



Defense-State Liaison Office Update Brief  
Kelli May Douglas, Pacific Southwest Regional Liaison  
MIC3 Annual Business Meeting, October 16-17, 2024



U.S. Department of Defense

**MILITARY**  
STATE POLICY  
**SOURCE**

# Who We Are and What We Do

The Defense-State Liaison Office provides state policymakers with expert insight on issues affecting military families and their quality of life.

This is part of the Defense Department's efforts to identify and address the most pressing needs of service members and military families.



# Taking Care of Our Military Families

## September 2022 DOD Memo: Taking Care of Our Service Members and Their Families

“The Department of Defense has a sacred obligation to take care of our service members and families. Doing so is a national security imperative. Our military families provide the strong foundation for our force, and we owe them our full support.”  
– Lloyd J. Austin, secretary of defense

## September 2021 Joining Forces Report: Strengthening America’s Military Families

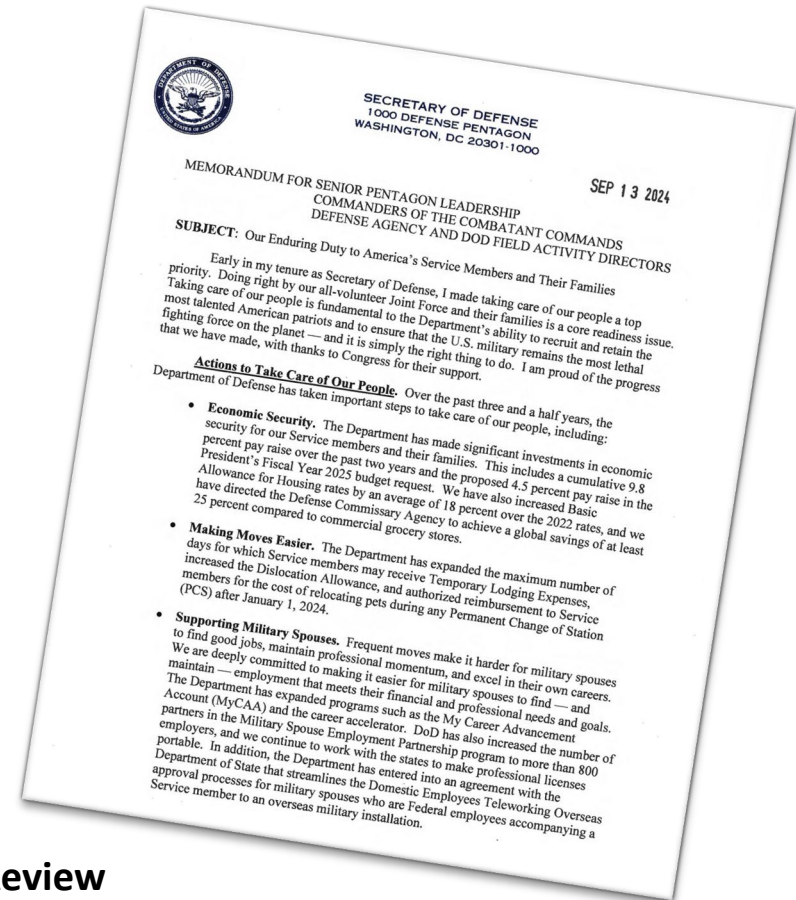
“The families of our service members and veterans, caregivers, and survivors ... may not wear a uniform ... but they sacrifice for us all. They give their best to the United States, and we owe them nothing but our best in return.”  
– Dr. Jill Biden, First Lady of the U.S.



# DoD Focus on Quality of Life – Taking Care of Our Military Families

On September 13, 2024, Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III announced seven initiatives to improve the quality of life for service members and their families today. These actions build on the extensive and unprecedented actions that Department of Defense leaders have taken over the past four years as part of Austin's Taking Care of People initiative.

- **Health Care Flexible Spending Accounts for Service Members**
- **Access to Wi-Fi Pilot**
- **Making Moves Easier**
- **Further Expand Spouse Eligibility for My Career Advancement Account Financial Assistance**
- **Investment in Childcare Workforce**
- **Quality of Life at Remote and Isolated Installations Review**
- **Uniform Costs Review**



# Meet the Regional Liaisons



**Tammie Perreault**  
Northwest Regional Liaison  
AK, ID, MT, OR, WA, WY



**Kelli May Douglas**  
Pacific Southwest  
Regional Liaison  
AZ, CA, HI, NM, NV, UT



**Michelle Richart**  
Midwest Regional Liaison  
CO, IA, KS, NE, ND, SD



**Jeremy Hilton**  
South Central Regional Liaison  
AR, LA, MO, MS, OK, TX



**Shane Preston**  
Great Lakes Regional Liaison  
IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI



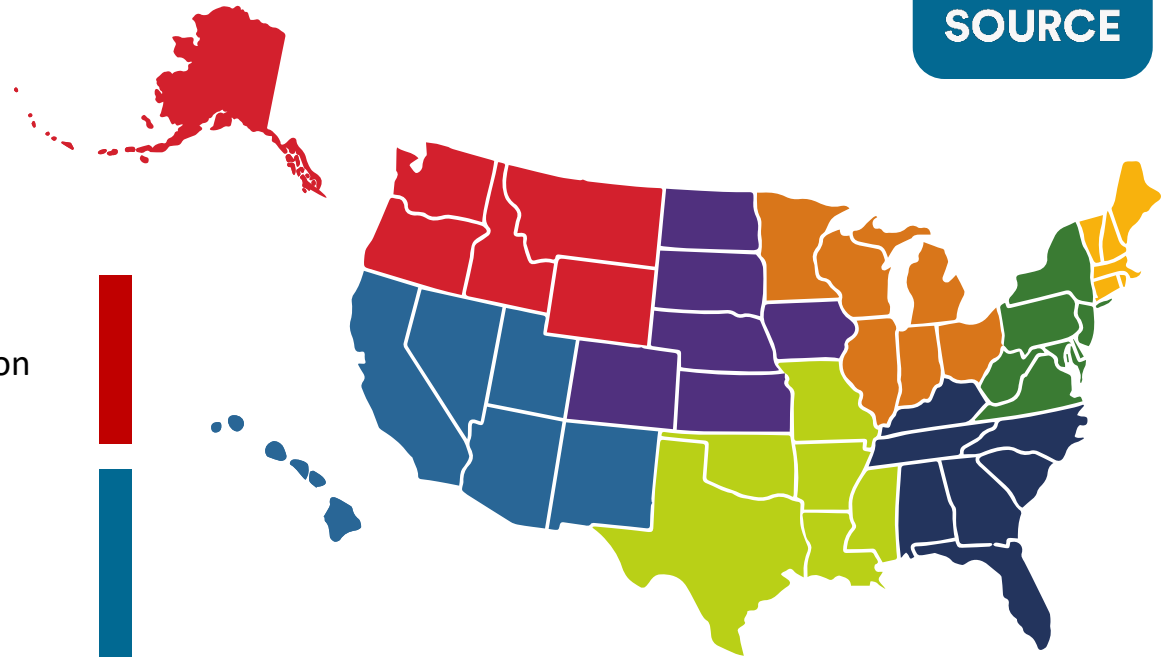
**Samantha Sliney**  
Southeast Regional Liaison  
AL, FL, GA, KY, NC, SC, TN



**Melissa Willette**  
New England Regional Liaison  
CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT



**Christopher Arnold**  
Mid-Atlantic Regional Liaison  
DE, MD, NJ, NY, PA, VA, WV



# State Policy Priorities for 2025



**Military Family Anti-Discrimination Status**



**Military Spouse Employment and Economic Opportunities**



**Open Enrollment Flexibility**



**Child Abuse Identification and Reporting**



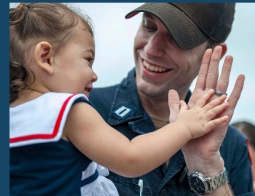
**Concurrent Juvenile Jurisdiction**



**Military Access to Quality Family Child Care**



**Defining Armed Forces in State Policy**



**Military Community Representation on State Boards and Councils**



**State Response to Military Interpersonal Violence**



**State Support for Military Families With Special Education Needs**

<https://statepolicy.militaryonesource.mil>



# Occupational Licensure Compacts

Nurse Licensure Compact — 42

Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact — 42

Physical Therapist Compact — 38

Audiology and Speech-Language-Pathology Compact — 33

Counseling Compact — 36

Occupational Therapy Compact — 31

EMS Compact — 24

Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Compact — 4

Physician Associates Compact — 13

\*Interstate Teaching Mobility Compact — 13

\*Cosmetology Compact — 8

\*Dentist and Dental Hygiene Compact — 10

\*Interstate Massage Compact — 2

\*Social Work Compact — 22

\*School Psychologists- 2

\*Dietitians — 3

\*Athletic Trainers

\*Estheticians


\*Respiratory Therapists

Note: \* Developed w/CSG

Licensing Compact Metrics as of 8 OCT 24



# Military Child Education - Impact

- Over 650,000 school-age children of active-duty personnel
- States w/highest K-12 impact 
- 2021 ADSS – “For your most recent PCS move, to what extent were the following a problem for your child(ren)?”
  - 55% - respondents w/school-age children stated that changing schools was a moderate to very large problem
  - 35% - respondents w/school-age children stated that missing school-related deadlines, to include applications/lotteries for OE, was a moderate to very large problem.

State	K-12 (Ages 5-17)
Virginia	62,463
Texas	53,277
California	48,928
North Carolina	39,420
Florida	35,426
Georgia	27,208
Washington	22,092
Maryland	17,081
Colorado	16,991
Hawaii	16,554
South Carolina	11,844
Tennessee	9,355
Kansas	8,864
New York	8,625
Arizona	8,592
Alabama	8,448
Oklahoma	8,298
Kentucky	8,245
Alaska	7,810
Missouri	6,513
Louisiana	6,343
Illinois	6,305
Ohio	6,242
Nevada	5,214
New Mexico	4,506



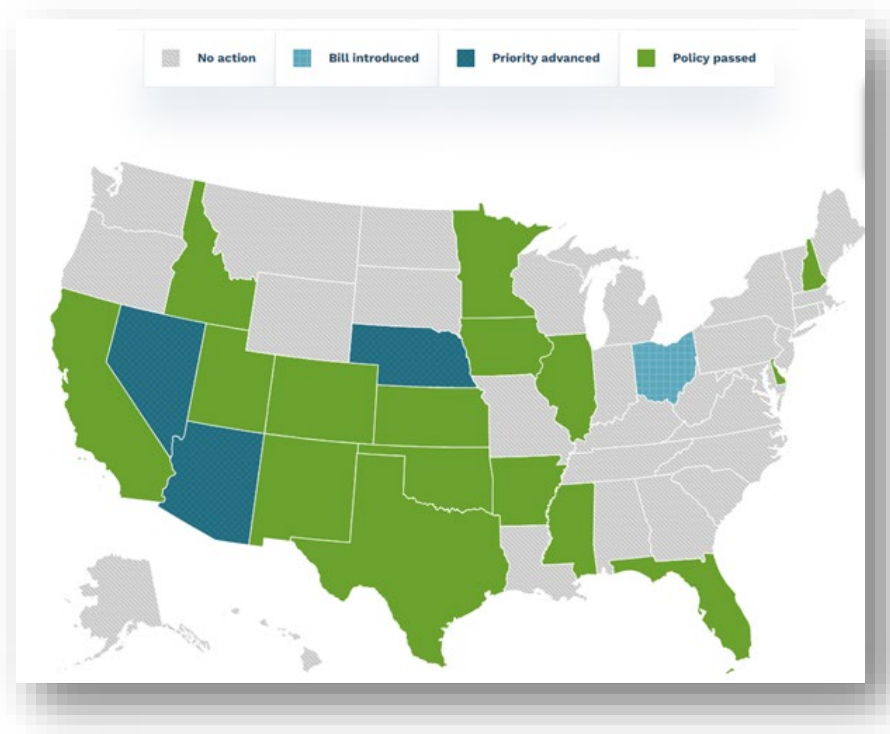


# Open Enrollment Flexibility

Military families often experience delays in receiving permanent housing upon a permanent change of station to a new location. States can improve military families' access to existing district, interdistrict and intradistrict transfer programs by modifying state education open enrollment policies.

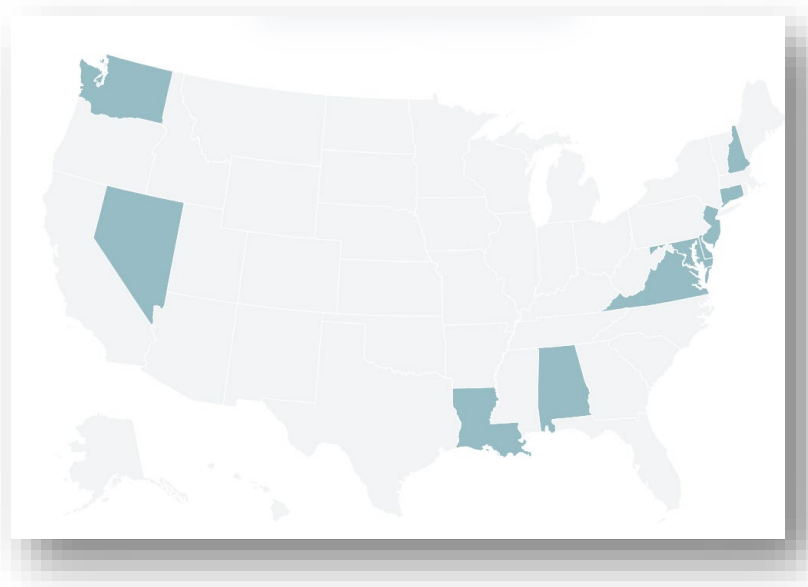
## ➤ States w/Policy: 18

- Fully met: Arizona, Arkansas, California, Delaware, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, Utah
- Partially met: Nebraska, Nevada



# State Support for Military Families with Special Education Needs

Highly mobile children, including military children, are more likely to experience recurring educational disruptions and challenges, particularly those who need access to special education and related services. States can assist military families by ensuring timely establishment of special education services upon relocation and reducing burdens associated with due process proceedings.



## ➤ States w/Policy: 11

- Minimizing delays: Alabama, Louisiana, Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey
- Reducing burdens: Connecticut, Delaware, Louisiana, Maryland, New Hampshire, Nevada, New Jersey, Virginia, Washington



# 2022-2024 Penn State Clearinghouse SPEAK Project – Overview and Status

*Evaluation of state implementation of Supportive Policies to improve Educational experiences and Achievement for K-12 Military Children (SPEAK Military Children)*

- **Phase I: [Literature Review](#)**
  - Purpose: conduct a comprehensive review of the current state of research literature related to the education of military-connected students, in partnership with the Defense State Liaison Office (DSLO).
- **Phase II: [State Data Extraction Report](#)**
  - Purpose: investigate data available on state education agency websites in support of four DSLO education-related initiatives.
    - Military Student Identifier, Purple Star Schools Program, Education Compact, Advance Enrollment
- **Phase III: Interviews and Deep Dive Visits/[Final Report](#)**
  - Purpose: better understand local implementation of four initiatives to support military-connected students.
  - Final report is a consolidation of all phases' findings.



# PSU SPEAK Findings – Themes Across All Initiatives and Programs

When implemented as intended, there are many successes and positive impacts:

- Reduced stress on families/smoothen transition
- Extra-curricular participation
- Schools more prepared
- Less out of school time for students
- On-time graduation
- Academic outcomes
- Social-emotional outcomes
- Inclusion and belonging
- School culture/climate
- School staff understanding of military lifestyle

Challenges present opportunities for collaborative efforts:

- Family and school awareness
- Staffing and resources
- Housing and geographic impacts
- Consistence across schools, school districts, and states
- Funding for initiatives
- Timing of events or information sharing
- Leveraging technology
- Strategic communication
- Accountability and enforcement



# PSU SPEAK Findings – Education Compact

## Positive Impacts

- Credit transfers, course placement, graduation, extra-curricular activities, kindergarten, reduced stress for families, and smoother transition

## Barriers

- School awareness, parent awareness, parent misunderstanding of the Compact, differences between states or schools, differences in kindergarten cutoff dates across states, differences across states in gifted qualifications or programming, school-level non-compliance

## Opportunities

- Increasing family awareness
- Additional school training
- More consistency across states
- Expanding the covered groups
- Increasing consistency and communication related to the state commissioners
- Increasing school accountability
- Adding a grace period for physicals
- Increasing access to special education services
- Accepting gifted designations from other states



# PSU SPEAK Considerations – Opportunities for Collaboration

- Advocate for standardization of data collection related to military-connected students, to include operationalization (i.e., how “military-connected student” is defined), data collection, and data reporting.
- Support the development, implementation, and sharing of evidence-informed practices for strategic communication of the initiatives to parents and school personnel.
- Advocate for information transparency and expectation management related to the specific ways the initiatives are implemented in each state and school district.
- Encourage states to leverage technology to directly support military families and to support effective implementation of the initiatives.
- Support initiative standardization, enforcement, and evaluation.
- Consider ways to increase IEP transportability and standardization of gifted qualifications and programming.



# PSU SPEAK Considerations – Opportunities for Collaboration

- Consider the ways in which increasing the capacity of the School Liaison Program and standardizing school liaison duties may improve parent and school personnel awareness of the initiatives.
- Consider how the selection and implementation of the MIC3 state commissioner position (e.g., whether it is a paid position or additional duty, the location of the commissioner within the education system) may impact the execution of MIC3 commissioner duties.
- Advocate for states to fully fund the initiatives and support the use of existing and potential funding mechanisms to improve the implementation of the four initiatives and to implement other programming that is evidence informed or evidence based.
- Support research to understand the scope of successes or difficulties during transitions to new schools and evaluations to ensure evidence-informed and evidence-based practices are used to support students during those transitions.



# Working with State Policymakers and Military Community Advocates



Scan the QR code to  
contact us:



Thank you for your partnership!

