
TO: House Committee on Ways & Means

BILL: SB0263– Education– Dependent Children of Active Service Members – Advance Enrollment Procedures

DATE: March 25, 2026

POSITION: Support

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) provides this letter of support regarding ***SB0263– Education– Dependent Children of Active Service Members – Advance Enrollment Procedures.***

SB0263 Summary

SB0263 requires local education agencies (LEAs) to allow dependents of active duty service members to enroll in a local school in advance of the dependent’s relocation to that LEA, and to establish a remote enrollment process for advance enrollment. LEAs may not charge a fee for the remote advance enrollment process, or require a parent or guardian to appear in person to complete any portion of this process.

MSDE Information

Under Maryland law, public school attendance is according to the geographic attendance area determined by the county board of education. ([Ed. Art. §4–109](#)). The statute states: “With the advice of the county superintendent, the county board shall determine the geographical attendance area for each school established...”.

The Military Interstate Children’s Compact Commission (MIC3) is the national organization leading the work on educational opportunities for military children. Maryland has been a member of MIC3 since 2010. (Md. Educ. Art. 7-1301 et seq) The Compact Rules of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children, revised November 16, 2012, addresses enrollment of dependents of members of the uniformed services when the service member is under active orders for deployment and outlines the flexibility that should be afforded to these students and their families (Chapter 300-Transfer of Education Records and Enrollment; Chapter 600-Eligibility).

Maryland statute currently requires the LEA to allow the child of a service member who is relocating to the LEA to have early enrollment in a public school. MSDE is a resource for LEAs and the school liaison staff of military installations to ensure that flexibility is afforded to children of service members on the enrollment process. LEAs, based on the current law, can advance enroll a student with provision of orders. Upon enrollment and relocation, the family has to then provide the necessary documentation of residency in the LEA. If the residency is not in the attendance area, then the student must transfer to the school of the residence.

MSDE supports SB0263, which expands the enrollment provision of Education Article § 7-115.1 to enable a student who enrolled in advance to remain in the selected school until the conclusion of the school year, whether or not the family ultimately resides in the attendance area of the school. SB0263 also provides that a child with a disability may be advance enrolled and also remain in that school until the end of the school year. If the family does not

ultimately reside in the geographic attendance area of the school, a transfer should be required after the initial school year. The State Superintendent of Schools will also publish and maintain information on:

1. The advance enrollment procedures established in SB0263;
2. The Purple Stars Schools Program;
3. The Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children; and
4. Assistance and services available to active services members included a child with a disability entitled to receive a free and appropriate public education in the State.

The State Board and MSDE respectfully request that the Committee consider this information in its deliberation of SB0263. For further information, please contact Laurel Cratsley, Interim Executive Director of Government Affairs, at laurel.cratsley@maryland.gov.