

## Chapter 645

**(Senate Bill 263)**

AN ACT concerning

**Education – Dependent Children of Active Service Members – Advance Enrollment Procedures**

FOR the purpose of requiring a county superintendent of schools to allow a certain dependent child of an active service member to advance enroll in a school in the county in a certain manner; requiring the remote registration process to provide an opportunity for the active service member or other parent or guardian of a dependent child with a disability to make a certain note during the registration process; requiring a county board of education to ensure that a dependent child with a disability continues to receive a certain education without undue delay through a certain method; requiring the Secretary of Veterans and Military Families, in consultation with certain entities, to publish and maintain certain information on school enrollment and related services for dependent children of active service members; and generally relating to school enrollment procedures for dependent children of active service members.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

Article – Education

Section 7–115.1

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2025 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,

Article – Education

Section 8–401(a)(1), (2), and (3)

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

**Article – Education**

7–115.1.

(a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

(2) **“CHILD WITH A DISABILITY” HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 8–401 OF THIS ARTICLE.**

**(3)** “Dependent child” means an individual of school age who is a natural child, a stepchild, an adopted child, or a financially dependent child of an active service member.

**[(3)] (4)** “Enrollment” includes course registration and charter school lotteries.

**(5)** “FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION” HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 8-401 OF THIS ARTICLE.

**(6)** “SENDING STATE” HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 7-1303 OF THIS TITLE.

**(b) (1) [A] SUBJECT TO PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION AND SUBSECTION (C) OF THIS SECTION, A** county superintendent shall allow a dependent child of an active service member who is relocating to the State on official orders and is not domiciled in that county during the enrollment period to apply for ADVANCE enrollment in a public school in the county[, in the same manner and at the same time as individuals domiciled in the county].

**(2) TO ADVANCE ENROLL UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION, AN ACTIVE SERVICE MEMBER SHALL PROVIDE TO A COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OFFICIAL ORDERS EVIDENCING THAT THE ACTIVE SERVICE MEMBER WILL BE STATIONED IN THE STATE DURING THE CURRENT OR IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING SCHOOL YEAR.**

**(3) (I) A COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT SHALL ESTABLISH A REMOTE REGISTRATION PROCESS FOR ADVANCE ENROLLMENT UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION.**

**(II) A REMOTE REGISTRATION PROCESS ESTABLISHED UNDER THIS PARAGRAPH MAY NOT:**

- 1. CHARGE A FEE; OR**
- 2. REQUIRE THE ACTIVE SERVICE MEMBER OR OTHER PARENT OR GUARDIAN OR THE DEPENDENT CHILD TO PHYSICALLY APPEAR AT A LOCATION WITHIN THE COUNTY TO COMPLETE ANY PART OF THE ADVANCE ENROLLMENT PROCESS.**

**(4) (I) THE REMOTE REGISTRATION PROCESS SHALL PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE ACTIVE SERVICE MEMBER OR OTHER PARENT OR GUARDIAN**

**OF A DEPENDENT CHILD TO NOTE WHETHER THE CHILD HAS AN INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM OR A 504 PLAN IN THE SENDING STATE.**

**(II) IF A DEPENDENT CHILD HAS AN INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM OR A 504 PLAN IN THE SENDING STATE, THE COUNTY BOARD SHALL ENSURE THAT THE CHILD RECEIVES AN APPROPRIATE EDUCATION WITHOUT UNDUE DELAY IN THE COUNTY IN WHICH THE CHILD ENROLLS, INCLUDING, IF APPROPRIATE, EDUCATION UNDER AN INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM OR IN ACCORDANCE WITH A 504 PLAN.**

**(III) A COUNTY BOARD SHALL COORDINATE WITH A CHILD'S PARENT OR GUARDIAN AND THE SCHOOL SYSTEM IN THE SENDING STATE IN ORDER TO CARRY OUT THIS PARAGRAPH.**

(c) (1) [Within] **TO FINALIZE ADVANCE ENROLLMENT UNDER THIS SECTION, WITHIN** 10 days of the published arrival date on the active service member's official orders, the active service member shall provide the school with:

(i) Satisfactory evidence of the dependent child's status as a dependent child of the active service member;

(ii) A copy of the active service member's official orders to relocate;  
and

(iii) Proof of residence in the county.

(2) The active service member may use the address of any of the following as proof of residence:

(i) A temporary on-base lodging facility;

(ii) A purchased or leased home or apartment; or

(iii) Any federal government housing unit or off-base military housing unit.

**(D) (1) NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER PROVISION OF LAW, A DEPENDENT CHILD OF AN ACTIVE SERVICE MEMBER WHO HAS USED ADVANCE ENROLLMENT TO ENROLL IN A SCHOOL UNDER THIS SECTION MAY REMAIN ENROLLED IN SCHOOL UNTIL THE END OF THE CURRENT SCHOOL YEAR, EVEN IF THE CHILD NO LONGER MEETS RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS OF THE SCHOOL.**

**(2) A DEPENDENT CHILD OF AN ACTIVE SERVICE MEMBER WHO USES ADVANCE ENROLLMENT SHALL HAVE ACCESS TO ACADEMIC COURSES AND**

**PROGRAMS, INCLUDING EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND ATHLETIC AND SOCIAL PROGRAMS, IN THE SAME MANNER AS OTHER STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE SCHOOL.**

**(E) THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AND MILITARY FAMILIES, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE MILITARY FAMILY EDUCATION LIAISON DESIGNATED UNDER § 7-1303 OF THIS TITLE AND THE OFFICE OF MILITARY AND FEDERAL AFFAIRS AND THE MARYLAND MILITARY INSTALLATION COUNCIL IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, SHALL PUBLISH AND MAINTAIN INFORMATION ON:**

**(1) THE ADVANCE ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED UNDER THIS SECTION; ~~AND~~**

**(2) THE PURPLE STAR SCHOOLS PROGRAM ESTABLISHED UNDER § 7-129 OF THIS SUBTITLE;**

**(3) THE INTERSTATE COMPACT ON EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FOR MILITARY CHILDREN ESTABLISHED UNDER SUBTITLE 13 OF THIS TITLE; AND**

**~~(2)~~ (4) ANY ASSISTANCE AND SERVICES AVAILABLE TO ACTIVE SERVICE MEMBERS REGARDING THE ADVANCE ENROLLMENT OF A DEPENDENT CHILD, INCLUDING A CHILD WITH A DISABILITY ENTITLED TO RECEIVE A FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION IN THE STATE.**

8-401.

(a) (1) In this subtitle the following words have the meanings indicated.

(2) “Child with a disability” means a child who has been determined through appropriate assessment as having autism, deaf-blindness, hearing impairment, including deafness, emotional disability, intellectual disability, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, specific learning disability, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury, visual impairment, including blindness, and who because of that impairment needs special education and related services.

(3) “Free appropriate public education” means special education and related services that:

(i) Are provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction, at no cost to the parents;

(ii) Meet the standards of the State Board regulations and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.);

(iii) Includes preschool, elementary, and secondary education; and

(iv) Are provided in conformance with the requirements of the child's individualized education program.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2026.

**Approved by the Governor, May 26, 2026.**