewide workshops that were open to all educators. As of April 26, 2018, 874 individuals participated in MCEC programming, including educators, parents and students. During 2017-18 school year, MCEC expanded its offerings to include the following four programs, described below.

- First offered during FY 2016-17, MCEC continued to provide professional development to educators during FY 2017-18. The primary professional development activity is the one-day training titled “Helping Military Children Find Their S.P.A.R.C: Strengths, Potential, Aspirations, Resourcefulness, Confidence.” “SPARC” training provides participants with strategies to assist young people in developing hardiness skills to meet personal and professional goals. Participants learn to identify sparks and interests that contribute to a growth mindset in children and youth.
- Working closely with Richland 2, MCEC implemented a Parent Program, with two part-time staff who are MCEC employees. Trained in January 2018, the team develops relationships with school staff, community partners and military families. Based on their conversations, the team provides workshops for military-connected families that may

address kindergarten readiness, transitions between schools and bullying. MCEC's goal for the Parent Program is to facilitate nine workshops with 90 parents monthly.

- Beginning in January 2018, a Military Student Transition Affiliate (MSTA), has begun working in South Carolina, the only one in the state. In Sumter School District, a longtime guidance counselor focuses on supporting military-connected students at Crestwood High School. She develops a relationship with the students and contacts their parents or guardians to answer questions, provide support during their adjustment time to the community, and assist them with navigating any challenges. In her work with students, the primary goals of the MSTA are to strengthen the relationship between school staff and military-connected families and to ensure students will graduate on time. The MSTA has also participated in student program training, so she is able to coordinate with student program staff to ensure the needs of students are addressed through the student program in Sumter.
- Student Programs are being conducted in Sumter and Beaufort school districts. The general Student 2 Student program is a student-led program that provides support to military-connected children through the following peer-to-peer mentoring programs: Elementary Student 2 Student (ES2S), Junior Student 2 Student (JS2S) and Student 2 Student (S2S). The program eases transitions and creates a positive school environment. The amount of adult guidance decreases as the age of the students increases. Overall, there is adult facilitation and guidance regardless of the ages or educational level of the students.

MCEC staff report Berkeley and Richland 2 school districts began Student 2 Student programs prior to the past two years of funding by proviso. Goose Creek High School's program was established in 2010 and Richland 2's programs in Ridgeview High School started in 2012 and Richland Northeast High's in 2004. MCEC provides a report card every semester based on a self-reported survey to each program that is distributed in winter and in the spring. MCEC also distributes newsletters, hosts webinars and sponsors an annual national training seminar in July. The training seminar is self-funded by participating districts. MCEC also sponsors the Frances Hasselbein Student Leadership Program and hold two leadership programs a year.

Table 10
Summary of MCEC Activities during FY 2018-19

Location	Program	Date	Participant Type							Total Attendance
			Educator					Parent	Other	
			Student	Counselor	Teacher	Admin	Other			
Beaufort	Student 2 Student (4 schools)	1/23/18 -1/24/18	21	2	3	0	1			27
	Junior Student 2 Student (5 schools)	1/23/18 -1/24/18	22	2	0	1	3			28
	Student 2 Student (3 schools)	1/25/18 - 1/26/18	10	2	0	0	3		1	16
	Junior Student 2 Student (4 schools)	1/25/18 - 1/26/18	15	0	2	0	2			19
	TOTAL		68	6	5	1	9	0	1	90
Charleston	Helping Military Children Discover Their SPARC	2/16/2018	0	10	12	8	0	0	0	30
	Helping Military Children Discover their SPARC	2/16/2018								
	Student 2 Student (2 schools)	4/19-20/18	10	2	2					14
	Junior Student 2 Student (1 school)	4/19-20/18	6	1			1			8
	Elem Student 2 Student (2 schools)	4/17-18/18	0	3	5	1	4			13
	TOTAL		16	16	19	9	5	0	0	65
Richland 2	Parent Education Seminars	11/16/2017	0					0	0	0
	Parent to Parent Team (2 staff)	1/22/2018						112		112
	TOTAL		0	0	0	0	0	112	0	112
Sumter	Student 2 Student (3 schools)	1/29/18 -1/30/18	12	2	0	1	3			18
	Junior Student 2 Student (3 schools)	1/31/18 -2/1/18	29	4	1	0	5			39
	Military Student Transition Consultant - Affiliate	1/1/18-6/31/18	192	76			15	66		349
	Parent Education Seminar									0
	TOTAL		233	82	1	1	23	66	0	406
Statewide funds	Florence (SPARC)	11/27/2017	0	16	9		8	1	0	34
	Charleston (SPARC)	2/16/2018	0	2	30	2	2	0	1	37
	Irmo (SPARC)	10/31/2017	0	15	6	3	5	0	6	35
	Camden (SPARC)	11/21/2017	0	28	0		4	0	1	33
	Georgetown (SPARC)	3/8/2018	0	24						24
	Goose Creek (SPARC)	3/22/2018	0	34	2	1	1			38
	Columbia (SPARC)	4/10/2018	0	24						
	Beaufort coverage									
	TOTAL		0	143	47	6	20	1	8	201
	GRAND TOTAL		317	247	72	17	57	179	9	874

Appendix A Resources for Military-Connected Students and Families

Department of Defense Education Activity provides professional development training in a webinar format for school liaison officers. This information is also helpful for local school districts to understand the needs of students and how to support them in a comprehensive manner.

DoDEA's Website "Keeping Students at the Center" <http://slmodules.dodea.edu/>.

School Liaison Officers serve as a primary point of contact for students and their families transitioning to new communities and schools. They are also a resource for schools and school districts. To view a list of school liaison officers by branch, go to <https://www.dodea.edu/Partnership/schoolLiaisonOfficers.cfm>.

Fort Jackson MWR School Liaisons provide ongoing educational support for military connected schools. This comprehensive website provides information about public and private schools, homeschooling, and local school districts.

http://www.fortjacksonmwr.com/school_liaison

Military Impacted School Association is a national organization of school superintendents. MISA supports school districts with a high concentration of military children by providing detailed, comprehensive information regarding impact aid and resources for families and schools.

<http://militaryimpactedschoolsassociation.org/>

The **Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission (MIC3)** provides consistent policy in every school district and in every state that voluntarily joins MIC3. MIC3 addresses key educational transition issues such as enrollment, placement, attendance, eligibility and graduation.

<http://www.mic3.net>

South Carolina Operation: Military Kids (OMK) is part of the National OMK initiative designated to provide support to the children and youth of families that are impacted by global contingency operations. This includes those served by Army installations, Air Force, Navy and Marine bases, and those families, children and youth who are geographically dispersed.

The **Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC)** focuses on ensuring quality educational opportunities for all military children affected by mobility, family separation, and transition. A 501(c)(3) non-profit, world-wide organization, the MCEC performs research, develops resources, conducts professional institutes and conferences, and develops and publishes resources for all constituencies.

<http://www.militarychild.org/>

[Military OneSource](#) is a confidential Department of Defense-funded program providing comprehensive information on every aspect of military life at no cost to active duty, National Guard, and reserve members, and their families.

Information includes, but is not limited to, deployment, reunion, relationships, grief, spouse employment and education, parenting and childhood services. It is a virtual extension to installation services.

The program also provides free resources to schools, including books and videos with relevant topics that help students cope with divorce and deployment.

www.militaryonesource.mil

South Carolina Programs

The **International Baccalaureate** Program helps students develop skills to create a better and peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. For more information, including a list of South Carolina schools participating in the IB Program, go to <http://www.southcarolinaib.org/>.

Four-year-old kindergarten is available in the state and is offered in public schools and private child care centers. State-funded prekindergarten for four-year-olds serves children in the “most at-risk” category, where family income falls 185% below poverty level or the family is Medicaid eligible. Families may also be eligible for other services such as Even Start, Head Start, state-funded family literacy programs, Social Security, food stamps, Medicaid or temporary assistance to needy families (TANF).

Children also qualify in case of a documented developmental delay, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) requiring pre-kindergarten, incarceration of a parent, placement in a foster home, or a child who is homeless. Documentation of family or child “most at-risk” conditions must be kept on file for review. Children who participate in free and reduced meal programs at the center/school they attend may also qualify, if income eligibility is verified on each child and records are kept on file for review.

Some districts use local funds to serve children who are not in the “at risk” category. Several districts serve all children who request services. A few districts charge a fee for non-qualifying children, but state regulations prohibit any fees for “at risk” children.

State law says that “students may enter kindergarten in the public schools of this State if they will attain the age of four on or before September first of the applicable school year.”

<http://ed.sc.gov/instruction/early-learning-and-literacy/cdep/>

Appendix B
Number of Military-Connected Students (MCS) by District, February 2017

District	Number	Percent of Total MCS in SC	District	Number	Percent of Total MCS in SC
Abbeville	1	0.01	Horry	1,024	7.28
Aiken	73	0.52	Kershaw	724	5.15
Anderson 1	5	0.04	Lancaster	97	0.69
Anderson 2	3	0.02	Laurens 55	4	0.03
Anderson 3	1	0.01	Laurens 56	8	0.06
Anderson 4	9	0.06	Lee	1	0.01
Anderson 5	2	0.01	Lexington 1	1,010	7.18
Bamberg 1	4	0.03	Lexington 2	40	0.28
Barnwell 45			Lexington 3	2	0.01
Beaufort	1,138	8.09	Lexington 5	563	4.01
Berkeley	1,578	11.22	Marion	2	0.01
Charleston	226	1.61	Marlboro	1	0.01
Cherokee	1	0.01	McCormick		
Chester			Newberry	21	0.15
Chesterfield	11	0.08	Oconee	133	0.95
Clarendon 2	14	0.10	Orangeburg 3	1	0.01
Clarendon 3	1	0.01	Orangeburg 4	3	0.02
Colleton	79	0.56	Orangeburg 5	44	0.31
Darlington	2	0.01	Pickens	143	1.02
School for the Deaf & Blind	1	0.01	Richland 1	12	0.09
Dillon 4			Richland 2	3,831	27.23
Dorchester 2	1,583	11.25	SC Public Charter School District	326	2.32
Dorchester 4			Saluda	11	0.08
Edgefield	64	0.45	Spartanburg 1	1	0.01
Fairfield	5	0.04	Spartanburg 2	50	0.36
Florence 1	108	0.77	Spartanburg 3	12	0.09
Florence 2	5	0.04	Spartanburg 5	3	0.02
Florence 3	1	0.01	Spartanburg 6	1	0.01
Florence 5			Spartanburg 7	94	0.67
Georgetown	5	0.04	Sumter	717	5.10
Governor's School for Math & Science			Union	9	0.06
Greenville	78	0.55	Williamsburg	11	0.08
Greenwood 50	12	0.09	York 1	3	0.02
Greenwood 51	1	0.01	York 2	1	0.01
Hampton 1	74	0.53	York 3	60	0.43
Hampton 2			York 4	12	0.09

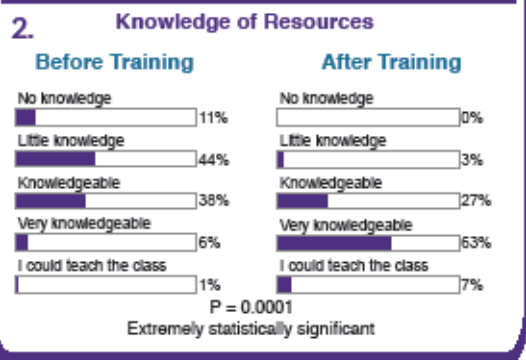
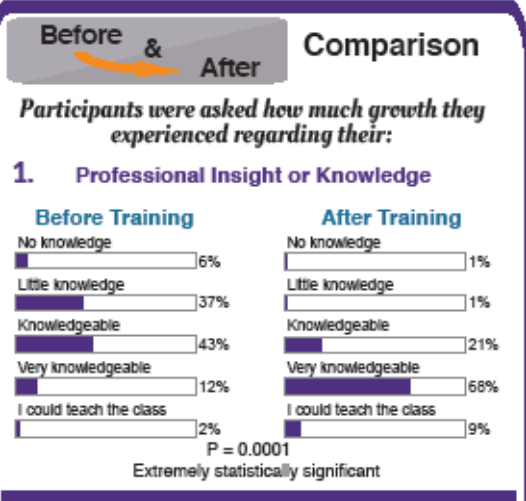
Appendix C MCEC Summary of Outcomes for FY 2017-18



Through funds allocated for "Partnerships for Innovation", the training, services, resources, and research below was provided to South Carolina teachers, counselors, mental health professionals, school nurses, service providers and military parents. Data demonstrates that the objective was met to increase the level of educational quality and support for military-connected children.




This course provides participants with strategies to assist young people in developing hardiness skills to meet personal and professional goals. Participants learn to identify sparks and interests that contribute to a growth mindset in children and youth.




The 250 participants in the S.P.A.R.C. trainings at the locations listed below, 190 completed the survey.

Date	Training Location	# Participants
10/31/17	Irma	35
11/21/17	Camden	34
11/27/17	Florence	26
2/16/17	Charleston	30
2/16/18	Charleston	37
3/8/18	Georgetown	25
3/22/18	Goose Creek	39
4/10/18	Columbia	24

Participants were asked, "how many will their new knowledge influence/reach?"



47,763
Students



8,050
Colleagues

Participants were asked: What was your favorite part of the training, and why was it so useful to you?

- "I enjoyed the focus on finding a student's spark and utilizing that to help them develop resilience through challenges."
- "I enjoyed listening to the military spouses share their experiences and how it affected their school age children."
- "We were placed in groups with people we did not know and the diversity of the minds opened up lots of possibilities."
- "The Goal Management worksheet provided very practical scenarios for us to practice."

"School Counselors don't necessarily receive training in working with children of military parents. I had a parent whose child attended another school to ask me about resources that parents could use with their children. Specifically, her husband was and still is active in the military and had been deployed overseas. I researched resources online, such as age appropriate books she could read to her child to help with understanding the father's deployment, but I needed more. This training provided more resources that I am to share with military families, but to also help all students find their spark."

"I have many students who have suffered trauma and, as the instructors told us, we rarely know if we have National Guard families, so all teachers should have this skill set."

"Helping students find their SPARK can carry them through many changes in schools, locations, and relationships -- their spark would remain the same, and could be the constant that brings success."

- Participants agreed that the training enabled them to:**
- 94%** Explore what it means to thrive, and the role of caring adults in helping children reach their full potential.
 - 88%** Interpret current research on thriving, and examine a specific four-step process to help adults support youth.
 - 91%** Network with colleagues to develop strategies for promoting thriving attributes in children and youth.
 - 91%** Analyze professional and personal practices as related to components of thriving and identify strategies and methodologies for application.

Student 2 Student ProgramSM

Provides support to military-connected children through the following peer-to-peer mentoring programs: Elementary Student 2 Student (eS2S), Junior Student 2 Student (JS2S), and Student 2 Student (S2S).

Core Values	Leadership
100% Acceptance Academics	Finding the Way Relationships



Adult Participants agreed the training enabled them to:

- 97%** Describe the challenges faced by students as they transition in or out of a school.
- 97%** Identify and apply 3 key issues of transitioning students: Finding the way, Academics and Relationships.
- 97%** Identify personal skills needed to implement and sustain a successful program using leadership, team building and communication skills.
- 87%** Create a customized Mission Statement.
- 97%** Draft a Campus Action Plan.

Adult Participant Comments

"The interactive classroom training was geared towards the students and not the adults. It made the children take charge of their own interpretation of being a leader and taking the ideas seriously."

"This training is the key to helping students who are transitioning into a new environment and school setting. Most significantly, their peers make that transition smoother!"

"The students were engaged and had immediate buy in."

"As an adult child of a retired military officer, it would have been helpful to have such a program available."

"The strategies were easy to use, easy to understand, and very good to work for the engagement of new students. It was very helpful to be reminded, as an adult, of how frightening a change can be for a your person."

Adult participants responded to:

How many will their new knowledge influence/reach?



7,075
Students



1,051
Colleagues

"The training is RELEVANT and students are learning great activities and important principles of leadership."

S2S High School

Location	Trained/Scheduled	Students	Adults
Beaufort	8 schools	31	11
Charleston	2 schools	April 19-20, 2018	
Sumter	3 schools	12	6

JS2S -Middle School

Location	Trained/Scheduled	Students	Adults
Beaufort	8 schools	37	10
Charleston	1 school	April 19-20, 2018	
Sumter	5 schools	29	10

eS2S -Elementary School

Location	Scheduled
Charleston	2 schools April 17-18, 2018

Student participants agreed the training enabled them to:

- 100%** understand the needs of a new student to my school.
- 98%** model 100% acceptance at my school.
- 97%** show new students around my school (Find the Way).
- 97%** connect with new students and connect them to other people (Relationships).
- 90%** encourage new students to challenge themselves academically (Academics).
- 93%** improve my school and community through acts of service (Service).
- 99%** inspire others to join me in the S2S/JS2S program (Leadership).

Students replied to, "What part of the training best prepared them to help new students and why?"

"Listening to others and showing people around. I'm awkward so talking to others and walking with them really helped."

"The exercise where we said what we would want to know if we were new students because it showed us the needs of new students at our school."

"The tangled knot games showed how much we get along with others."

"The best part of the training was learning how to 'break the ice' and helping students learn more about the community, because it helps the student to get use to the change."

"To make everyone feel welcome, all of the training was great because it will help us start our JS2S club."

"Listening and communication skills. It helped me understand how to communicate with people."

"The 100% Acceptance because I don't always accept people but now I will."



Parents are a child's primary and most important advocate. In recognition of that critical role, the MCEC developed a series of workshops addressing needs based on a child's developmental stages. Workshops are developed specifically with parents in mind and approach challenges faced by military-connected children from the parent's perspective.

Participants agreed the training enabled them to support children's:

100% educational and social/emotional needs.

Comments

"I've been through many deployments and also the internet is full of advice on how to successfully conquer a deployment, but it's a whole other level of support to hear this information face-to-face and meet others going through a similar experience. The Presenters tailored the conversation to the people in the room which made the experience worth it."



"Reminders on how to stay connected during a deployment are always helpful. Even if I am doing some of this, hearing it gives me affirmation that my efforts are working."

"I didn't know where to start. This workshop helped me get started."



Date Workshops Completed

- Mar. 8 Coaching a Home Run Reader
- Mar. 12 Staying Connected to Your Child's Education During Deployment
- Mar. 15 Test-Taking Strategies (2 workshops)
- Mar. 28 Coaching a Home Run Reader (2 Workshops)
- Apr. 9 Resiliency
- Apr. 12 Turning Stress Into Strength

97 participants attended the workshops

Date Workshops Scheduled

- Apr. 13 Resiliency
- Apr. 25 Cooking with Kids (3 Workshops)
- May 7 Kindergarten Readiness
- May 17 Avoiding the Summer Slide
- June 5 Avoiding the Summer Slide
- June 7 Avoiding the Summer Slide



Date Tell Me a Story (TMAS) Scheduled

- May 6 Click Clack Moo (Book)
- Guest Readers will be MG and Mrs. Livingston, SC Adjutant General



Affiliates serve with the capability and capacity to provide personalized care. Affiliates are on site and able to build relationships in order to problem solve at the local level. The Affiliate plays a pivotal role in establishing collaboration among school systems, education agencies, community groups and installation resources.

"The MSTA has made a tremendous impact with building positive relationships and improving communications among military students and their families at our high school. Currently stakeholders are receiving improved individualized services that assist with their transitions. As a result of the collaborative partnership, military families have an on-site advocate who helps school administrators provide an optimal learning environment." -Principle

"The MSTA is doing an awesome job in assisting military students and families and she is in great demand among student, and parents alike in our local military communities." -Guidance Counselor

"I am so happy that the school has a MSTA. It is always great to hear positive feedback and I really appreciate you taking the time to share with me what you have seen with my child's performance and progress in school." -Parent

"What a great asset we have at our school in the MSTA. She's providing guidance to students to help them start the process of reaching their S.P.A.R.C. Students come with an idea of what they like, but have no ideas of how to get started. The MSTA provides valuable information that help the students to get started. She is working with the the S2S program and together we are exploring ways to partner together to bring informational topics of discussion to a forum for military parents. She is a joy to work with and I am grateful for this partnership." -SLO

Topics Addressed

- Academics
- Club/Sports
- College and Career Readiness
- Conflict Resolution
- Military Lifestyle
- Social Emotional
- Special Education

The MSTA :

1. assisted 66 military-connected students with transition and problem solving support.



2. connected with 64 parents providing ongoing support.



3. provided support to 41 School, Installation and Community personnel to benefit military-connected students.



The SC Education Oversight Committee is an independent, non-partisan group made up of 18 educators, business persons, and elected leaders. Created in 1998, the committee is dedicated to reporting facts, measuring change, and promoting progress within South Carolina's education system.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you have questions, please contact the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) staff for additional information. The phone number is 803.734.6148. Also, please visit the EOC website at www.eoc.sc.gov for additional resources.

The Education Oversight Committee does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, or handicap in its practices relating to employment or establishment and administration of its programs and initiatives. Inquiries regarding employment, programs and initiatives of the Committee should be directed to the Executive Director 803.734.6148.