

Mohammed Choudhury

State Superintendent of Schools

BILL: Senate Bill 234 DATE: March 31, 2022

SUBJECT: Public Schools – Purple Star **COMMITTEE:** Ways and Means

School Program – Establishment

POSITION: Support

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EXPLANATION:

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) supports Senate Bill (SB) 234 – *Public Schools* – *Purple Star School Program* – *Establishment*, which requires that MSDE administer the Purple Star School Program that is designed to recognize public schools that provide strong services and supports for military-connected students and their families.

Maryland is a member of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunities for Military Children. All 50 states and the District of Columbia are members of the Compact which ensures smooth transitions as military students transfer from one state to another. Military children generally transfer between seven and nine times in their K-12 educational years. Maryland has been a member of the Compact since May 2009.

Through the Compact, MSDE is actively involved with the Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission (MIC3). The MIC3 compact provides technical assistance to schools in areas such as student transitions, enrollment, immunizations, placement and attendance, and graduation of military-connected students, and describes the supports and services recommended for them.

Military posts/bases across the State have designated school liaison officers to assist families with transitions and enrollment. All school systems have an individual designated as the military point of contact who works with schools to ensure smooth transitions for military-connected children. The hard work of the staff involved in the support of military families would be highlighted by receiving Purple Star status.

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MSDE is dedicated to supporting the Purple Star School Program so that military-connected students can successfully transition from school-to-school. Recognizing the extra support that is required for military families and students, this program will highlight the State's pride in our military-serving families and in the schools that support them.

We respectfully request that you consider this information as you deliberate **SB 234**. Please contact Ary Amerikaner, at 410-767-0090, or ary.amerikaner@maryland.gov, for any additional information.