Military Initiatives

The Purple Star Campus Designation (PSCD) emphasizes the importance of fostering partnerships and collaboration between schools, local military installations, community stakeholders, and veteran service organizations.

The military initiative component of the PSCD provides an opportunity to foster key partnerships and collaborations - an important aspect of the PSCD. Military initiatives aim to provide tangible engagement opportunities, increase awareness, and show appreciation and support for the service and sacrifice of military-connected students and families.

This resource gives an overview of PSCD requirements regarding different types of military initiatives, key strategies for planning and implementing, and related guidance for conducting annual recognition or special events.

When implementing military initiatives, documenting and highlighting related activities and events help enhance PSCD program visibility.

Taking pictures and sharing them on various communication channels, such as social media, campus webpage for military families, and newsletters, helps archive evidence of events like Purple Up Day celebrations.

For example, using hashtags like #PurpleUP increases awareness and visibility of military initiatives.

Did you know?

It is recommended to establish a Campus Advisory Committee.

A Campus Advisory Committee is a volunteer group of students, parents, school staff, as well as district, community, and installation leaders who meet regularly to discuss the Purple Star Campus initiatives to help increase community stakeholder awareness and parental and staff engagement.

Establishing a Campus Advisory Committee is highly recommended to support the implementation and development of the Purple Star Campus Designation program and to facilitate military initiatives that promote community collaboration and military family engagement.

Forming such a committee helps guide crucial initiatives and ensures effective support for military-connected students. It is vital to secure buy-in from students, parents, and school staff, and to involve community stakeholders, such as the state and local Department of Education, district, installation, and campus leadership.

Campuses seeking the Purple Star Campus Designation (PSCD) must engage in at least one of three specified military initiatives:

1. Establish a (district or campus) resolution showing support for military-connected students and families.
2. Participate in the Month of the Military Child (April) or National Veterans and Military Families Month (November).
3. Partner with a school liaison officer (SLO) or school liaison (SL) to encourage and provide opportunities for active duty military members to volunteer in the local schools, speak at a school assembly, or host a school field trip.

Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 61, §1063

Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children TEC §162

1. Establish a Resolution Showing Support for Military-Connected Students and Families

A resolution serves as a formal commitment from the campus and/or district to provide support, resources, and a welcoming environment for military-connected students and their families.

Resolution: A resolution is a formal statement or declaration made by the campus and/or district leadership to recognize and support military-connected students and families. Their resolution serves as a commitment to provide resources and assistance to military families, ensuring they feel supported and included within the school community (See Appendix for a sample LEA resolution).

Begin working on plans with your campus and/or district leadership to determine the process for implementing a resolution and key timelines and dates for ensuring the resolution is effective for the Month of the Military Child (April) and/or Veteran and Military Family Appreciation Month (November).

2. Participate in Month of the Military Child (April) and/or Veteran and Military Family Appreciation Month (November)

Participation in the Month of the Military Child (April) and/or Veteran and Military Family Appreciation Month (November) is a valuable opportunity to integrate installation and community partnerships to form tailored networks of support for annual military initiatives and/or special recognition events for military-connected families. (Reference the *Annual Calendar and Timeline Recommendations* resource for additional planning support).

Month of the Military Child Planning Ideas:

Participating in Month of the Military Child creates an opportunity for schools to build continual support and overall awareness for military-connected students and families within your school and community.

Consider partnering with the local chamber of commerce, county and state organizations, and local installation programs to establish annual military initiatives for Month of the Military Child.

It is important to recognize and celebrate the selflessness and sacrifice of military-connected students during the Month of the Military Child. Here are some ideas that help increase awareness and build support for military-connected students at your campus.

- Host a teacher door decorating contest that centers on supporting military-connected students.
- Establish **Purple Up** day to wear purple to celebrate military kids.
- Start Military Child Spirit Week
  - » For Example:
    - Monday: Support your favorite military branch day
    - Tuesday: Red, white, and blue day
    - Wednesday: Crazy purple sock day
    - Thursday: Camouflage day
    - Friday: Purple Up day
- Prior to April, encourage military-connected students to submit works of art to the national Military Child Education Coalition *Call for the Arts* contest.
- Visit the **Military Child Education Coalition Call for the Arts** for eligibility and guidelines.

Use various Month of the Military Child toolkits to promote school and community awareness:

Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission (MIC3) Purple Up Toolkit

Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC)

Military One Source

White House Purple Up Toolkit

Military Community and Family Policy

Veteran and Military Family Appreciation Month Planning Ideas

Participating in Veteran and Military Family Appreciation Month creates an opportunity for schools to build continual support and overall awareness for Veterans and military families within your school and community. Consider partnering with the local chamber of commerce, county and state organizations, and local installation programs to establish annual community partnerships for Veteran and Military Family Appreciation Month.

Examples and considerations when establishing community partnerships:

1. **Collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce:** Work with your local or state chamber of commerce to organize events and activities that recognize and support military families. The chamber of commerce can provide resources, connections, and assist with promoting military initiatives.
2. **Special Recognition Events with Veterans Organizations:** Partner with local veteran service and community organizations, such as the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign War (VFW), and Area Centers on Aging. Invite local veterans to your campus for special recognition events where they can be honored and appreciated for their service. If your school is located near a military installation, consider involving the local community spouses' club(s) to enhance the engagement.

3. Partner with a school liaison officer (SLO) or school liaison (SL) to encourage and provide opportunities for active-duty military members to volunteer in the local schools, speak at a school assembly, or host a school field trip.

One option for satisfying this requirement is to partner with an installation school liaison to help facilitate military support during national military recognition months and throughout the academic school year.

Here are a few ideas to establish collaborative partnerships with installation school liaisons:

- Assemblies
- Workshops
- Guest speakers
- Special recognition and/or celebration events highlighting contributions of military-connected students and families

Installation school liaisons can help support school military initiatives, special recognition events, and other activities throughout the academic school year. Click on the link to find your local **Installation School Liaison**.

Note: Campuses may decide to participate in one, some, or all of the military initiatives. However, only **one** is required to meet the requirements of the PSCD.

Gold Star Standards for Hosting Special Recognition Events

Special recognition events are an effective way to unite school staff and engage the local community in efforts to support military-connected students and families. By actively engaging the local installation and community stakeholders, schools can foster a positive atmosphere and strengthen partnerships to promote a sense of belonging for military-connected students and families within the broader community throughout the academic school year.

Best practice strategies for special recognition events require intentional planning and may include:

1. **Planning and Coordination:** The planning calendar for annual special recognition and/or celebration events emphasizes collaborative planning involving campus, community, and installation leadership for success.
   - » **One year before the event:** Initiate planning, set date and objectives, form an advisory committee that includes students, parents, staff, district, and community leaders to foster partnerships.
   - » **Six months prior to the event:** Finalize the event planning calendar and invite campus, installation, and community partners.
   - » **Sixty to ninety days before the event:** Use the campus advisory committee to secure support from local community organizations and installation school liaison. Involve campus groups, like JROTC or peer-led student transition teams, for input.
   - » **Thirty days before the event:** Ensure broad awareness through newsletters, social media, district notifications, inclusion in district calendar, sharing with local chamber of commerce, and inviting local media coverage.
2. **Engaging Students and Parents:** Involving students and parents in the planning and execution of events creates a sense of ownership and allows them to contribute their ideas and perspectives, which fosters a collaborative environment.
3. **Honoring and Raising Awareness:** Special recognition events increase awareness of the experiences and contributions of military-connected students and families. These events provide an opportunity to honor their service and sacrifices, promoting a culture of appreciation and understanding.
4. **Community Collaboration and Partnerships:** Special recognition events encourage collaboration between the school and the broader community. These events facilitate partnerships with local organizations, businesses, and military installations, and encourages a supportive network that benefits military-connected families.
5. **Cultivating Excellence and Network Building:** By organizing these events, schools and districts can cultivate a network of excellence within their educational community. These events bring together stakeholders who share a common goal of supporting military-connected students and families and promotes a culture of collaboration and support.
6. **Recognizing Community Partnerships:** Special recognition events offer an opportunity to recognize and appreciate the efforts of community partners who contribute to supporting military-connected students and families. This recognition reinforces the importance of community collaboration and encourages further engagement.
7. **Documenting the Event:** Make sure to keep evidence, such as pictures, flyers, announcements, and other items, that can be used as artifacts for the Purple Star Campus Designation application.

APPENDIX:

Sample provided by the Clint Independent School District

Resolution for the Support of Military Children and Families

WHEREAS, our country owes the daily freedoms to members of the Armed Forces, their family members and loved ones who share in their service and sacrifice;

and WHEREAS, we celebrate the exceptional service, strength and character of military connected students and families in the Clint Independent School District;

and WHEREAS, we acknowledge that military families face unique challenges due to deployment, reintegration, service in combat zones and frequent relocations based on duty assignments;

and WHEREAS, the Board of Education of Clint Independent School District calls for the continued creation of opportunities for military families and community members to purposely partner with schools in supporting student achievement, aspirations, and social-emotional development.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: That the Board of Education of Clint Independent School District officially supports all military children and families;

and be it FURTHER RESOLVED: That the Board of Education of Clint Independent School District encourages all school staff and community members to initiate, support, and participate in appreciation activities designed to recognize the exceptional role and unique sacrifices our military-connected youth make in our nation's best interest.

Signed:

JAMES R. PENDELL
Board President

3.21.2023
Date

DR. JUAN I. MARTINEZ
Superintendent

3.21.2023
Date