



(mandated additional wording about change in residency)

STUDENTS:

Educational Opportunities for Military Children

Children of Deployed Parents/Guardians

The Board of Education (Board) recognizes that one of the most difficult situations a child can experience is having a parent/guardian deployed as a result of military service involvement. The demands on military members and their families are increasing and becoming more complex. Members of the armed forces and their families sacrifice personal comfort and experience tremendous upheaval when called to serve the country, here and abroad. Children are especially vulnerable when separated from parents/guardians due to deployments.

Deployment is the term given to the movement of an individual or military unit within the United States or to an overseas location to accomplish a task or mission. The mission may be as routine as providing additional training or as dangerous as war. Deployment consists of three phases; (1) pre-deployment, (2) deployment, and (3) post deployment, which includes reunion. Each phase has unique challenges requiring proper interventions. Individual responses of children impacted by deployment will depend on such factors as age, maturity, gender, parent-child relationships, and coping skills of the caregiver during the separation.

Note: *Cross-referenced policy #[5118.2](#) defines deployment as the period one month before the service members' departure from their home station on military orders through six months after return to their home station.*

Schools can be a place where stability and normal routine provide an anchor for children during the challenges of deployment and the resulting disruptions to daily life. The impact of deployment that includes changes in a child's psychological equilibrium and disruption of individual behavior and coping skills can be lessened by the predictability of classroom routine. Alternatively, it is also recognized that the stresses resulting from family separation have the potential to affect the school community and may interfere with the ability of students and staff to focus on learning.

If a child of a member of the armed forces is enrolled in a school under the jurisdiction the district, and such member has received military orders directing them from such town, or any other documents from the armed forces indicating a change of residency from such town during the school year, the child may continue to be enrolled in the school until the end of the school year while such member remains a member of the armed forces, except that any such child in grade eleven may continue to be enrolled in the school for an additional school year while such member remains a member of the armed forces

The Board believes the school district has an obligation to help build coping skills in their students during and after a military deployment. The Board's goal is to bring needed support and

understanding to the process while maintaining an optimal learning environment in the classroom and school.

Through a unified effort, military families and the school district can provide the best educational environment for military children in grades K-12. The District will provide military families with supports to address the unique challenges that occur when families transition from one duty station to another or during deployments during the course of a military career.

The Board believes a school's focus must be on enhancing student learning opportunities, student achievement, and educator professional development to effectively address the unique challenges related to children of military parents/guardians, especially during a period of deployment.

Students in military families often experience high mobility and have diverse educational experiences from many locations in this country and around the world. The district must recognize the strengths these experiences bring to the learning environment as well as to identify the gaps that may exist due to inconsistencies across educational programs. These unique needs of military children need to be assessed and addressed. Staff development must be provided to staff to become knowledgeable in a variety of ways to identify military children struggling with their parent's/guardian's absence and with suggestions on how to help them in the classroom.

The District's responsibilities to students of deployed parents/guardians include the following:

- Training for school staff members
- Concerted effort on the school's part to initiate and maintain open and frequent communication with the caregiver with the parents/guardians prior to deployment and with the remaining caregiver after a deployment.
- Ensure that parents and, if appropriate, the children, are aware of services available to assist them.
- Ensure that community leaders and others are aware of the need to provide support and resources for the children and their families.
- Referral to District mental health personnel (counselors, nurses, social workers, psychologists, crisis intervention team members) for intensive individualized assessment and therapy as necessary based upon student's reaction to the deployment.
- Student intervention strategies in the classroom.
- Teacher supportive intervention strategies in the classroom.
- Establishment of the school setting as a safe and caring place in which the children of the deployed are nurtured and provided necessary support.
- Alterations to District's attendance regulations

Considerations for excused absences:

- o A one-day absence provided for students when their parent/guardian is deployed into active military service.

- o A one-day absence provided for students when their parent/guardian returns from active military service or deployment.
- o A student whose parent or legal guardian has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting shall be granted additional excused absences at the discretion of the Superintendent or his/her designee.
- o Absences related to a student visiting with his/her parent related to leave or deployment activities may be excused by the District. The district will permit no more than ____ excused absences per year for this purpose.
- Utilize Veteran's Day or other days in which veterans are honored, to remind students of the sacrifices that the families of veterans and their families make, as well as the effect on active service members.

Through supportive interventions, delayed or prolonged stress responses can be minimized and learning can resume in a positive and productive manner for students of deployed parents/guardians.

(cf. [5113](#) - Attendance and Excuses)

(cf. [5118.2](#) - Educational Opportunities for Military Children)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

[10-15f](#) Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

[10-221](#) Boards of education to prescribe rules, policies and procedures.

Approved May 13, 2024