AGENDA

Academic Standards & Assessments Subcommittee Meeting

Monday, May 20, 2024
10:00 a.m.
Room 433, Blatt Building

I.   Welcome...Dr. Patty Tate

II.   Approval of ASA Subcommittee Minutes
        for March 18, 2024.. Dr. Patty Tate

III.   <u>Action Item:</u>
        Report on the Educational Performance of
        Military-Connected Students in SC, 2024........................Dr. Sara Jane Arnett,
                                                                                          Consultant to the EOC

IV.   <u>Information Item:</u>
        Cut Score Concordance of College
        Readiness Exams... Dr. Matthew Lavery

V.   2024 Retreat Update ....Dana Yow

VI.   Adjournment

<u>Academic Standards and Assessments Subcommittee</u>
Dr. Patty Tate, Chair   Sidney Locke
Rep. Terry Alexander   Sen. Dwight Loftis
Rep. Bill Hager   Melissa Pender
Barbara Hairfield   Sen. Ross Turner

Members Present (in-person or remote): Barbara Hairfield, Sen. Dwight Loftis, Melissa Pender, Dr. Patty Tate, Sen. Ross Turner

EOC Staff Present: Dana Yow, Dr. Rainey Knight, Riley Dixon, Dr. Jenny May, Hope Johnson-Jones, Tenell Felder

Guest(s) Present: Matthew Ferguson, SCDE

Dr. Patty Tate welcomed the ASA subcommittee then asked for a motion to approve the Jan. 22 meeting minutes. After the motion to approve was accepted, Dr. Tate called Tenell Felder to present the first information item on the Data Trailblazer Award.

Ms. Felder informed the subcommittee that the Data Trailblazer award will recognize schools that have used creative data visualization and storytelling to achieve student success. She then reviewed the award's criteria which included demonstration of assisting educators in using data to improve student outcomes, helping families and caregivers interpret student data, establishing a culture of school-wide data informed decision making, and incorporating practices that prioritize data privacy. Ms. Felder let the committee know that the award would be announced at the EOC retreat and that the recipients would be invited to present. She then told the committee they could visit expectmoresc.com and select the 2024 Data Trailblazer Award link to nominate a school for the award until March 27. Ms. Felder then asked for questions.

Senator Ross Turner asked Ms. Felder to provide an example of data story telling. She responded that data story telling could be using a student's data points to illustrate how to get that student to a certain achievement level.

Following this, Senator Turner asked how the award was communicated.

Ms. Felder responded that an announcement was sent to district information officers, principals and guidance counselors via list serve and the EOC's newsletter. She had also requested that those judging the Data Trailblazer award submissions send out the announcement to their constituents which included the South Carolina School Improvement Council.

Dana Yow then commented that the award was also announced at the SCASA conference where EOC staff presented last summer on data story telling. She expounded that the EOC education dashboards at dashboard.sc.gov provide data story telling for early childhood education in South Carolina. Ms. Yow also stated that EOC staff had seen good examples of data storytelling at the Beating the Odds Investigative Study schools that are effectively using data to tell stories to parents and communities.

Following this, Dr. Tate called Dr. Jenny May to present the State Funded Full-Day 4K Report for FY 2022-23 and 2023-24.

Dr. May opened by reviewing the enabling legislation that designates EOC as the reviewing body for the South Carolina Child Early Reading and Development Education Program (CERDEP).

She then reviewed terms in the report, specifying how CERDEP programs are classified as well as data and funding sources.

Dr. May clarified that the report focuses on CERDEP utilization and impact. The report also acknowledged that students classified as "potentially unserved" include students who are CERDEP eligible but not yet accessing it, or students that might be utilizing other non-CERDEP 4K programs. Head Start students are not included in CERDEP or potentially served.

Dr. May asserted that this year's CERDEP data was more comprehensive and cleaner than previous years.

The EOC made several recommendations in last year's report which included expanding CERDEP access, finding more ways to evaluate program quality and ways to expand coordination and collaboration.

The key findings of this year's report were as follows — Of the 57,804 enrolled kindergarten students during the 2023-24 school year, about 60% or 34,878 are designated peoples in poverty. Dr. May also informed the subcommittee that there were approximately 12,000 potentially CERDEP eligible pupils in poverty where their 4k experience was unknown. She also noted her hypothesis that the decreasing number of pupils in poverty from 4K to 5K might be indicative of families moving out of poverty.

Dr. May then discussed another key finding that there are approximately 21,000 potentially CERDEP eligible children who are not utilizing CERDEP programing.

Dr. May noted how access and attendance are closely related, particularly for the CERDEP waitlist which had more than 200 children on it. For illustrative purposes, she compared CERDEP's waitlist to a restaurant waitlist in that the waitlist does not inform the person of open spaces at another restaurant – just for that particular location. Dr. May suggested that waitlists be more collaborative between CERDEP program providers and reiterated that waitlists inform the need for new 4K classrooms.

Next, Dr. May discussed the key findings around whether South Carolina children are ready for kindergarten. Statewide, 38% of all students demonstrated readiness on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA). Pupils in poverty who participated in full-day, state-funded 4K via CERDEP programming were more likely to Demonstrate Readiness (37%) on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) than Pupils in Poverty who did not participate in CERDEP (27%).

Dr. May then discussed the importance of 4K preparation for students with an IEP or a disability. Twenty-one percent of students with a disability included in any CERDEP program demonstrated readiness on the KRA, compared to 16% of students with disabilities who did not – noting that CERDEP also positively impacts students with disabilities for kindergarten readiness.

In addition, she noted that Head Start has a federal requirement to serve at least 10% of disabled students in their program. If the Head Start program does not meet that 10% requirement, Dr. May expressed it was indicative to review the referrals and evaluation processes in that particular program.

She also noted that South Carolina is 11th in the nation for access to 4K and 48th when it comes to all 4K spending of state, federal and local dollars.

Dr. May then discussed the EOC's recommendations for CERDEP which included looking more closely at how wait lists are instituted across all early childhood settings and in investing supports to better understand 4K access and attendance. She also mentioned that the EOC would like to continue to evaluate CERDEP quality through bringing stakeholders together to look at the three NIEER benchmarks that are not yet being met.

In conclusion, Dr. May reviewed the proposed CERDEP changes for the 2024-25 fiscal year which included incorporating average daily attendance so that consistent enrollment can be determined. It was also requested that the South Carolina Department of Education issue a unique student identifier for each child receiving services from public or private provider including CERDEP, Head

Start, SC Child Care Scholarships, EIA, Title I, district-funded, and all other federal, state, and local public sources.

Questions were received following the presentation.

Melissa Pender commented the report indicated four counties were not utilizing CERDEP funding and inquired to know why they were choosing not to utilize it.

Matthew Ferguson responded that the SCDE was actively working with those districts to see if they could get more participants in the 4K program.

Dr. May also clarified that if a district doesn't offer CERDEP, it does not mean the district does not offer any programming for their preschool-aged children.

Ms. Yow then noted the improvement of CERDEP's data quality. She stated that when CERDEP data were visualized on the dashboard, gaps in services were identified.

She then expressed confidence that the EOC would be able to expand its data collection through the proposed proviso and would update its Pre-K dashboard shortly.

Senator Loftis asked if expectations and standards for 4K students had or would increase.

Dr. May responded that 4K programs are meant to operate under the same set of early learning standards and that those standards are subject to cyclical review. She also stated that the standards consider developmentally appropriate practice and evidence-based interactions with children.

Next, Senator Loftis asked how private centers are involved with 4K programs, specifically First Steps, and if their data is provided to the EOC.

Dr. May responded that the First Steps office does provide data to the EOC. But that she would defer to First Steps for program specifics. She also reiterated that First Steps is state funded and held in private centers.

Barbara Hairfield then asked why there were not enough centers for students to participate in CERDEP.

Dr. May responded that the challenge with the waiting list is that it cannot always accurately capture where the students are in the pipeline. She also specified that one of the purposes of the waitlist is to show the need for new CERDEP classrooms. She also explained that state-funded

4K providers can continue to identify efficient ways for families to access 4K and that she has seen an improvement in communication between partners.

Ms. Yow then stated that while waitlist numbers have been improved – there are still 200 students on the waitlist. Therefore, partners should systematically examine the wait list process to determine how to make it so that there are no students on the wait list.

Ms. Pender asked for the CERDEP qualification criteria.

Dr. May responded there must be a reason to believe the child is at risk for not being ready for kindergarten as evidenced by their DIAL-4 (Developmental Indicators for Assessment of Learning) score. The child must also be financially eligible.

Ms. Pender then asked if CERDEP classrooms could consist of students who meet the criteria and those who do not to which Dr. May responded that you could, but that she would defer to the SC Department of Education on allowable spending for CERDEP dollars.

This concluded Dr. May's report.

Following this, Ms. Yow gave an Accountability update on behalf of Dr. Matthew Lavery who was presenting at the Coordinating Council on Workforce Development.

Ms. Yow informed the committee of an update to the English Proficiency Exam for Multi-Lingual learners. WIDA with the University of Wisconsin-Madison is going through a standard setting process that will occur in July 2024. They will provide a concordance table to support the transition. In the meantime, the final scores will not be submitted in time to include in the 2024 State School Report Cards for October 15, 2024. However, the final scores will be received in time to meet the federal accountability deadline of December 2024.

Senator Dwight Loftis then asked how many of the students taking the Alternative Assessment might have been exposed to LETRS.

Ms. Yow responded that that would likely depend on the school but that the students would possibly be in their first year. She agreed with Senator Loftis that instruction based on the science of reading has been shown to yield results.

With no further questions, the meeting was adjourned.

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

DATE: <u>May 20, 2024</u>

<u>COMMITTEE:</u>
Academic Standards & Assessments Subcommittee

<u>ACTION ITEM:</u>
Educational Performance of Military-Connected Children in SC, 2024 Report

<u>PURPOSE/AUTHORITY</u>
§59-18-100: 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.

<u>CRITICAL FACTS</u>
The 2024 report provides:
- Demographics details of military-connected students in SC from School Year 2022-23.
- An overview of the data collection and reporting at the State level related to military-connected students as well as an update on the federal Impact Aid program.
- An update on the academic performance and school attendance of military-connected students as reported for the most recent school years;
- Existing structures and support for military- connected students in the State; and
- Findings and recommendations.

<u>TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS</u>
Annual review

<u>ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR EOC</u>
   Cost: $10,000: study

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<u>ACTION REQUEST</u>

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☒ **For approval**   ☐ **For information**

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<u>ACTION TAKEN</u>

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☐ **Approved**   ☐ **Amended**
☐ **Not Approved**   ☐ **Action deferred (explain)**

EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF MILITARY-CONNECTED STUDENTS IN SOUTH CAROLINA

2024 REPORT

PREPARED BY:
Dr. Sara Jane Arnett

PREPARED FOR:
The SC Education Oversight Committee

20 May 2024

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Contents of the Educational Performance of Military-Connected Students in South Carolina found in this report have been produced and published as required by Act 289, the Military Family Quality of Life Enhancement Act, which was passed by the South Carolina General Assembly in 2014. The purpose of Act 289 is to, "enhance quality of life issues for members of the armed forces" (2014).

The report provides critical areas of insight to include federal, state, and local level reporting, academic performance, graduation rates, school attendance, demographics, and Military Student Identifier (MSI) data collected from PowerSchool. Report findings and recommendations will be presented to the Education Oversight Committee's (EOC) Academic Standards and Assessments Subcommittee on 20 May 2024; additionally, report findings and recommendations will be presented and briefed to the EOC on 10 June 2024. Recommendations are included for future policies, procedures, and legislation to better support military-connected students and families such as enforcing Military-Connected Student reporting, continuing collaboration and partnerships with state and local military-connected stakeholders while working to close data gaps to continuously enhance quality of life issues for South Carolina's military-connected community.

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Acknowledgements

The report's author gratefully acknowledges the support of military-connected student support professionals and organizations for their contributions to the integrity and development of this report.

To date, the Palmetto State's collaboration efforts have yielded high performance numbers that are steadily growing by creating a climate of trust through relationship-building. South Carolina continues to raise the bar on progress for our military-connected students through the support of Governor McMaster, state legislators, and many more state and community leaders.

BACKGROUND

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.

Federal Military-Connected Student (MCS) Requirements

The Every Student Succeeds Act codified the recognition of military-connected students as a district subgroup for reporting purposes which mandates the use of a Military Student Identifier (MSI). According to the Military Child Education Coalition (2023):

Schools regularly disaggregate student demographic and performance data to determine program effectiveness to identify areas requiring attention or resources and to detect students in need of specific academic assistance. MSI data provide an additional dimension that more finely attunes the schools' programs to respond to the needs of children.

The MSI is essential to improve and personalize academic and social/emotional responses for the unique military student population which is highly likely to move and frequently change schools during their K-12 education years.

By effectively using MSI, schools can also consider programs that recognize contributions of the military to their community as they do for other groups.

WHAT IS MCS?

According to the Military Connected Student Indicator Erratum (2023) "Students who are military connected: status as a student with a parent who is a member of the armed forces on active duty or serves on full-time National Guard duty, where "armed forces," "active duty," and "full-time National Guard duty" have the same meanings given them in 10 U.S.C. 101(a)(4), 101(d)(1), and 101(d)(5)."

Federal Military-Connected Student (MCS) Requirements (continued)

Table 1. Military-Connected Student Codes PowerSchool is the current South Carolina Student Information System (SIS)

Code	Meaning
00 or 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.

Per definition of MCS, students identified by Code 00, 01, or 02 are not considered MCS.

STATE MILITARY-CONNECTED STUDENT REPORTING

Table 2. Population of Military-Connected Students in South Carolina by School Year (SY)
Data collected within the Student Information System

Military Connection	MCS School Year District Level Counts (180-Day Enrollment Data)				
	SY 2018-2019	SY 2019-2020	SY 2020-2021	SY 2021-2022	SY 2022-2023
Active Duty Military, Not Deployed	9,314	9,672	9,540	9,465	10,778
*National Guard, Not Deployed	2,631	3,027	3,896	3,256	3,311
*Reserves, Not Deployed	2,075	2,308	2,276	2,257	2,748
Active Duty Military, Wounded within last year	591	1,087	1,368	1,430	1,131
Active Duty Military, Currently Deployed	1021	1,081	1,065	1,117	1,134
National Guard, Currently Deployed	506	543	525	502	583
Reserves, Currently Deployed	295	368	369	420	360
Active Duty Military, Deceased within last year	82	151	190	188	176
Totals:	**16,515**	**18,237**	**19,229**	**18,635**	**20,221**

*While included in the totals above, *National Guard, Not Deployed* and *Reserves, Not Deployed* are not considered as military-connected students.

To date, there is no standard collection method and/or reporting standard for collecting student military-connected status by state, although a common practice of data collection is via a parent or guardian survey. South Carolina collects information about deceased and wounded military personnel so that appropriate school personnel can assist families and students who have experienced loss and grief. **Based on the data collected within the Student Information System and summarized above in Table 2, the population of military-connected students within the past five years, beginning in SY 2018-2019 to SY 2022-2023, has increased by 19.9%.**

LOCAL LEVEL REPORTING

PowerSchool serves as South Carolina's current Student Information System (SIS) which collects data related to MCS. District implementation and collection methods vary, making the accurate collection of all MCS an ongoing challenge. Twenty-five School Districts reported 0 MCS within SIS.
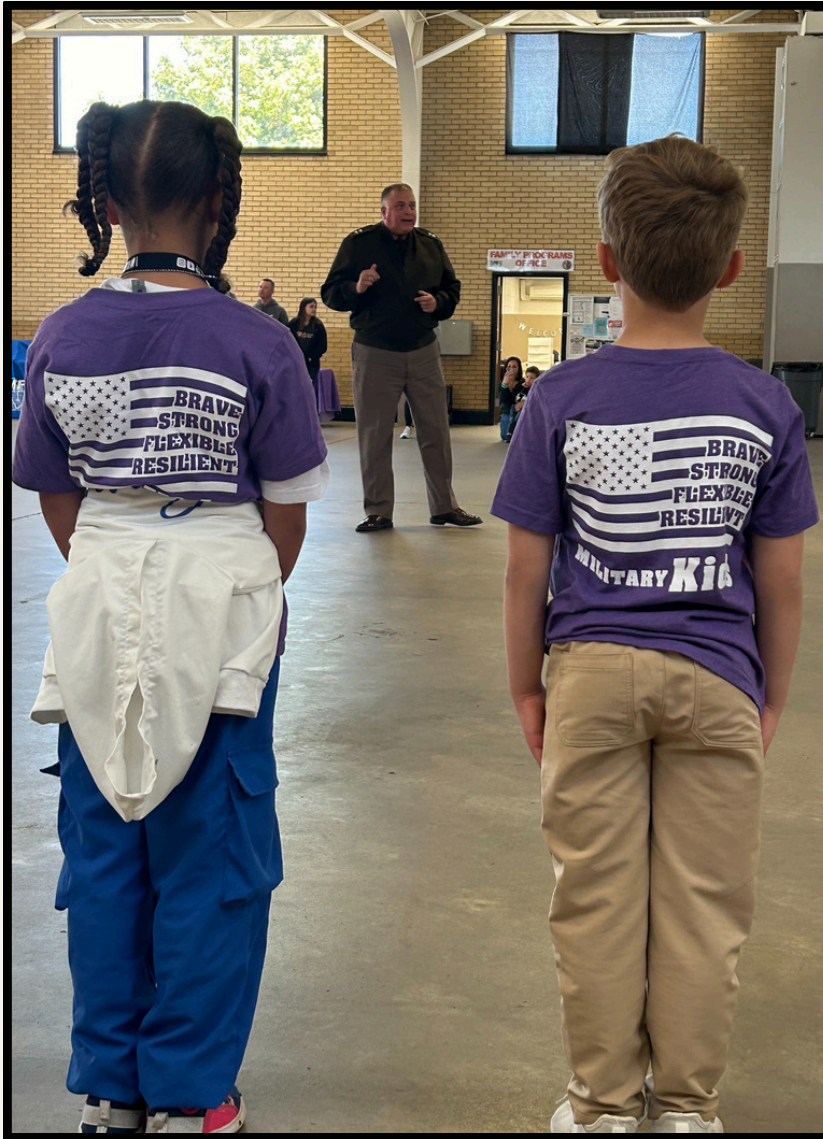
> " 14,162 military-connected students were reported by school districts to the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) in school year 2022-2023 based off of 180-day enrollment period. "

Table 3. Population of Military-Connected Students by District Districts highlighted in **purple** are Purple Star Schools (please see page 16); Districts reporting less than 20 MCS are not included in the table below to protect student privacy. *Indicates South Carolina Public Charter Schools

District Name	# of MCS	District Name	# of MCS
Aiken	**458**	Lexington 2	45
Anderson 1	**237**	Lexington/ Richland 5	322
Beaufort	**1,056**	Newberry	27
Berkeley	**1,639**	Oconee	91
Charleston	**714**	Orangeburg	76
Chesterfield	69	Pickens	89
Darlington	145	**Richland 1**	**58**
Dillon 4	33	**Richland 2**	**2,976**
Dorchester 2	1,405	Spartanburg 2	60
Edgefield	**40**	**Sumter**	**814**
Florence 1	364	York 3	81
Florence 2	21	York 4	38
Florence 3	61	SC Public Charter School District	307
Georgetown	106	Charter Institute at Erskine	135
Greenville	63		
Horry	**1,537**	***Liberty Steam**	**37**
Kershaw	**779**	***PACE Academy**	
Lancaster	74		
Lexington 1	**551**		

Table 4. School Districts with Largest Population of Military-Connected Students
Table highlights top twenty largest numbers of MCS from greatest to least.

District Name	# of MCS
Richland 2	2,976
Berkeley	1,639
Horry	1,532
Dorchester 2	1,405
Beaufort	1,056
Sumter	814
Kershaw	779
Charleston	714
Lexington 1	551
Aiken	458
Florence 1	364
Lexington/ Richland 5	364
SC Public School District	307
Anderson 1	237
Darlington	145
Charter Institute at Erskine	135
Georgetown	106
Oconee	91
Pickens	89
York 3	81

DEMOGRAPHICS OF MILITARY-CONNECTED STUDENTS

Demographics of Military-Connected Students in South Carolina are listed below in Tables 5, 6, and 7 compared to Non-MCS Student Population

Table 5. Racial Make-Up

	MCS	Non-MCS
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.32%	.28%
Asian	1.17%	1.79%
Black or African American	26.08%	31.36%
Hispanic or Latino	14.50%	12.98%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.44%	0.125%
Multiple Categories Reported	9.02%	5.70%
White	48.46%	47.76%

Table 6. Percentages by Grade

Grade Level	MCS	Non-MCS
K	7.22%	7.82%
1	7.60%	8.25%
2	7.42%	8.02%
3	7.46%	7.96%
4	7.45%	7.77%
5	7.58%	8.16%
6	7.69%	7.86%
7	7.83%	7.87%
8	8.15%	8.02%
9	9.41%	8.14%
10	8.35%	8.08%
11	6.85%	6.02%
12	6.98%	6.04%

Table 7. Advanced Placement Exam Passage

	MCS	Non-MCS
Gifted and Talented	16.01%	15.66%
Student with a Disabiity (SWD)	12.77%	14.76%
Limited English Proficient (LEP)	4.09%	9.48%
Pupil in Poverty (PIP)	28.28%	62.06%
Foster Care	*	0.46%
Homeless	0.37%	1.53%
Migrant	*	0.05%

- * indicates a number count of less than 20 (not displayed to protect student privacy)

Academic Performance of Military-Connected Students - KRA

This section compares the 2022-2023 school year performance of MCS to Non-MCS in South Carolina across various *measures*, including the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA), SC READY and SC PASS tests, End-of-Course Examination Program (EOCEP), Advanced Placement (AP) Examinations, and High School Graduation Rates.

Table 8. MCS and Non-MCS KRA Performance

	MCS	Non-MCS
Demonstrating Readiness	45.34%	37.96%
Approaching Readiness	36.01%	34.14%
Emerging Readiness	18.15%	27.24%

KRA Performance of MCS and Non-MCS

KRA measures readiness in
1) Social Foundations
2) Language/Literacy
3) Mathematics and
4) Physical Well-Being.
During the 2022-2023 school year, MCS demonstrated readiness at a rate of 45.34% compared to 37.96% of Non-MCS students as shown in Table 8.

Tables 8, 9, and 10 Measures Acronyms:

KRA — Kindergarten Readiness Assessment

EOCEP — End-of-Course Examination Program

AP — Advanced Placement

Academic Performance of Military-Connected Students: SC Ready and SCPASS

The South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Assessments (SC READY) program is a statewide assessment designed to measure student performance in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics for grades 3 - 8 The South Carolina Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (SCPASS) is another statewide assessment program that focuses solely on assessing science at 4th and 6th grades. During the 2022-2023 School Year, MCS were more likely to score Meets or Exceeds in Mathematics, ELA and Science.

Table 9. 2022-2023 School Year SC READY and SC PASS Performance

	Student Group	Count	% Does Not Meet	% Approaches	% Meet	% Exceeds	% Meets or Exceeds
SC Ready Math	MCS	6,308	11.76%	20.97%	28.44%	38.82%	67.26%
	Non-MCS	340,066	21.57%	24.87%	24.91%	28.65%	53.56%
SC Ready ELA	MCS	6,306	19.68%	28.85%	26.94%	24.53%	51.47%
	Non-MCS	340,154	31.06%	28.43%	20.83%	19.68%	40.51%
SC PASS Science	MCS	2,073	21.85%	19.92%	29.96%	28.27%	58.23%
	Non-MCs	111,819	33.70%	21.70%	24.48%	20.12%	44.60%

Academic Performance of Military-Connected Students - EOCEP

The End-of-Course Exams Performance (EOCEP) of MCS and Non-MCS section provides an overview and measures student performance on end-of-course exams for gateway courses that are awarded units of credit in English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. EOCEP examination scores have historically counted for 20% of a student's final grade in gateway courses. To date, defined gateway courses include Algebra 1, Biology 1, English 2 and United States History and the Constitution.

Table 10 outlines the performance of military-connected students on end-of-course exams for the 2022-2023 school year. During the school year, MCS out-performed all students state-wide on EOCEP exams in Algebra 1, English 2, Biology 1 and United States History and the Constitution.

Table 10. EOCEP Performance

Subject	SY	# of MCS	Mean Score	% Passing (A, B or C)	# of Non-MCS	Mean Score	% Passing (A, B or C)
Algebra I	2022-23	1,125	73.38	57.42%	64,993	69.31	45.26%
English II	2022-23	1,111	81.73	79.30%	60,962	77.82	67.86%
Biology I	2022-23	1,091	71.62	53.80%	63,102	66.93	43.17%
US. History & the Constitution	2022-23	859	71.97	54.37%	54,706	67.56	44.82%

Photo courtesy of the South Carolina Department of Veterans' Affairs

Academic Performance
of Military-Connected Students - Graduation Rates

Graduation Rates are calculated from the graduation cohort base file for the 2022-2023 SY. The graduation cohort included all students whose first year in high school occurred three full years prior to the school year being measured. Students are only removed from the cohort for reasons of student death, emigration, transfer to prison, or juvenile facility following adjudication and properly documented transfer out of the state.

Table 11. Graduation Rates

School Year	MCS	Non-MCS
2022-2023	93.18%	83.93%
2021-2022	94.30%	83.90%
2020-2021	91.40%	83.20%
2019-2020	90.80%	82.00%
2018-2019	86.90%	81.10%

The data found below in Table 12 was provided by the South Carolina Department of Education; the statistics were pulled from PowerSchool to compute MCS and Non-MCS attendance rates. State-wide average percentage of Non-MCS attendance rates was 93.04% while MCS attendance was 93.65%.

Table 12. Attendance Rates

	MCS	Non-MCS
Average Days Absent	10	11.49
Average Days Attended	93.65%	93.04%

PURPLE STAR SCHOOLS (PSS)

The Purple Star School (PSS) Program is a statewide initiative that recognizes school districts and campuses which show a concerted and intentional commitment to military-connected families by providing extra support, resources and focus. The Purple Star School Program is overseen and managed by the South Carolina Department of Education's subcommittee, the Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission. The Purple Star School Program is designed to prepare schools to better understand and respond to the educational and social-emotional challenges military-connected children face during their transition to a new school and keep them on track to be college, workforce, and life-ready (2024).

The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) adopted the Purple Star School (PSS) Program initiative in August 2019 to recognize districts and campuses who actively strive to show a major commitment to military-connected families through targeted supports and resources. The PSS Program is designed to prepare schools and educators to better understand, respond and meet educational needs, to include social-emotional challenges which military-connected children face during school transitions.

The Purple Star School Program is currently undergoing a strategic development plan to ensure the PSS Program's integrity and implementation while the overarching goal is to secure a standard operating procedure so that South Carolina's military-connected students receive a concerted effort of support from state and local leadership through a streamlined and efficient process.

As of 10 October 2023, 38 states have PSS designation programs, covering more than 550 school districts and 2,700 schools from elementary to high school while there are four states which have proposed legislation (2024). As of 1 May 2024, South Carolina has 13 school districts and two public charter schools that have earned PSS designation.

Findings & Recommendations

Table 13. Comparatives of Military-Connected Student Population in South Carolina from (1) School Year (SY) 2018-2019 to SY 2022-2023 & (2) SY 2021-2022 to SY 2022-2023.
Data presented below is collected in the South Carolina Student Information System (SIS) and based on 180-Day Enrollment. *Not included in MCS population designation.*

Military Connection	PERCENTAGES					
	SY 2018-2019	SY 2022-2023	%	SY 2021-2022	SY 2022-2023	%
Active Duty Military, Not Deployed	9,314	10,778	**15.72%**	9,465	10,778	**13.87%**
*National Guard, Not Deployed	2,631	3,311	**25.85%**	3,256	3,311	**1.68%**
*Reserves, Not Deployed	2,075	2,748	**32.43%**	2,257	2,748	**21.75%**
Active Duty Military, Wounded within last year	591	1,131	**91.37%**	1,430	1,131	**-20.9%**
Active Duty Military, Currently Deployed	1021	1,134	**11.07%**	1,117	1,134	**1.52%**
National Guard, Currently Deployed	506	583	**15.22%**	502	583	**16.14%**
Reserves, Currently Deployed	295	360	**22.03%**	420	360	**-14.29%**
Active Duty Military, Deceased within last year	82	176	**114.63%**	188	176	**-6.68%**
Totals:	16,515	20,221	**22.44%**	18,635	20,221	**8.51%**

Findings & Recommendations (continued)

Finding One: Areas of concern are noted from the 2019 - 2024 (5 year period): Active Duty Military, injured within last year with an increase of 91.37%; Active Duty Military, deceased within last year is 114.63% and the percentage increase of the combined military fields (codes 1-8) has increased 21.8%.

Recommendation. Monitor the increase of MCS in SC schools, especially those who have experienced loss or trauma. Work with school-based liaisons and health professionals with specialized training to both identify these students and effectively support them.

Finding Two: Due to the lack of a uniform Military Student Identifier collection protocol at the national level, states experience the inability to accurately capture and report MCS. Until processes are in place to identify military-connected students, the accuracy of MCS reporting will continue to create ongoing reporting challenges. Per the 2023 Findings and Recommendations (Adgerdon, 2023), a six-bulleted presentation of data fails to utilize the Military Student Identifier; this reinforces the need for policies to formalize a standard MSI protocol.

Recommendation. Work to incentivize school-based reporting of MCS within school district student information systems; better data quality will allow state policymakers to make decisions using better data.

Recommendation. In collaboration with the SC Dept of Veterans Affairs, include MCS as filter on the SC Education Data Dashboard, allowing the general public to see data related this student group. By surfacing the data visually, districts who currently do not report will be incentivized to change internal practices to improve data collection and quality.

MILITARY SUPPORT RESOURCES

Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission (MIC3)

According to the South Carolina Department of Education (2021):

All states, including South Carolina, have joined the Interstate Compact regarding Educational Opportunity for Military Children to ease the transition for students and to ensure that there are no barriers to educational success imposed on children of military families because of frequent moves and deployment of their parents. Former Governor Mark Sanford signed the Compact on June 11, 2010 and it became law in South Carolina on July 1, 2010.

As a member of the Interstate Commission, South Carolina has a seat at the table to discuss with other member states the Articles of the Compact and identify best practices to ensure the educational issues associated with military families during their transitions are successfully addressed.

MIC3 Students are children of the following:

- Active-duty members of the uniformed services including members of the National Guard and Reserve on active-duty orders (Title 10)
- Members or Veterans who are medially discharged or retired for one year
- Members who die on active duty, for a period of one year after death
- Uniformed members of the Commissioned Corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the United States Public Health Services (USPHS).

South Carolina - Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission, please visit:
https://mic3.net › state › south-carolina

Military Support References (continued)

Military Spouse Teacher Certification. To assist educators who may be required to change residence and employment on short notice due to military service, the Office of Educator Services provides expedited processing of certification applications for spouses of active duty military service members assigned to South Carolina.

Military Honor Cords Ceremony for SC High School Seniors. The SC Department of Education hosts an annual appreciation ceremony to publicly recognize high school seniors who will be or have enlisted in the U.S. Armed Forces or attending a military service academy. Seniors who have chosen to serve our country are presented with white and blue graduation honor cords that they wear during their high school graduation ceremonies.

Purple Up! (April). April is designated as the Month of the Military Child or *Purple Up! For Military Kids*. Nationally, states and school districts celebrate the important role of military children through special events and wearing the color purple.

Purple Star School Military Liaisons

School District/School	Point of Contact	Email Address
Aiken	Sondra Thomas	sthomas@acpsd.net
Anderson	Charity Kurlas	kurlasc@apps.anderson1.org
Beaufort	Latoshia Middleton	latoshia.middleton@beaufort.k12.sc.us
Berkeley	Kylon Middleton	middletonkylon@bcsdschools.net
Charleston	Antoinette Green	antoinette_green@charleston.k12.sc.us
Dorchester 2	Karean Troy	ktroy@dorchester2.k12.sc.us
Edgefield	Jerrilyn Harmon	jgharmon@edgefield.k12.sc.us
Horry	Velna Allen	vallen@horrycountyschools.net
Kershaw	Timothy Hopkins	timothy.hopkins@kcsdschools.net
Lexington 1	Zan Tracy Pender	zpender@lexington1.net
Liberty Steam Public Charter School	Micah Vaughn & Shereza Middleton	mvaughn@libertysteamcharter.org smiddleton@libertysteamcharter.org
PACE Academy Public Charter School	Brandon Riley & Adrian Peay	brandon.reilly@choosepace.org adrian.peay@choosepace.org
Richland 1	David Jackson	david.jackson@richlandone.org
Richland 2	Kelsie Carter	kecarter@richland2.org
Sumter	Tamara Collier	tamara.collier@sumterschools.net

Military Support References (continued)

School Liaison Officers serve as a POC for military families and students 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, visit: https://www.dodea.edu/education/partnership-and-resources/department-defense-school-liaison-program

Fort Jackson School Liaison. Provides ongoing educational support for military-connected schools. This comprehensive website provides information about public and private schools, homeschooling, and local school districts https://jackson.armymwr.com/programs/school-liaison-officer

Shaw Air Force Base is home to the 20th Fighter Wing, Headquarters Nine Air Force, the United States Army Central Command and several associate units. School Liaison information is found in the following website: https://www.thebestfss.com/family-youth/school-liaison-officer

Marine Corps Air Station and the Marine Corps Recruit Depot The School Liaison Program (SLP) builds bridges for the academic success of military dependent children by obtaining educational information and assistance from local school districts. Additional information may be accessed at the following website: https://southcarolina.usmc-mccs.org/marine-family-support/child-and-youth/school-liaison

Joint Base Charleston. The Department of Air Force Liaison Program connects schools, families, and community services to enahnce K-12 educational opportunities for military children. Visit the following website for more information: https://www.jbcharleston.com/school-liaison

Upcoming Academic Transition Support Metrics

To support the seamless transition of MCS, the Office of Student Intervention Services helps students and their families navigate grading measurements and point systems, age cutoffs for kindergarten entry, and social studies/history (and other subject credits). Other issues that impact the transitions of MCS and military-connected families are also included. The office is beginning to categorize and quantify the issues which are most common for MCS and their families. These new metrics will aim to assist in the development of targeted MCS policy recommendations.

Military Support References (continued)

MILITARY INSTALLATION POINTS OF CONTACT	
DAF *School Liaison Program Manager* 628th Force Support Squadron Joint Base Charleston	Chris Gerry christopher.gerry@us.af.mil
DAF *School Liaison Program Manager* (PreK–12) 628th Force Support Squadron Joint Base Charleston	Jennifer Ohmer jennifer.ohmer@us.af.mil
U.S. Army Fort Jackson *School Liaison Officer*, Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation/Child & Youth Services	Fred Henley fred.c.henley.naf@army.mil
Shaw Air Force Base *School Liaison Program Manager* 20th Force Support Squadron	Deborah MacQueen deborah.macqueen@us.af.mil
MCAS Beaufort–Parris Island *School Liaison Program*	Kim Wiley kimberly.wiley@usmc.mil

Photo courtesy of the South Carolina Department of Veterans' Affairs

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Yow, D. and Fulton, G. (2022). South Carolina Education Oversight Committee. 'Recommendations'. *Educational Performance of Military-Connected Children in SC 2022 Report 13 June 2022*. p. 4.

APPENDICES

A. Historical (2018 - 2023) Military-Connected Student Annual Report Findings and Recommendations RE: Military Student Identifier (MSI)

B. Numbers of National Guard Dependents by School District

C. Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission (MIC3) Fiscal Year 2025 State Totals

APPENDIX A: Historical (2018 - 2023) Military-Connected Student Annual Report Findings and Recommendations RE: Military Student Identifier (MSI):

According to Dr. Couch, findings from the **2018** report were as follows, "As a state, South Carolina continues to under report the number of military-connected students, but the difference in numbers reported at the state and at national level is closing. Over the past two years, there has been a 23% increase in the number of military-connected students reported in PowerSchool" (South Carolina Education Oversight Committee, 2018).

2019 "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 … Data related to military-connected students are collected and reported by districts in PowerSchool" according to the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee, 2019).

In **2020**'s report, "There was significant improvement in district reporting of military-connected students from 2016-17 to 2018-19 school years. 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. 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."

Minutes from the **2021** South Carolina Education Oversight Committee meeting stated, "Every Student Succeeds Act or ESSA requires the identification and collection of Military-Connected Student data. Data reported by the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) regarding military-connected students are based on district entry of student information into the student information system."

The following was listed as a **2022** number one recommendation, "Identifying military-connected students provides educators with critical information about students who are highly likely to move and frequently change schools, necessitating specialized attention of transitions and resources. EOC recommends staff work with school districts data personnel to identify the barriers in data collection and reporting of MCS. County and zip code level DEERS data will assist in the investigations" per the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee (2022).

In **2023**, the following was listed as second of the top six report findings, "Consistency in reporting to local, state, and federal institutions vary among institutions in SC concerning MCS. Efforts should be made to capture MCS more effectively" and "There is no standard collection and reporting standard for collecting student military-connected status by state, although all typically collect it via a survey of parents and guardians" (South Carolina Education Oversight Committee, 2023).

APPENDIX B. Numbers of National Guard Dependents by School District
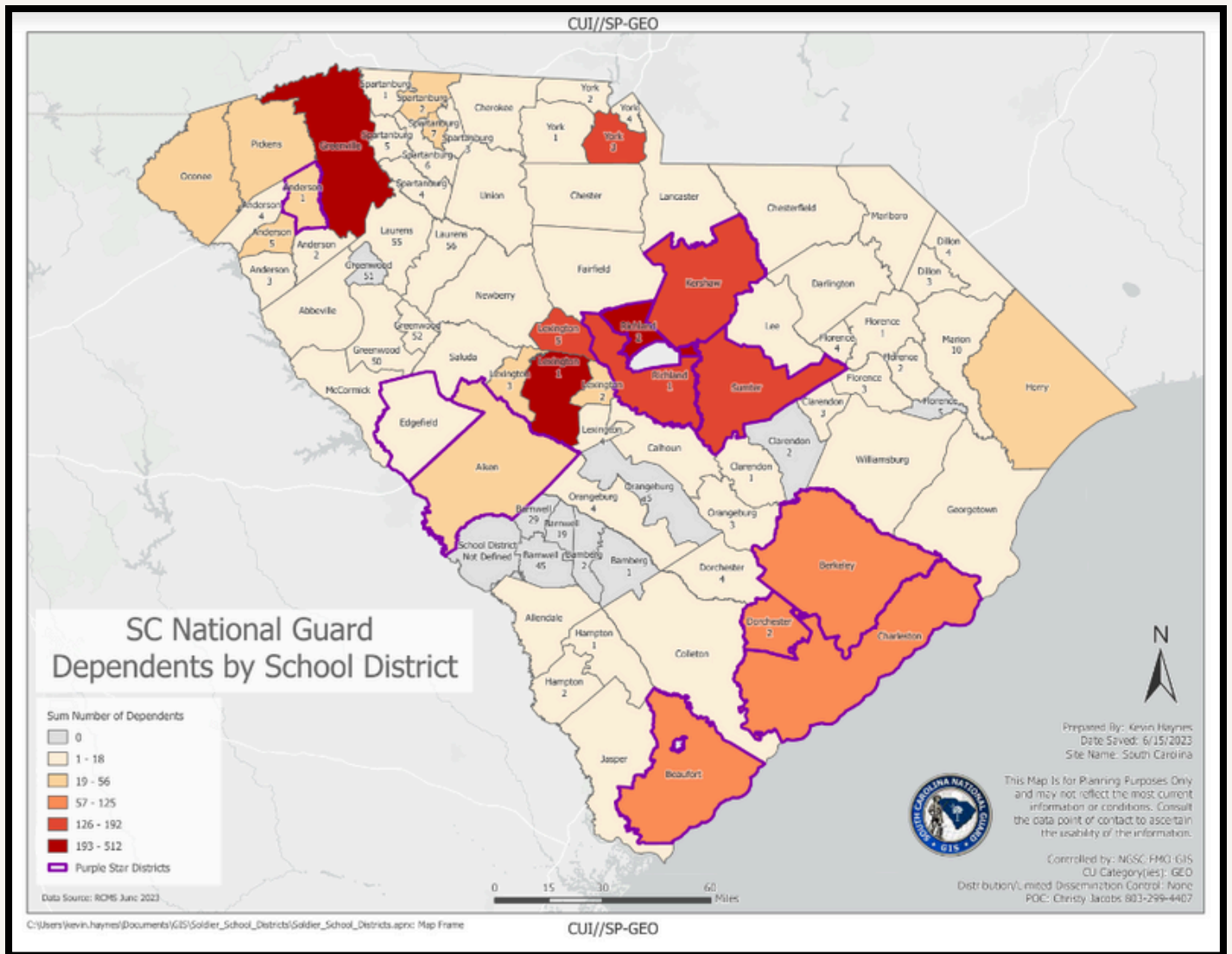
APPENDIX C: Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission (MIC3) Fiscal Year 2025 State Projection Totals

State	Army	Navy	Marines	Aforce	SForce	CGuard	*USPHS	*NOAA	Total	No TH	FY25 DUES w/TH	DIFF
AL	5,970	547	258	2,201	115	745	15	1	9,852	$ 11,330	$ 11,330	$ -
AK	3,456	61	18	3,845	5	946	218	0	8,549	$ 9,831	$ 9,831	$ -
AZ	2,886	678	1,331	4,762	43	37	403	0	10,140	$ 11,661	$ 11,661	$ -
AR	466	201	83	1,722	2	30	10	0	2,514	$ 2,891	$ 2,891	$ -
CA	5,712	29,186	11,296	6,730	579	2,080	180	3	55,766	$ 64,131	$ 64,131	$ -
CO	12,173	778	313	4,297	1,451	72	127	0	19,211	$ 22,093	$ 22,093	$ -
CT	273	2,086	66	84	0	424	15	1	2,949	$ 3,391	$ 3,391	$ -
DE	147	69	21	1,268	0	52	10	0	1,567	$ 1,802	$ 2,300	$ (498)
DC	247	236	70	299	27	91	41	0	1,011	$ 1,163	$ 2,300	$ (1,137)
FL	8,262	14,785	1,898	12,572	206	2,693	110	16	40,542	$ 46,623	$ 46,623	$ -
GA	20,992	3,723	771	4,763	39	328	571	0	31,187	$ 35,865	$ 35,865	$ -
HI	8,088	4,644	1,672	2,755	67	638	31	4	17,899	$ 20,584	$ 20,584	$ -
ID	313	204	86	1,303	12	19	26	0	1,963	$ 2,257	$ 2,300	$ (43)
IL	1,475	2,061	393	3,194	17	169	35	0	7,344	$ 8,446	$ 8,446	$ -
IN	1,332	421	214	335	3	64	10	0	2,379	$ 2,736	$ 2,736	$ -
IA	513	117	108	235	2	35	18	0	1,028	$ 1,182	$ 2,300	$ (1,118)
KS	7,947	203	165	1,542	15	77	40	0	9,989	$ 11,487	$ 11,487	$ -
KY	8,200	232	137	240	0	127	68	0	9,004	$ 10,355	$ 10,355	$ -
LA	3,039	627	393	2,489	6	683	29	0	7,266	$ 8,356	$ 8,356	$ -
ME	190	361	35	60	0	333	6	0	985	$ 1,133	$ 2,300	$ (1,167)
MD	6,294	5,487	1,213	4,075	75	1,157	1,233	48	19,582	$ 22,519	$ 22,519	$ -
MA	574	297	151	568	22	585	64	4	2,265	$ 2,605	$ 2,605	$ -
MI	1,233	548	252	344	4	553	34	0	2,968	$ 3,413	$ 3,413	$ -
MN	422	222	105	214	2	69	106	0	1,140	$ 1,311	$ 2,300	$ (989)
MS	787	1,769	167	1,933	11	206	14	2	4,889	$ 5,622	$ 5,622	$ -
MO	4,305	487	505	2,111	2	122	64	3	7,599	$ 8,739	$ 8,739	$ -
MT	167	106	40	1,117	4	11	79	0	1,524	$ 1,753	$ 2,300	$ (547)
NE	372	358	72	2,753	24	4	15	0	3,598	$ 4,138	$ 4,138	$ -
NV	508	672	89	4,591	59	41	13	0	5,973	$ 6,869	$ 6,869	$ -
NH	168	149	33	99	3	121	26	1	600	$ 690	$ 2,300	$ (1,610)
NJ	1,055	448	253	1,947	2	614	59	0	4,378	$ 5,035	$ 5,035	$ -
NM	584	158	96	3,782	100	15	186	0	4,921	$ 5,659	$ 5,659	$ -
NY	7,190	1,090	431	564	15	420	81	0	9,791	$ 11,260	$ 11,260	$ -
NC	23,739	3,945	11,263	3,315	10	1,412	170	2	43,856	$ 50,434	$ 50,434	$ -
ND	108	43	4	2,275	12	3	26	0	2,471	$ 2,842	$ 2,842	$ -
OH	1,465	724	364	3,836	129	350	42	2	6,912	$ 7,949	$ 7,949	$ -
OK	4,726	1,075	184	3,191	15	37	336	0	9,564	$ 10,999	$ 10,999	$ -
OR	444	259	137	186	3	401	63	12	1,505	$ 1,731	$ 2,300	$ (569)
PA	1,803	843	454	654	13	216	88	2	4,073	$ 4,684	$ 4,684	$ -
RI	220	769	126	88	6	148	8	5	1,370	$ 1,576	$ 2,300	$ (725)
SC	4,771	2,035	1,525	3,857	18	553	30	0	12,789	$ 14,707	$ 14,707	$ -
SD	138	42	16	1,154	1	1	92	0	1,444	$ 1,661	$ 2,300	$ (639)
TN	8,392	1,744	215	561	4	129	15	0	11,060	$ 12,719	$ 12,719	$ -
TX	36,855	4,976	1,760	15,406	104	1,235	287	0	60,623	$ 69,716	$ 69,000	$ 716
UT	593	205	134	2,347	25	20	36	0	3,360	$ 3,864	$ 3,864	$ -
VT	65	21	14	34	0	6	3	0	143	$ 164	$ 2,300	$ (2,136)
VA	15,700	35,339	5,917	9,658	686	3,614	368	11	71,293	$ 81,987	$ 69,000	$12,987
WA	12,922	8,737	301	2,832	12	820	122	6	25,752	$ 29,615	$ 29,615	$ -
WV	238	108	25	122	3	70	60	2	628	$ 722	$ 2,300	$ (1,578)
WI	762	391	135	265	8	220	30	0	1,811	$ 2,083	$ 2,300	$ (217)
WY	83	43	12	1,151	6	6	24	0	1,325	$ 1,524	$ 2,300	$ (776)
Total	228,364	134,310	45,321	129,726	3,967	22,802	5,737	125	570,352	$655,905	$655,951	$ (46)

Data from USDOD DEERS Database, July 31, 2022

*NOAA and USPHS Data from USDOD DEERS Database, August 19, 2020

Approved November 9, 2023

Threshold (TH):
Minimum: $2,300
Maximum: $69,000

SC EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

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