

# **SUPPORT AND DEFEND**

## **THE K-12 EDUCATION OF MILITARY-CONNECTED CHILDREN**

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## PREFACE

**Lieutenant General Rick Lynch,  
Retired Three-Star General, United States Army**

Pioneer Institute's research paper on educating Military Connected Children (MCC) is both timely and pertinent. It is extremely well documented and is an exhaustive examination that deserves careful consideration.

I contend that the two most important elements of our society are our service members who protect our freedoms and our way of life, and our educators who guarantee our future. Both must be cherished and supported.

In addition, we must acknowledge the sacrifices of the Military Families. I remember as a Corps Commander the time when a young captain came into my office with tears in his eyes asking for help. He had been in the Army five years, and had deployed three times (twice to Iraq and once to Afghanistan). He had been married five years, and he and his wife had a three-year-old son who didn't recognize his dad because of the constant deployments. A similar story can be told a million times over.

We have always been concerned about the impact of constant moves as a result of the military lifestyle. I served in the Army for 35 years, and during that time my Family moved over 20 times. My children attended numerous schools. One time, I remember my wife and I were overjoyed because our son was so excited that the lunch room ladies knew him by name, because he had been in that school for two consecutive years.

When I am asked how I measure the cost of fighting the Global War on Terrorism over the past 14 years, I tell folks to look in the eyes of the children. It's not only the moves, but also the constant concern the children have about their parents who may be deployed into harm's way. Everyone has to be aware of this issue, and work to mitigate the effects. This is all part of focusing on the education of our military connected children. We have seen a degradation of performance (both academically and in social

interaction) in military children that can be attributed to the impact of war.

While in the Army I had the privilege of commanding at all levels. As a General Officer, I commanded both the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division and Fort Stewart, Georgia, and later the III Corps and Fort Hood, Texas. In that capacity I dealt personally with the leadership of the school districts in which the children of my Soldiers attended school. My last posting in the Army as the Commanding General of the United States Army's Installation Management Command (IMCOM) responsible for all the Army installations. As I traveled the Army, I made it a point to connect with the Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to get a sense as to how things were going.

My wife, Sarah is an educator. She taught in the public schools, as well as Department of Defense Dependents Schools (DODDS) schools, around the nation. She saw firsthand the impact of the moves, and the war, on her students as well as on our own children. She had children in her classes whose parent had paid the ultimate sacrifice protecting our freedoms. That had an obvious impact on their lives, but also in the lives of the other children in the classroom as well.

Our experience allows us to reaffirm the author's recounting of effective initiatives, and to support his recommendations.

The Interstate Compact on Education was indeed a critical milestone in the evolution of the education of military children. It has now been ratified in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. It was intended to mitigate the effects of the moves on the military children in all aspects of their education. The author is correct. Now that the policies are in place, they must both be understood and executed. There must be a pronounced effort to raise awareness of the Interstate Compact in both the parents and the school administrators.

Of note, sometimes this important point is missed. In many Military Families, both the

mother and father are in uniform, and sometimes they deploy together. In addition, there are many single parents in the United States Military. When they deploy, a guardian is given responsibility for the child. That guardian must also be aware of the Interstate Compact.

The author talks about the importance of school liaison officers. Sarah and I wholeheartedly endorse that program. It is imperative to have someone at each installation responsible for detailed, daily coordination with the school districts and school administrator. It is critical that the right person be placed in the job, however. They must have credentials with both the school system and the parents.

It is a true statement that many Military Families have opted to home school their children, for a variety of reasons. This is being done at twice the national average. We must aggressively support programs that will help with this, as well as support programs on the military installations that give home-schooled children the opportunity to participate in sports and other community activities.

What I found in my travels as the CG, IMCOM is that many of the local education agencies are severely underfunded. We must continue as a nation to place education of our children as a major priority. The author recommends continuation of targeted grants to LEA schools that support military-connected children. I agree that we must support the LEA schools that educate our children.

As the author recommends, I do think it is critical to perform longitudinal studies to determine exactly the impact on military connected children, and determine precisely what is working and what isn't working. This can only be done if we figure out how to code military children so they don't get lost as they move around the world.

It is a true statement that less than 1 percent of the American public are serving our nation in uniform, but we all enjoy the freedoms provided by that select few. It is our duty as Americans to

help those service members, and their families, through these difficult times. The children are our future, and we must ensure we are doing our very best with their education. Reading this research paper and using it to continue a constructive dialogue as to how we can get better is essential to that goal.

## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Global military operations have kept active duty military personnel—as well as members of the National Guard and military Reserves—engaged in the longest continuous overseas conflict in our nation’s history. Though the homefront has not experienced an “at war” cultural shift during current operations as happened in previous conflicts, there has been an increasing awareness of the impact of this prolonged combat on military families. These military families reside in every state in the union. In addition to the more obvious presence of active duty military personnel in a community, the Citizen Soldier Support Program (CSSP) performed a geographic analysis on 2012 data and found that there were only 12 counties in whole nation that were not home to at least one of the 1.3 million Reserve members then serving. It also found that there are only 27 counties that do not have at least one of the approximately 650,000 Reserve members who deployed in support combat operations in either Iraq or Afghanistan or both.<sup>1</sup>

Many policies and initiatives have been proposed or implemented to address the unique needs of military families who face special challenges while supporting the service of their military member(s). Some of those policies and initiatives have sought to focus on military-connected children (MCCs) and the particular academic challenges they face. The unique aspects of many of the challenges stem from the dynamics of the military lifestyle. Of course, current efforts to address the academic needs of MCCs are built upon earlier efforts, some of which can be traced back nearly two centuries.

Today, primary oversight and responsibility for federal elementary and secondary education programs in support of MCCs rests with the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) headquartered in Arlington, Virginia. DoDEA provides high-quality education to more than 84,000 eligible MCCs in more than 190 schools around the world, achieving higher than average standings on nearly all standardized

assessments.<sup>2</sup> The rich history of the journey to this circumstance in some ways reflects Carl von Clausewitz’s proverbial “fog and friction” which military members are taught tends to dominate the battlefield.<sup>3</sup> Yet, despite many challenges and periods of general neglect, a remarkable system of education has been created to meet not only the needs of MCCs *overseas* and in *some* stateside locations but also to *augment* local resources in other stateside locations. As we shall see, these efforts have and continue to mitigate the most egregious academic challenges of military life for MCCs.

Although ascertaining their academic performance is more challenging and less straightforward than it could and should be, there are many indications that MCCs perform academically at least as well—and sometimes better—than their non-MCC peers. Despite this, there have been assertions that federal Common Core standards are essential to improving the academic progress of MCCs and would greatly benefit them as they transition with their military parents between different military duty locations. However, such assertions are supported neither by the available evidence nor by the existing questions of rigor, legality, transparency, privacy, and state & local control that surround the implementation of Common Core. The assertions are also contrary to the rising trend of homeschooling military families, which has typically been a higher percentage than their civilian counterparts, but appears to be increasing even more due in part to concerns over the implementation of Common Core. Rather than centrally and opaquely determined standards, initiatives such as the Interstate Compact on the Education of Military Children, the creation of school liaison officers, support of military homeschooling families, and the use of targeted grants, to name just a few examples, are better suited to assisting military families and military leaders address the challenges of K-12 education for MCCs.

That does not mean there is no room for improvement. In fact, a closer look will reveal

there is much we do not know about MCCs and their academic performance despite earlier and current interest. This unknown information is essential to policy makers at the local, state, and federal levels as well as invaluable to education and military leaders, nonprofits dedicated to supporting military families, and, not least of which, to the military families themselves. To that end, coding of MCCs as a subgroup within existing systems of assessment and performance should be established, and to overcome the challenges of assessing mobile students over time, longitudinal studies should be pursued. However, despite the absence of overall, longitudinal, and subgroup information, case studies can offer some immediate perspective and inform current policy efforts aimed at the K-12 education of MCCs while the means to more thorough research is developed. These glimpses into particular groups of MCCs suggest that the various claims asserting that national Common Core standards will aid the academic performance of MCCs or that the national Common Core standards should be viewed as the best solution to the challenges faced by MCCs are at a minimum, misguided.

## II. EDUCATING MILITARY-CONNECTED CHILDREN: A HISTORY OF PRIOR FEDERAL EFFORTS

### *A. Summary of Nineteenth Century Efforts*

When Congress enacted into law General Winfield Scott's *General Regulations for the Army; or Military Institutes* in 1821, they established the earliest official policy regarding the funding and operation of schools for MCCs on military installations. The Institutes, as they came to be called, were the first comprehensive and systematic written regulations for the U.S. Army since 1778. The prior regulations had been drafted by Baron von Steuben, the Prussian officer who trained George Washington's men at Valley Forge that historic and perilous winter. He entitled them *Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States*, but they were more commonly known as the "Blue Book." General Scott's regulations replaced the Blue Book and, once congressionally approved, covered all facets of a soldier's life and training as well as the specifics of how the Army would organize and run itself.<sup>4</sup>

Article 41 of *The Institutes* established a "Council of Administration" at each installation to stabilize and regulate the process by which merchants could sell items on an Army post to the assigned soldiers. It contained provisions for collecting assessments from the merchant (aka the "sutler") for the privilege of selling items and services on post (aka "sutling") and as well as fines in case of bad conduct on the part of the sutler.<sup>5</sup> After providing "immediate or temporary relief" to widows, orphans, and afflicted veterans not entitled to pensions from the government, the "post fund," as it was named by the regulation, was to be used for "the education of soldiers' children [MCCs] at the post school" and next for library acquisitions. This simple provision would generally govern the education of MCCs for the next half century, sometimes resulting in a post school being established before one was present in the surrounding frontier community.<sup>6</sup>

Congress also at least nominally recognized a need for dedicated oversight of each post school. In 1838, they mandated that Army chaplains assigned to each post would function as the headmasters for the post school.<sup>7</sup> There were also backward steps, however, such as when Secretary of War, Jefferson Davis, suspended support for libraries from the post fund in 1857.<sup>8</sup> This was corrected in revised Army regulations in 1861, but the Civil War eclipsed full implementation until 1866 when General Order No. 22 again established the assessments and fines process for sutlers with support again for education of MCCs in post schools and support for post libraries.<sup>9</sup>

It was also in 1866 when General Garfield, prior to his presidency and while serving as a member of the House, proposed additions to the Army bill to create schools on each "post, garrison, or permanent camp" so that all the enlisted men could receive "instruction in the common English branches of education, and especially in the history of the United States." The proposal both authorized and directed the Secretary of War to "detail such commissioned and non-commissioned officers as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this section." Garfield's motivations were revealed in a supporting speech, where he is noted for having "dwelt upon the evil effects of the idleness in which soldiers pass the time spent in camps and at posts and garrisons" and for having "expressed the conviction that the pursuit of knowledge and the interests to which it leads would prove the most effectual remedy." Though the proposal was added to the bill and became law that same year, action was delayed until 1877 when a board of key military officers convened to determine a plan for implementation. This plan was announced in Army General Orders No. 24 on 18 May 1878.<sup>10</sup>

The impact of these schools for MCCs can be seen in the annual report of the Commissioner of Education<sup>11</sup> for 1880. This report contains tabular data on the participation rates at each post and stratifies the students into two groups: enlisted men and children. The total number of MCCs in the reported post schools exceeds the

total enrollment of enlisted men for both school years reported: 1878-79 and 1879-80. The actual number of students between the two school years increased by 28 percent overall but with nearly identical overall increases in the two categories so that the percentages of enlisted men (42 percent) and MCCs (58 percent) remained stable, though there were variations at individual locations. The report also details the infrastructure expenditures in support of education at 29 different posts for such things as reading rooms, school rooms, school houses, chapels, libraries, and various combinations of these. The reported total of these expenditures was nearly 34 thousand dollars, an amount that roughly translates to over 800 thousand dollars today.<sup>12</sup> Additional funds were expended for school books, periodicals, and a 35 cents per diem for those enlisted men detailed as teachers. All those so detailed had to meet minimal standards of education themselves which, in some cases, led to great difficulty in finding suitable teachers. Some among these who had “the inclination and necessary qualification” were also funded to attend teacher preparation programs.<sup>13</sup>

But there was turbulence on the horizon. Within the War Department, questions about the legality of operating and supporting post schools and educating MCCs would occur following the Spanish-American War in 1898, again in 1905, and yet again in 1913. Following World War I, Congress initially appropriated monies to support on-base schools but by 1922 the funding had reverted back to the earlier model, but with reliance on exchange profits expanded to also include installation recreation funds and voluntary contributions. This became the primary means of providing schooling for those MCCs who did not otherwise have access to public schools until after the conclusion of World War II.<sup>14</sup>

### *B. Twentieth Century Impacts on Military Dependent Education*

The conclusion of World War II led to the creation of a second kind of federal school

program for MCCs in the form of overseas schools. These would be managed and operated separately from domestic, on-base schools until 1992. Although the U.S. demobilized following the war, as it had for all prior wars, there were numerous overseas postwar commitments and, by 1946, military policy was adapted to allow family members to accompany active duty service members being assigned overseas. The Army established schools both on-base and off for MCCs in the occupied territories of Austria, Germany, and Japan and by the end of the 1946/47 school year, enrollment had reached nearly three thousand.<sup>15</sup>

With the creation of the Air Force as a separate military service under the National Security Act of 1947, there were, by 1949, three U.S. military departments operating nearly 100 schools in separate school systems in a variety of countries in Europe and the Pacific, all in addition to and separate from the existing domestic, on-base schools.<sup>16</sup> Contemporaneous to this was the Berlin Airlift (1948-49), aka OPERATION VITTLES, which would not only demonstrate the capabilities of airlift, but would signal a shift towards what became the Cold War. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was also formed in 1949.<sup>17</sup> The Korean War in 1950 would galvanize NATO in a powerful way and lead to the creation of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) to enable military cooperation within NATO as well as the establishment of the position of Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), first filled by General Dwight D. Eisenhower.<sup>18</sup> The U.S. presence in Europe was expanding from the already considerable post-World War II commitments to even more Cold War commitments—and even more overseas MCCs needing K-12 education.

In the Pacific, the U.S. had the ongoing task of rebuilding and forming a new government for Japan as well as maintaining scattered bases across the region. Cold War tensions involving China, Korea, Vietnam and other locations would impact the positioning of forces in

the Pacific. Following the Korean War, the U.S. would not fully demobilize and would instead, for the first time in her history, begin maintaining a *large, standing military*.<sup>19</sup> This, in concert with post-war birth rates, led to a steady increase in MCCs—overseas and stateside—needing a quality education.

Legislation in the 1950s created what came to be known as “Section 6” schools on stateside bases. They were labeled this because the authority for the schools originated in Section 6 of Public Law No. 81-874. Section 6, along with Public Law No. 81-815, formally approved the construction of school facilities on federal property and also consolidated both the funding and the operation of schools run on military installations in the contiguous United States.<sup>20</sup> This new authority empowered the federal Commissioner of Education to establish procedures and make arrangements for the free public education of MCCs who resided on federal property if the state did not allow tax revenues to be expended for that purpose or if there was no local education agency (LEA) able to provide a suitable free education.<sup>21</sup> Through 1980, there were four primary circumstances which would cause the Commissioner of Education to make “Section 6 Arrangements” for MCCs: (1) existence of state laws prohibiting integrated schools or a determination that segregated education was unsuitable, (2) the inability of an LEA to provide suitable education, (3) situations where property was held under exclusive federal jurisdiction by the U.S., and (4) existence of state law<sup>22</sup> prohibiting tax revenues from being utilized in ways necessary to provide a free public education for MCCs. For some MCCs the first reason was a primary one, given not only the often greater racial diversity in the military than in the local community but also the greater prevalence of interracial marriage in the military versus the civilian population with corollary greater numbers of multi-racial children needing K-12 education.<sup>23</sup>

The 1960s saw MCC overseas enrollment reach a peak of more than 160 thousand students in

over 600 elementary and secondary schools in 41 different countries.<sup>24</sup> There were also several stages of consolidation and realignment which divided the overseas schools into three geographic regions with the Army operating schools in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East; the Air Force operating schools across the Pacific region; and the Navy operating all schools in the Atlantic region. At this time, nearly fifty percent of all the schools were located in Germany.<sup>25</sup>

The 1960s also saw an increasing distrust and dislike of *conscription*. The United States had used combinations of volunteers and conscripts throughout its history with widespread public support so long as the mandatory military service was universal in nature. With the advent of the Cold War, however, the U.S. maintained conscript forces during ostensible times of peace but also when projected military needs were small in relation to the size of the population of eligible young men attaining draft age, which suggested that conscription would essentially no longer be universal. These and other factors led to a steadily increasing push for an All-Volunteer Force (AVF).<sup>26</sup> There was also growing recognition within the U.S. Army that an AVF would be preferable to conscription.<sup>27</sup> The Gates Commission report convinced Congress to pass and President Nixon to sign into law provisions ending the draft and creating the AVF.<sup>28</sup>

The advent of the AVF led to various maxims within the military services that can be summarized as the “we recruit the member but reenlist the family.” Increasingly, quality of life (QoL) issues began to have more bearing so as to attain adequate inductions and then retain the best and brightest.<sup>29</sup> It was increasingly important to appeal not just to the military member but also to the member’s spouse<sup>30</sup> and children.<sup>31</sup> Concerns over the academic performance of MCCs and the challenges they faced due to the military lifestyle, which had already begun moving from a peripheral issue to a more central one due to the legacy obligations of World War II and the exigencies of the contemporary Cold War, became an even more prominent presence

within the spectrum of QoL considerations. That continued prominence was validated in a 2013 Military Family Lifestyle Survey, which found that “the quality of education available is an important benchmark when military families make decisions to relocate, consider living separately (known as geographic bachelor situations, or ‘geo-batching’), or even leave active duty service.”<sup>32</sup>

The 1970s and 1980s saw additional congressionally-directed structural and control changes as well as a partnership between DoD and the newly created Department of Education (ED), a dispute between DoD and ED regarding the schooling of MCCs associated with the U.S. Military Academy (aka Westpoint) which had to be settled by the Department of Justice, and the renaming of the DoD overseas schools to their most commonly known name, DoD Dependents Schools (DoDDS).<sup>33</sup>

In 1990, DoD, through Defense Management Report Decision No. 64, transitioned the operational authority for all Section 6 schools from the separate military departments to the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD). This stateside school system in support of MCCs came to be called Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools (DDESS) and with the repeal of Section 6, the SECDEF was granted authority to continue operating domestic schools as part of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 1995. The earlier centralization, combined with analyses performed at the behest of Congress in the late 1980s, in the 1990s, and again in this century, caused some military families to become concerned that the operation and control of defense domestic schools would ultimately be transferred to LEAs.<sup>34</sup> Their concerns stemmed from a perception that on-base schools were generally more successful than their local counterparts and that on-base schools tended to more effectively “recognize and respond to the distinct needs of children of military families.”<sup>35</sup>

The mid to late twentieth century also saw a rise in American parents desiring to homeschool and, depending on their location, finding themselves at odds both with interpretation of compulsory attendance laws and the state and local education bureaucracies. Military families also sought the benefits of homeschooling, primary among them the flexible schedule amidst the demands of a military lifestyle and the continuity of curriculum. But military families also found themselves sometimes at odds with military regulations and policies<sup>36</sup> as well as needing to understand the laws and policies of foreign countries and the nature of specific Status of Forces Agreements (SOFAs) between the US and the host country.<sup>37</sup> Despite these additional challenges, military families would ultimately adopt homeschooling at a higher rate than the civilian population, often because of the flexibility and continuity that was possible.<sup>38</sup>

The 1990s brought the end of the Cold War with a much touted but not often manifested “peace dividend.” Shifting geo-political situations as well as advances in technology and military strategy did however enable new paradigms such as rapid deployment of forces over long distances, agile reach-back of deployed forces to stateside resources, and expanded use of electronic monitoring and surveillance. These and other factors brought force reductions, different weapons systems with different manpower requirements and broader geographic capability, as well as numerous military mission changes and relocations, including a reduction and consolidation of permanent overseas bases. There were also natural disasters, such as the explosion of Mt. Pinatubo in the Philippines that shut down in-country operations on both Navy and Air Force installations. All of these things led to a corollary reduction in and a consolidation of DoDDS schools, which was considered by some as the beginning of an end to “America’s grand experiment to send military families overseas instead of just those who served, thus showcasing American life and providing their children the highest quality education experience [in the process].”<sup>39</sup>

Consolidation did not stop with just realigning within DoDDS. There was also a consolidation of all military dependent education programs at the DoD level, which resulted in the chartering of DoDEA in 1992. DoDEA not only replaced DoDDS, but was also given responsibility for DDESS and correspondingly organized into three regions: Pacific, Europe, and Americas. The latter region contains the oldest, still-operating DoD overseas school, the W.T. Sampson School, which opened in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, in 1931.<sup>40</sup>

DoDEA also supports students in more than 180 countries where DoDEA-operated schools are not available as part of its Non-DoD Schools Program (NDSP).<sup>41</sup> Further, DoDEA operates a virtual school, currently offering high school level courses with a plan to eventually include middle school level courses as well. These courses are meant to supplement existing DoDEA schools, provide options for scheduling conflicts, and also as an option under NDSP.<sup>42</sup> There are more than 70 course offerings, including foreign language, AP courses, and technical education courses like computer programming.<sup>43</sup> The first graduates received their diplomas in June 2012.<sup>44</sup>

Lastly, DoDEA also offers support to eligible military homeschooling families in a couple of ways.<sup>45</sup> Homeschooled MCCs eligible to attend DoDEA schools—stateside or overseas—can elect to enroll in one or more classes, perhaps as a supplement to their homeschool curriculum, and can also request auxiliary services, such as “use of academic resources, access to the library of the school, after hours use of school facilities, and participation in music, sports, and other extracurricular and interscholastic activities” under the same eligibility and restrictions as full-time DoDEA students and “consistent with existing regulations and policy.”<sup>46</sup> This also potentially enables participation in special education, ESL, and gifted and talented programs, if existing eligibility requirements are met. As well, military families eligible under NDSP who desire to homeschool and are permitted under host country laws and SOFAs,

can qualify for financial assistance to offset the cost of homeschooling.<sup>47</sup> Lastly, military homeschooling families otherwise eligible to attend DoDEA schools or receive support under NDSP, can also use the Virtual High School.<sup>48</sup>

### III. EDUCATING MILITARY-CONNECTED CHILDREN: CONTEMPORARY EFFORTS AND INITIATIVES

#### *A. Military Operations and the Global War on Terrorism*

Military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq constitute the longest continuous combat operations in the history of the American armed forces. While it is common to attribute the 9/11 attacks as the start of these operations, U.S. and coalition partners maintained Iraqi “No Fly Zones” (NFZs) following the first Gulf War, which means that portions of the U.S. military have been in combat operations since 1992, more than twenty years. The NFZs were enforced by two separate operations—OPERATION NORTHERN WATCH (and its predecessor OPERATION PROVIDE COMFORT) and OPERATION SOUTHERN WATCH—and, among other things, these operations involved aerial combat, surface to air missiles, anti-aircraft munitions, air launched missiles, and laser guide bombs.<sup>49</sup> Thus, active combat operations have been an ongoing part of the military experience since the 1990s. Initially these involved mostly the air components of the separate services but after the 9/11 attacks and with the resulting *War on Terrorism* came a shift in focus more to ground operations with greater participation from all services and all components.

The increased deployments and the related pre-deployment and unit training, along with the increased use of mobilized Reserve forces and federalized National Guard forces, have impacted today’s military family in many ways, including more frequent and longer separations from the military parent. Included among the corollary factors to the separations are challenges

associated with both the role changes for the MCCs during separations and the readjustments during the ultimate reconstitution of the family afterwards, fears associated with the dangers of deployment, adjustments stemming from injuries sustained by the military parent and/or cases of PTSD, and grief and mourning associated with the loss of the military parent. While it might be argued these factors are outside the specific scope of the K-12 education of MCCs, they inevitably impact and potentially disrupt that education and so must be considered in crafting related policy and programs. In attempting to address the unique challenges faced by MCCs, note that Common Core does nothing in this area. However, expanding the pre-Common Core successes of DoDEA shows great promise!

### *B. Capitalizing on and Expanding DoDEA's Successes*

Congress, in the *John Warner National Defense Authorization Act* (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2007, helped to more comprehensively address these factors by expanding the role of DoDEA beyond just the schools it directly operates. Starting in 2007, DoDEA gained authority to partner with ED to jointly help students transitioning from DoDEA schools to LEA schools. The NDAA also granted authority to award grants to LEAs for programs that enhance student achievement.<sup>50</sup> These authorities enabled DoDEA to reach beyond the smaller population of MCCs who attend DoDEA physical schools or the virtual high school<sup>51</sup>—estimated to be around eight percent of the total population of MCCs—to *more than ninety-two percent of the remaining MCCs* who do not attend DoDEA schools, including MCCs whose parents are among the Reserve forces or the National Guard. Through the partnership with ED, DoDEA is able to share not only its expertise and experience in serving the educational needs of MCCs, but can also “support schools serving military students regardless of where they reside.” The resources shared with LEAs encompass, among other things, “academic programs and strategies to improve student achievement, curriculum

development, teacher training, teacher resources, access to virtual and distance learning options, and support for practices that minimize the impact of transition and deployment.”<sup>52</sup>

The authorized grant programs took two forms: invitational and competitive. The invitational grant programs focused on “building capacity” in districts (1) which serve military installations with frequent or sustained deployments of the military parents, (2) which serve MCCs whose parents have been wounded, or (3) which serve MCCs where the military command has identified school quality is a concern. The competitive grant program targeted districts experiencing a significant growth in the number of MCCs due to military force structure changes and focused on “enhancing student learning opportunities, student achievement, and teacher professional development.”<sup>53</sup>

Today the DoDEA grant programs are aimed at promoting student achievement in core curricular areas; lessening the challenges MCCs encounter due to military moves, transitions, and deployments; supporting the “unique social and emotional needs” of MCCs; encouraging and expanding distance learning opportunities; improving professional development for teachers and education professionals; encouraging parental involvement in LEA schools—such involvement an oft-cited hallmark of DoDEA schools; and enhancing and integrating technology in the learning process. To date, DoDEA has awarded nearly 200 million dollars in grants to more than 180 school districts which impacted not only the almost 280 thousand MCCs, but also the more than 670 thousand students overall in more than 900 different schools.<sup>54</sup> The most recent grant awards went to 44 military-connected public school districts to support and enhance both academic and transition support programs. Included was a three million dollar award to the National Math and Science Initiative with a goal to expand advanced placement (AP) courses through the Initiative for Military Families. Overall, the grant projects are estimated to impact more than 93,000 MCCs in 550 public schools.<sup>55</sup>

As well, DoDEA has broadened its support to MCCs attending schools outside of its own districts in at least three other ways. First, DoDEA partnerships with ED enable DoDEA to coordinate the expansion of the Military and Family Life Counselor (MFLC) program in support of LEAs that serve MCCs. The MFLC program, begun in 2004 to assist active duty troops and their families through “non-medical counseling aimed at short-term problem resolution,” expanded in 2007 to include a variety of additional services and outreach capabilities, including Child and Youth Services as well as a Schools Programs initiative.<sup>56</sup> These services assist not only MCCs and their parents, but also faculty and staff, with such issues as school adjustment; deployment and reunion challenges; communication between MCCs and parents or teachers; anger management and conflict resolution; decision-making and coping skills; homesickness and building resiliency; and sadness, grief, and loss.<sup>57</sup> The MFLC program is an important tool in addressing some of the unique academic challenges faced by MCCs—and those challenges would not be addressed on any level merely by embracing the hollow promises of a national Common Core scheme.

Additionally, DoDEA and ED, in June 2008, entered into an MOU, much like DoD and ED had previously, which enables their combined efforts to achieve more on behalf of MCCs than otherwise would occur. As well, DoDEA, through its Educational Partnership Program, has responsibility for administering DoD’s Impact Aid programs.<sup>58</sup> These aid programs, along with federal Impact Aid programs administered by ED,<sup>59</sup> as distinct from the DoDEA targeted grant programs, help to offset the costs of educating MCCs whose presence often does not adequately increase the tax base and whose presence is also driven by the actions of the federal government, rather than local economic factors or political actions.<sup>60</sup>

A final way in which DoDEA has expanded their outreach to some MCCs outside of their own schools—both brick and mortar schools

and the Virtual School—is the Domestic Transition Program, implemented for school year 2014-15. Under this program, a limited subset of MCCs—those whose parents are active-duty, who are attending an overseas DoDEA school or are eligible under NDSP, and who are transferring to a stateside location—can utilize the Virtual School but must pay their own tuition costs.<sup>61</sup> MCCs attending stateside DoDEA schools or DoDEA schools in a U.S. territory are not eligible. This option helps to smooth transitions from overseas DoDEA schools to stateside locations while also enabling scheduled completion of sequential coursework.<sup>62</sup>

### *C. State Level Compact*

An example of an initiative implemented at the state level is the Interstate Compact on the Education of Military Children that started out in July 2006 as a collaboration between the Council of State Governments (CSG) and DOD’s Office of Personnel and Readiness.<sup>63</sup> Although compacts are not federal law, the individual states, since they are acting as sovereign entities, have obligated themselves to each other akin to individuals under a contractual agreement. Therefore, no single state can lawfully act unilaterally in areas covered by the compact. As well, the states can lawfully use their collective sovereignty to enforce compliance of any signatory state or group of states.<sup>64</sup>

The goal of the Compact is to establish consistent policies for MCCs in transition whose academic performance is impacted by frequent moves as well as parental deployments which can result in additional, temporary moves. The agreement outlines how member states will endeavor to remove obstacles to educational achievement for MCCs while also establishing a means to provide MCCs predictability in their transitions. There are also enforcement mechanisms built into the authority given to the Commission which administers the Compact. Some key educational transition issues addressed include enrollment (including but not limited to kindergarten and first grade enrollment age variances), placement,

attendance, transfer of records, eligibility (academic and extracurricular), and graduation.<sup>65</sup> The Compact applies to MCCs attending public schools whose parents are active duty; are members of the National Guard or the military Reserve and are on active duty orders; are medically discharged veterans within one year of leaving active duty; or are military retirees within one year of transitioning to retired status. It also applies if the parent(s) died while on active duty.<sup>66</sup>

Because the Compact does not attempt to address curriculum matters and because each state entered into the agreement voluntarily, with public debate and without federal carrots (such as Race-to-the-Top money) and sticks (such as those associated with the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) waiver process),<sup>67</sup> the Compact has not generated the controversy and public outcry—from either parents or educators—associated with the adoption and implementation of national Common Core standards.<sup>68</sup> In fact, the Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission (MIC3), which oversees the administration of and compliance under the Compact, has declined to take a position on national Common Core standards as curriculum decisions are outside the purview of the MIC3.<sup>69</sup> As a result of several years of concerted efforts on the part of the Council of State Governments' National Center for Interstate Compacts, DoD, MIC3, various national associations, federal and state officials, the Department of Education of each state, school administrators, policy and legal experts, and military families, effective January 1, 2015, all 50 states are officially members of the Compact, along with the District of Columbia.<sup>70</sup> This is very good news for military families, commanders, and LEAs.

The Compact has the potential to mitigate much of the non-academic turbulence associated with military moves such as eligibility and deadlines for sports teams, school activities and social clubs. It also endeavors to help ease the turmoil associated with deployments: separation, reintegration, injury, loss, death, relocations to another caregiver, and relocations

with the non-deployed parent. Much of the academic turbulence is also mitigated by providing a means for policy accommodations and by establishing a structured coordination between losing and gaining schools. There is certainly room for greater awareness of the Compact and its functions as well as for broader implementation within each signatory state. However, the Compact is providing a much needed structure through which military families can seek smoother transitions between school districts, acquire a more connected and rigorous education experience for MCCs, and pursue accommodations for some of the unique demands and aspects of being a military family.<sup>71</sup>

#### *D. School Liaison Officers*

The creation of School Liaison Officers (SLOs) by each of the military services<sup>72</sup> is another initiative that is paying high dividends for both DoD and military families while also benefiting LEAs. The SLO functions as a full-time, primary point-of-contact for military families, local school systems, and commanders and military leadership on all school-related matters. In addition to traditional local schools and/or on base schools, this also includes educational alternatives such as charter schools (on and off base), virtual schools, private schools and academies, and homeschooling policies and cooperatives.<sup>73</sup> The SLO is positioned to identify barriers faced by MCCs, establish and mature partnerships in education, and provide resources and tools to military parents to both be involved in their children's education and aid in overcoming obstacles resulting from the unique demands of being a military family. They also function as an advisor and go-to source for commanders and other military leadership on K-12 education and they work with local communities and schools to inform and educate about the challenges faced by MCCs.

SLOs also connect military families with other uniformed service resources, such as the Exceptional Family Member Program for special needs individuals, installation youth

and child programs, and applicable service-specific personnel policies such as how to request consideration for a Permanent Change of Station (PCS) waiver for families with rising high school seniors. SLOs are also able to provide information about tutoring<sup>74</sup> and mentoring programs as well as on base and local library resources. SLOs, by design, are positioned to play an expanding role under the full implementation of the Compact where they will act as “ex-officio members” in State Councils and assist both the military families and the signatory state in implementing the Compact.<sup>75</sup> Thus, they function directly at a local level to facilitate informed parental choices while helping to mitigate the academic challenges faced by MCCs, and will also function at a more strategic level under the Compact. In both roles, SLOs will provide more dynamic and flexible support to MCCs and military families than centrally-established national Common Core standards could. The SLO is generally a full-time civilian employee, but the specific status, grade, and funding source of the position varies by military service and location as does the scope of responsibilities and span of authority. However, all active duty installations have a full-time SLO<sup>76</sup> as do many Guard and Reserve bases.<sup>77</sup>

#### *E. Other National Government Efforts and Initiatives*

Several other initiatives have been launched to assist military families attain a high quality education for their MCCs amid the challenges of military life. One of these is *Operation Joining Forces*, a White House initiative launched in June 2011, which seeks to mobilize all sectors of society to enable opportunities, resources and support for military service members and their families with a goal of making military transitions and deployments easier.<sup>78</sup> This program builds on earlier efforts like the 2008 Memorandum of Understanding between DoD and ED regarding mitigating challenges faced by MCCs and *Strengthening Our Military Families: Meeting America’s Commitment*, a White House approved report outlining how

the executive branch can and does support military families.<sup>79</sup> One example of a *Joining Forces* K-12 education effort is *Operation Educate the Educators*, stemming from a partnership between the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) and the Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC), which has resulted in more than 100 colleges and universities committing through their colleges of education to inform current educators and prepare future educators to respond to the unique academic and lifestyle challenges faced by MCCs.<sup>80</sup> Actions such as this initiative are more likely to help MCCs facing academic challenges associated with the military lifestyle than are national Common Core standards.

There are also various service-specific efforts like the Education Summits held by the U.S. Army *centrally* and by the U.S. Navy at *various* locations. These conferences helped raise awareness and facilitate implementation of other initiatives, like the Compact and the establishment of SLOs, while also providing a forum to solicit input and feedback from military families for service leadership.<sup>81</sup> Additionally, at some stateside installations, groups of military families have obtained both permission through military channels and authority under governing state laws to establish and operate charter schools on the military installation.<sup>82</sup> A DoD report to Congress in August 2012 indicated that four charter schools were in operation at U.S. Air Force bases, two at U.S. Navy installations, and one at a joint Air Force and Navy installation. Combined, these charters served over 24 hundred students, with about 17 hundred of them, or 71 percent, being MCCs. The MCC percentage of population at individual schools varied from a low of 42 percent up to a high of 85 percent. At the time, only one charter had high school grade levels that were being phased in over time. Although nearly all the charters received varied amounts of impact aid, they were not directly funded by the hosting military installation. All were publically chartered and had non-MCCs as well as MCCs, though it varied by state the

extent to which MCCs were given preference for admission to the charter school.<sup>83</sup> A subsequent report by the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) called for additional guidance for those seeking to start and operate charter schools on military installations to streamline the process.<sup>84</sup> The advent of on base, public charter schools provides a more localized and adaptive education option with potentially higher academic rigor than the bandwagon of opaque Common Core standards can deliver.

#### *F. Examples of Private Sector Efforts and Initiatives*

A variety of non-profit organizations also focus on supporting MCCs and their parents as well as the school systems of which they are a part. Because the academic challenges faced by MCCs consistently make the top ten concerns lists when military families are surveyed, most military advocacy or support organizations exert some time and resources to address them and a few are more singularly focused. A couple key examples should suffice to represent the range of initiatives and efforts.

Near the top of any list of engaged non-profits would be the Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC). MCEC grew out of a national conference held in 1998 that examined the needs of military children and is concentrated on “ensuring quality educational opportunities for all military-connected children affected by mobility, family separation, and transition.” The organization sees its role as helping “families, schools, and communities be better prepared to support military-connected children throughout their academic careers.”<sup>85</sup> They run a clearinghouse of sorts by way of the extensive resources and links on their website, have authored guides for parents, schools, military leadership, and public officials; partnered with schools, other non-profits, and military organizations to create programs and conduct research; have held national conferences and training seminars; and, as noted earlier, have participated in the *Joining Forces* initiative to help current and future teachers better support and

educate MCCs. Regrettably, MCEC has, to date, advocated for national Common Core standards despite concerns identified by parents, teachers, and education policy experts.

In the area of funding of and support for the schools impacted by military families, an excellent example is the Military Impacted School Association (MISA), a national organization of school superintendents formed in 1986. MISA is part of the National Association of Federally Impacted Schools (NAFIS) with a specific focus on serving “school districts with a high concentration of military children.”<sup>86</sup> Through partnerships with DoD, school districts, and other non-profit organizations, MISA is active with regard to funding, legislation, military housing privatization and the attendant impact on schools, the Compact, BRAC, mobilizations, and online academic resources in math, reading, and ELA for military families and communities.

Blue Star Families, established in 2009 by a group of military spouses, seeks to “create a platform where military family members can join with civilian communities and leaders to address the challenges of military life.” They report having more than 100 thousand members with 46 chapters around the world. Their focus is on “strengthening military families regardless of rank, branch of service, or physical location, and leading military family members towards opportunities to build strength in individuals, families, and communities.”<sup>87</sup> While not exclusively focused on MCCs and their educational challenges, Blue Star Families—which includes active duty, National Guard, Reserve, wounded, transitioning service members and their families from all ranks and services, along with veterans—obtains funding for and publishes the results of the Military Family Lifestyle Survey. This survey not only provides insights from the military families themselves but also identifies in the process possible areas of additional research and needed policy or program changes, including those related to the academic performance of MCCs.<sup>88</sup>

The Military Child Initiative (MCI) aims at assisting public schools to “improve the quality of education for highly mobile and vulnerable young people with a special focus on military children and their families by providing national, state and local education agencies, as well as schools, parents and health, child welfare, juvenile justice and educational professionals with information, tools and services that enhance school success.”<sup>89</sup> The center is located at Johns Hopkins University and was sponsored under a DoD contract.<sup>90</sup> Their goal is to “move research-based practical approaches into schools and school districts so that all children and youth can thrive, especially those who are most socially mobile and emotionally vulnerable.”<sup>91</sup> Their website provides links to many resources, they make use of longitudinal studies,<sup>92</sup> they conduct detailed needs assessments, and they just recently completed a three-year study of MCCs and education in Hawaii.<sup>93</sup> Although the original DoD contract has ended, the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS) at Johns Hopkins “continues to offer Technical Assistance on partnership program development to districts and schools that serve children from military families.”<sup>94</sup> MCI is an excellent example of a focus on improving academic performance by studying and supporting the often unique developmental, social, and emotional needs of MCCs—something that national Common Core standards do not address.

As noted earlier, military families appear to homeschool at a rate higher than civilian families, so any review of private sector efforts would be incomplete without mention of a few key non-profits focused on homeschooling. Near the top of any list of key organizations supporting homeschoolers—including homeschooled MCCs—would be the Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA). HSLDA, while not focused solely on MCCs, has directly impacted the viability and success of military families endeavoring to home educate their MCCs. Many examples could be cited, but three should suffice. First, HSLDA has advocated

for military families and worked with military leadership to affirm the existing parental right to homeschool in policy and regulations and has provided legal representation for members on homeschool matters. They note that “homeschooling is a logical choice for families in the military, providing a stable environment in the midst of frequent change. More important than the academic continuity is the opportunity to develop close family bonds—the most secure support system children can have.”<sup>95</sup> As part of that effort, they also helped establish DoDEA’s “neither encourage nor discourage” policy towards homeschooling<sup>96</sup> as well as homeschooled MCC access to DoDEA auxiliary services and academic resources as detailed earlier.<sup>97</sup>

HSLDA’s research, advisement, and legal efforts have also removed obstacles for homeschooled students—both MCCs and non-MCCs—with regard to college admissions,<sup>98</sup> and military enlistment,<sup>99</sup> and through their guidance and the HSLDA Online Academy<sup>100</sup> they have expanded access to Advanced Placement (AP) courses and AP exams for homeschooled students.<sup>101</sup> Since MCCs tend to enlist in statistically higher numbers than non-MCCs and there is anecdotal evidence that MCCs tend to attend college at a higher rate than non-MCCs, these efforts are especially beneficial to military homeschoolers.<sup>102</sup>

Lastly, in addition to the legal services offered to members, HSLDA offers financial assistance in the form of discounted membership for active, guard, reserve, retired, or disabled military homeschoolers as well as discounts offered to affiliated groups, which includes military homeschooling groups.<sup>103</sup> Through the Home School Fund (HSF), the separate, official charity of HSLDA, “military homeschool families who are struggling financially to meet their children’s educational needs” can also apply for financial assistance to help take “some of the pressure of purchasing essential curriculum off their shoulders.”<sup>104</sup> The scholarships are based on financial need and subject to the availability of funds.

The Home School Association for Military Families is a non-profit “community of military homeschooling families working to bring community, resources, and support to each other, around the world” and is aimed at connecting the local community with “Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, and Marine families.” Through partnership and membership, they give “backpacks full of supplies to military homeschool children;” enable discounts on supplies, curriculum, testing, and HSLDA membership; provide private forums and monthly newsletters; have special emphasis programs to help newly homeschooling military families, those homeschooling during a deployment, and those homeschooling special needs children; and they provide a forum for exchange and dissemination of homeschooling information specifically relevant to military families.<sup>105</sup> Members and representatives include SLOs.<sup>106</sup>

#### **IV. WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT MCCs AND THEIR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE?**

##### *A. District Level Comparisons*

One way to approach the question of *what we know* is to compare military-connected districts (MCD) to other school districts. A DoDEA commissioned study by the American Institutes for Research undertook that comparison, defining MCDs as those (1) who applied for Impact Aid and (2) where the average daily attendance either included 400 MCCs or MCCs constituted 10 percent of the student population. Their analysis found that MCDs had similar or fewer students in subpopulations associated with higher needs, such as English language learners, students with disabilities, or students in poverty.<sup>107</sup> They also found that districts often appeared more diverse overall with fewer white students and more black students, but when they were compared with other districts of similar size and location, they actually had similar percentages of black students, more white students, and fewer Hispanic students. Lastly, they determined that MCDs had similar counts of students per staff

and lower cost-adjusted expenditures per student. However, the differences in expenditures were negligible when the MCDs were again compared to other districts based on size and location. So, when looking in aggregate, it is important to *adjust for both size and location*, and to understand that *aggregate demographic differences may not be as significant as they initially appear*.<sup>108</sup>

A DoD report to Congress on charter schools operating on military installations offers a different way to examine MCDs.<sup>109</sup> Because the charters are public schools, they have both MCCs and non-MCCs and, similar to the DoDEA commissioned study, academic performance differences between the two groups were not identified. The results do provide some perspective as to the academic performance of schools with significant percentages of MCCs.<sup>110</sup> Although the report details seven charter schools in six states, two of the schools were too new to have relevant data. For the remaining five, the results varied as shown in Table 1.

Because charter laws differ between states and because the philosophy and curriculum of the schools also varied, it is unhelpful to draw too many direct comparisons between them. However, it is clear that performance varies just as with charter schools not located on military installations.

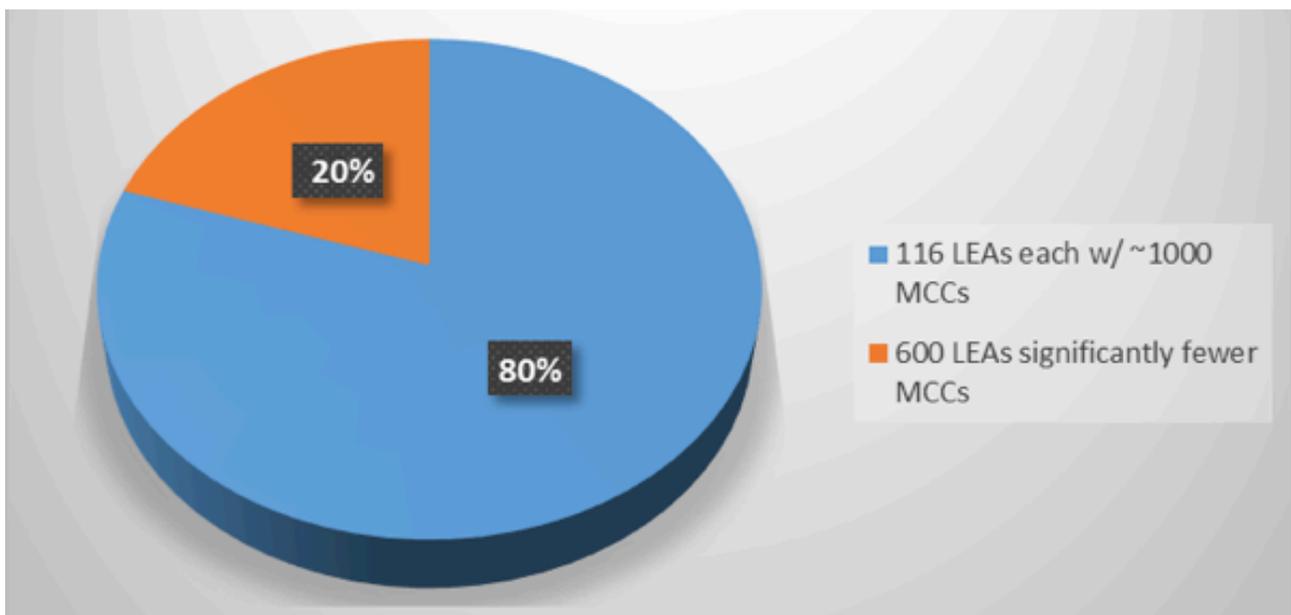
##### *B. Where are MCCs and MCDs Located?*

An important consideration when attempting to determine what we know is location. A 2011 RAND study on Impact Aid which was commissioned by the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) examined numbers of MCCs at LEAs that apply for Impact Aid.<sup>111</sup> The study found that, among active duty MCCs attending stateside public schools which had applied for Impact Aid, more than three-quarters were concentrated in fewer than 20 percent of the LEAs, each of which had about a thousand MCCs. The remaining schools generally had significantly smaller populations of MCCs.

**TABLE 1. ON BASE CHARTER SCHOOL PERFORMANCE**

Charter	Assessment	Performance
Sonoran Science Academy, Davis-Monthan Air Force Base	Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS)	Higher than both state averages and a demographically similar middle school in all four areas assessed: math, reading, writing, and science
Wheatland Charter Academy, Beale Air Force Base	California's Standardized Testing And Reporting (STAR)	- Similar to both the district and state for ELA averages - Similar to state for math and science, but lower than the district averages
Manzita Public Charter School, Vandenberg Air Force Base	California's Standardized Testing And Reporting (STAR)	Compared to district and state scores: - Better in science - Less well in ELA - Somewhat better in math.
Belle Chasse Academy, Naval Air Station/Joint Reserve Station New Orleans	Integrated Louisiana Educational Assessment Program (iLEAP)	- Averages were higher than state by ten or more percentage points in ELA, science, and social studies - Math averages were lower than state, though by less than ten percentage points
Sigbee Charter School, Naval Air Station Key West	Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT)	- Same or better than district and state in reading for all three tested grades - In math, fourth graders significantly exceeded district and state, third graders were lower than both, and fifth graders were only slightly better

**FIGURE 1. MCCs AT LEAs APPLYING FOR IMPACT AID**



In fact, the study found only thirteen districts where there were more than five thousand MCCs. Overall, their research suggested that the average school-aged MCC who attends a public school which applied for impact aid was in a district where MCCs represented approximately 22 percent of the students. The LEAs where MCCs represented more than half the enrolled student population usually were associated with remote or isolated duty stations. At these locations, the military families were also more likely to live on the military installation due to local housing situations. Elsewhere, across the nation, 67 percent of MCCs do not live on the base but in the local civilian community. So, among AD MCCs, there is a greater chance of attending a public school where MCCs are a known subpopulation, but one-fifth of the time this is not the case. It is also usually not the case for Guard or Reserve MCCs unless they live near or are associated with a large active duty base.<sup>112</sup>

On the issue of location, MCEC, using 2012 numbers, identified the top ten states for active duty military presence and found that more than half of the active duty MCCs are located in just five states: California, Virginia, Texas, North Carolina, and Georgia.

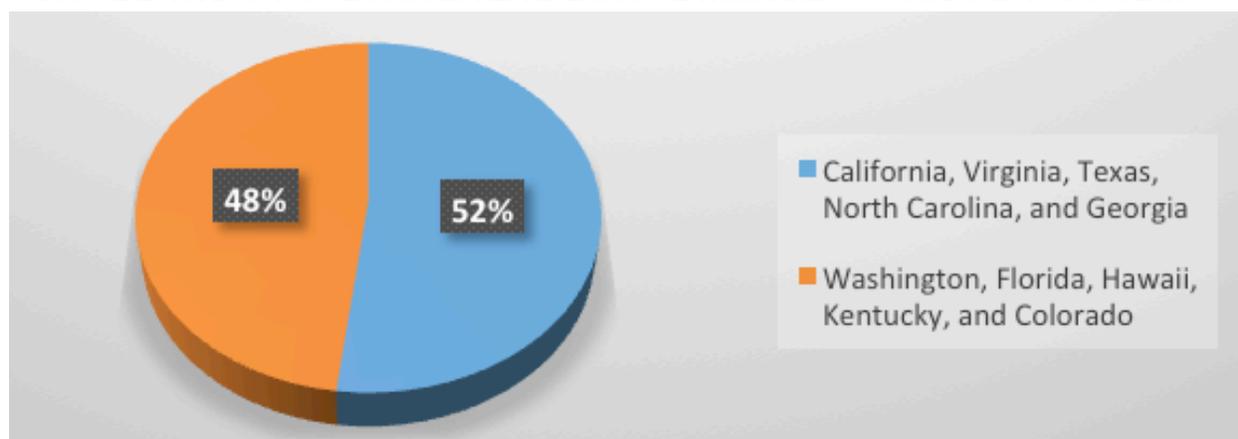
For the Selected Reserves, MCEC reports that more than half the MCCs are in slightly more than ten states, some mirroring the active duty MCCs: California, Texas, Florida, Pennsylvania, New York, Georgia, Ohio, Virginia, Illinois,

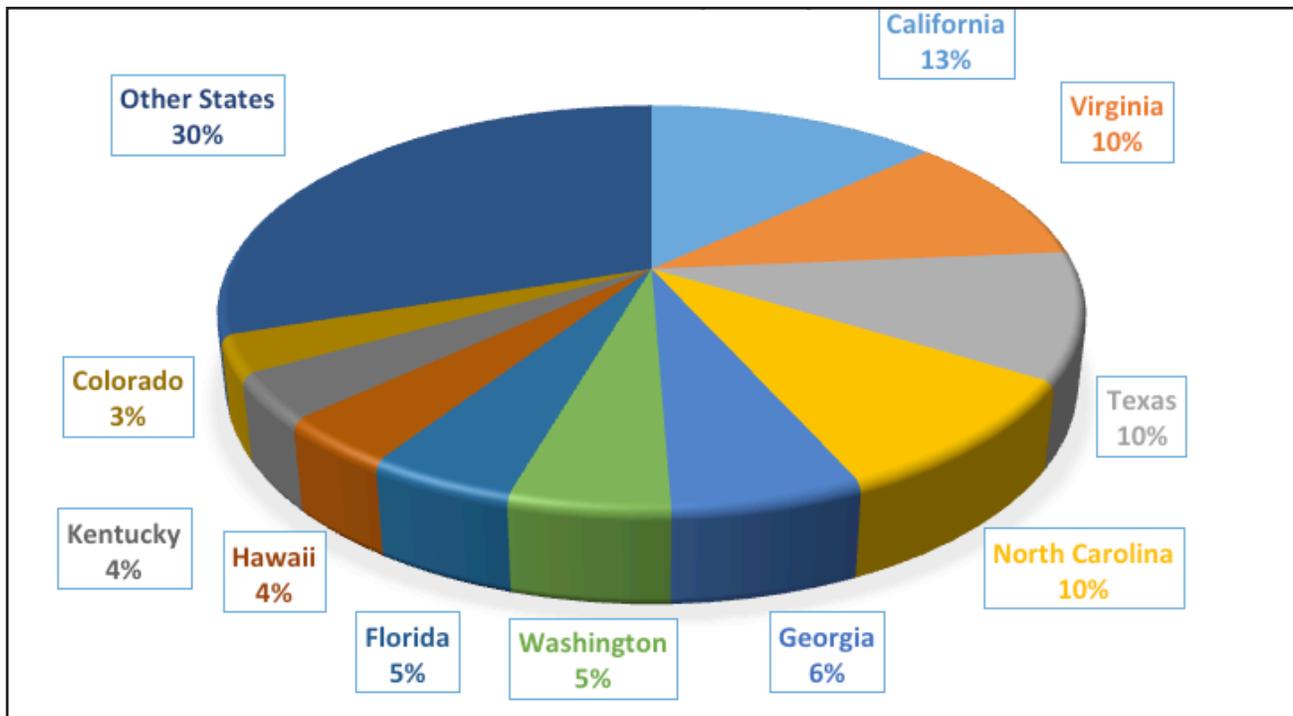
North Carolina, Alabama, Louisiana, and Indiana.<sup>113</sup> An obvious conclusion would be that these states need to consider the needs of their significant and—especially for active duty families—generally transient populations of MCCs when crafting education policy, to include policies related to homeschooling. However, ED reports that virtually every school district in the U.S. has MCCs somewhere in the K-12 programs based not only on the greater distribution of Guard and Reserve forces, but also on the distribution of active duty special duty assignments which are typically not located near military bases.<sup>114</sup> In fact, as mentioned in the Executive summary, there were in 2012 only 12 counties in whole nation that were not home to at least one of the 1.3 million Reserve members then serving and there were only 27 counties that did not have at least one of the approximately 650,000 Reserve members who deployed in support combat operations in either Iraq or Afghanistan or both.<sup>115</sup> If you add in all veterans who separated or retired in the last five years, then the distribution is even broader. So, even those school districts not at the earlier listed locations have good reason to be cognizant of the challenges and dynamics associated with the K-12 education of MCCs.

### *C. Military Family Demographics and Lifestyle Factors*

The *Future of Children* journal, in collaboration with MCEC, devoted its fall 2013 issue to

**FIGURE 2. FIVE OF TOP TEN STATES REPRESENT MORE THAN HALF OF STATESIDE AD POPULATION**



**FIGURE 3. TOP TEN STATES FOR AD MILITARY PRESENCE (2012)**

MCCs. In the second chapter, entitled “The Demographics of Military Children and Families,” Clever and Segal provide many illuminating details about *what we know*—and what we do not. Importantly, they note that “military families cannot be neatly pigeonholed” since “they are a strikingly diverse population” and within the larger military “demographic groups differ in important ways, and the service branches differ from one another as well.” They note that military families “come in many forms, including not only the categories familiar from civilian life—two-parent, single-parent, and so on—but also, unique to the military, dual-service families in which both parents are service members.” Particularly noteworthy while also intuitive is the observation that “military families’ needs change over time as they move through personal and military transitions” so “the best policies and programs to help military families and children are *flexible and adaptable rather than rigidly structured*.”<sup>116</sup>

Their illuminating information includes the following: spouses and children now outnumber service members by ratio of 1.4 to 1; military

members are more likely than peers of the same age to be single upon entering the military; subsequent to entering the military, they are less likely to cohabit and more likely to marry younger and start families sooner; and among 23-25 year olds, those who have served on active duty are three times more likely to be married as those who have never served.<sup>117</sup> Clever and Segal echo other reports that military families move more frequently than civilian families—some estimates being three times more often—and have more frequent separations lasting many months—sometimes well over a year—but they also note that “although frequent moves can disrupt a child’s school progress, they can also help change bad habits [by the chance to reinvent oneself at a new location] and strengthen parent-child bonds.” They also identify that, despite increasing numbers of women in the military, the military is still overwhelming male which results in most military parents being fathers.<sup>118</sup> The corollary to this is that in most military homeschooling families, the primary teacher is the mother. They further note that most military members serve *less than ten years* on active duty. As well, they compare the military to the

working population of the country aged 18 to 45 years old and document that the military is generally younger on a percentage basis—two-thirds being 18 to 30 years old versus 45 percent of the civilian workforce being 18 to 30 years old and 55 percent being 31 to 45 years old.<sup>119</sup>

An important though seemingly contradictory observation can be drawn from these facts. Mobility is a reality for active duty MCCs, with standard estimates being six to nine moves K-12,<sup>120</sup> but it is also true that many MCCs will experience the *most mobility* when they are preschool and elementary school age and will also experience *fewer moves* given the average length of active duty service. In fact, the authors also detail that 41 to 42 percent of active duty MCCs are preschool and only 16 percent are high school.<sup>121</sup> These numbers are also supported by MCEC, which reported that in 2012 more than half of the active duty MCCs were seven years old or younger.<sup>122</sup>

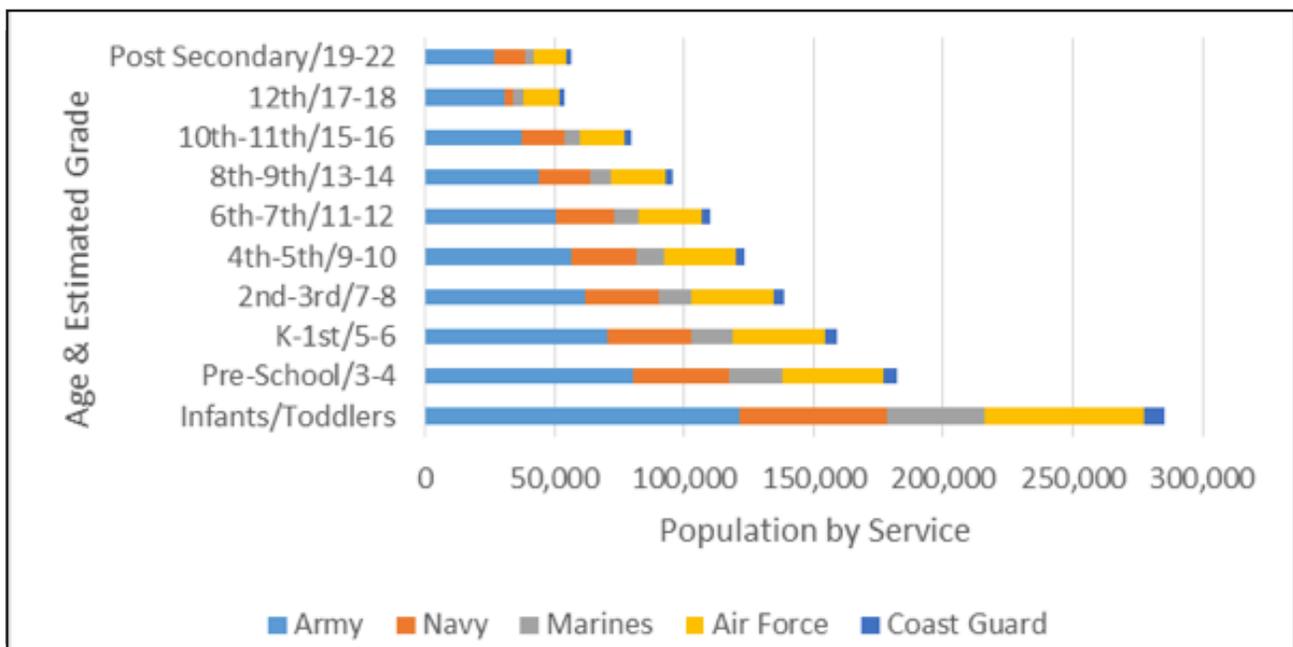
Even if one sets aside the numerous defects and objections to the national Common Core standards, given these demographics, Common Core could only conceivably “help” less than half

of active duty MCCs, who are the most mobile of MCCs, which makes clear it is far from a panacea for the academic challenges faced by MCCs.

Clever and Segal also note that MCCs from active duty Air Force and Navy families tend to be somewhat older since those services tend to emphasize “experience and technical training” which equates to higher retention rates which leads to an increased prevalence of older MCCs.<sup>123</sup> This does not mean that military moves are not an important consideration, rather it highlights the authors’ earlier cautions about “pigeonholing” MCCs with one-size fits all solutions since military families are “strikingly diverse” and the “service branches differ from one another as well.”<sup>124</sup> Common Core would more constitute “pigeonholing” and would be less able to address the diversity of military families and the experience differences between the military services.

In light of these demographics and the possibility that military moves can actually help MCCs overcome bad habits and “strengthen parent-child bonds,” many military families choose to

**FIGURE 4. ACTIVE DUTY MCCs BY SERVICE & AGE/GRADE (2012)**



homeschool their children. Not only are they able to avoid the disruptions in curriculum and course sequencing that accompany military moves, but they can schedule homeschool breaks and family travels to match the availability of the military parent who is often working a variable schedule driven not by business cycles or an academic calendar, but by global events and national security requirements. Such flexibility often results in a *carpe diem* approach to the process of military transfers, the deployment and subsequent reintegration of the military parent, and the unique opportunities found in each new, local area. Some examples of the latter include an aspiring veterinarian volunteering at a pet hospital, a student writing a stage play under the tutelage of an established producer, and brothers learning about combustion engines by rebuilding a muscle car under the guidance of an expert mechanic.

While recent hard numbers are difficult to find, there are numerous indicators that the percentage of homeschooling families remains and has always been higher than in the civilian population, the rate is increasing at least as fast as in the civilian community, and that broad adoption of Common Core standards is likely increasing parental interest in homeschooling for both military and civilian families.<sup>125</sup> Anderson reports that there are an estimated “2 million home-schoolers, with their numbers growing as much as 12 percent annually” and that “there is data to indicate that military families are home schooling at perhaps twice the national average.” This assertion is based on a 2001 Army survey, an earlier sampling of military families in Korea, and data provided by the National Center for Education Statistics.<sup>126</sup> Berry and Neal both identify Common Core spurring parents—both military and civilian—to choose homeschooling.<sup>127</sup>

Noteworthy also in Clever and Segal’s article is the fluidity of military service as evidenced by transitions from active duty to service in the Guard or Reserves. MCCs of Guard and Reserve families skew older, with only 28 percent

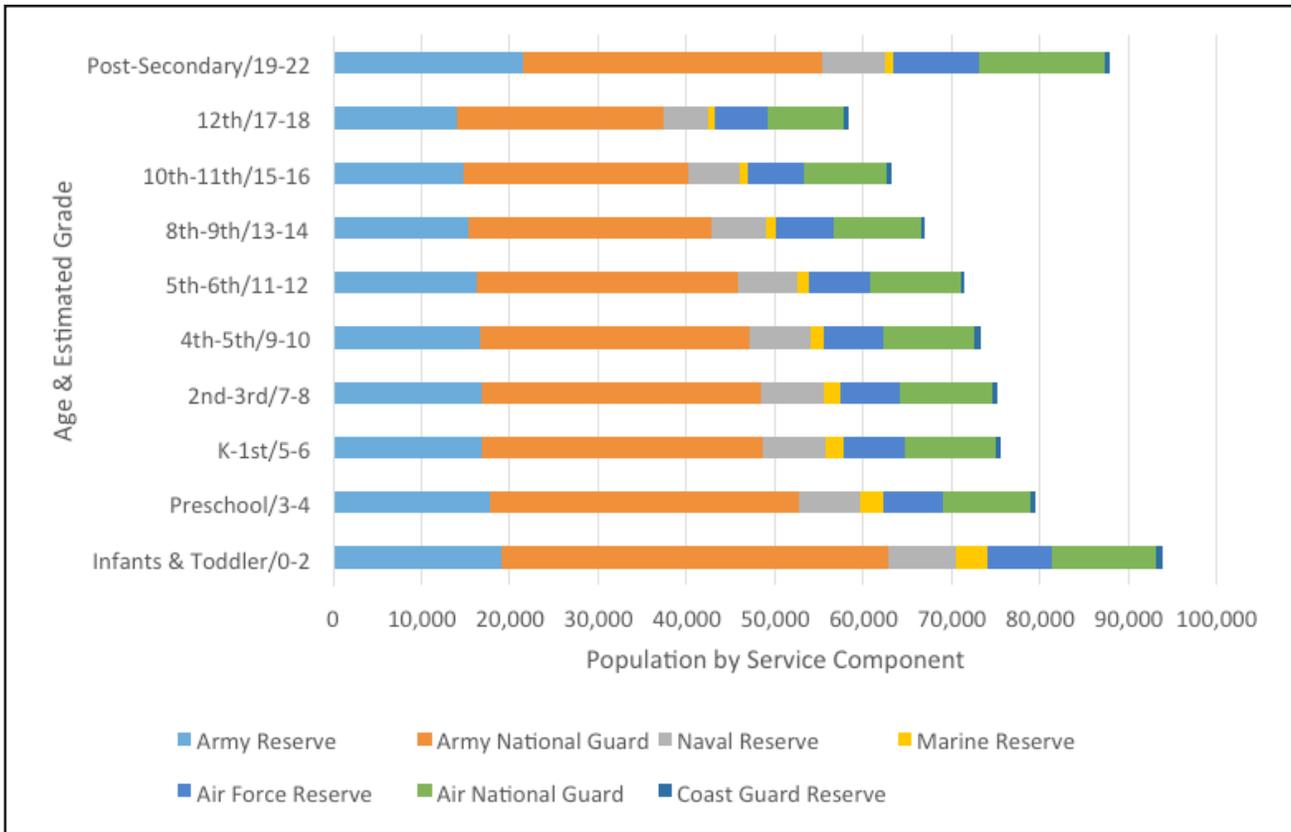
being preschool and 44 to 45 percent being in elementary school, in part because many were once active duty MCCs constituting that higher percentage preschool age group.<sup>128</sup> MCEC again supports these numbers, asserting that in 2012 the majority of Guard and Reserve MCCs were between the ages of six and eighteen.<sup>129</sup>

One demographic that is not currently easily identifiable is the number of military moves for Guard and Reserve MCC. While not typically subject to frequent military relocations like active duty MCCs, military operations in this century have increasingly involved mobilizing and deploying individuals and units from the Guard and Reserve. The mobilization sometimes involves pre-deployment training or unit participation in pre-deployment exercises, so the term of mobilized active duty service can range from a few months to over a year and even to multiple years in some cases. While the significant involvement of Guard and Reserve members and units in military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq is well documented, and while there is anecdotal evidence of some MCCs relocating—with an attendant change of schools—when their Guard or Reserve parent is mobilized, there is little research and hard data on these moves and their impact on the MCCs.

#### *D. Assessing Academic Performance of MCCs as a subgroup*

Moving from overall numbers and general demographics to specifics about academic performance at grade levels or in particular subject areas would be a logical progression in discussing *what we know* about MCCs. With all the initiatives, aid, and policy directed at this topic, an assessment of the impact and results seems logical. However, such an assessment is hampered by the fact that the academic performance of MCCs as a subgroup is not tracked in any standardized way. The need for this tracking has been identified by the GAO in a report on Impact Aid,<sup>130</sup> by DoD,<sup>131</sup> by policy groups,<sup>132</sup> by the White House,<sup>133</sup> and by various social policy researchers.<sup>134</sup> Additionally, as MCEC points out, ED “regularly urges schools

**FIGURE 5. GUARD & RESERVE MCCs BY SERVICE & AGE/GRADE (2012)**



across our nation to operate using data-driven decisions; yet schools do not have any uniform data on military-connected students.”<sup>135</sup> ED, in an official comment on the draft GAO report, reaffirmed the White House call for identifying MCCs as a subpopulation to enable “reporting of student achievement data” but noted that like “gender or migrant status, these data would be publicly reported but would not be used for [impact aid] accountability purposes.”<sup>136</sup>

The creation of the identifier code remains delayed, however, because the legal authority needed is part of the stalled reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) whose most recent iteration is the oft-waived NCLB. Though ESEA reauthorization is stalled, ED noted in June of 2013 that a few states “have recognized the importance of assigning an identifier for military connected students in their educational data systems...and have some type of legislation in place to identify

their military school age children...”<sup>137</sup> While many appear merely to be using the identifier, at least initially, only to determine numbers of MCCs and the locations of schools they attend, hopefully the identifier will be eventually utilized to assess academic performance at key aggregate levels relative to appropriate comparison data as well as to identify and compare graduation rates. Additional states are considering similar legislation or other actions, such as linking performance on state educational assessment tests to MCC-status determined from surveys of parents, as noted by DoD.<sup>138</sup>

*E. Assessing the Academic Performance of MCCs via Case Studies and Reports*

Although there is no standardized identification and coding system for MCCs, some insights can be gleaned from case studies and reports. To that end, a review of academic performance data within DoDEA will provide some insights. A review of DoDEA internal performance

assessments will not only demonstrate how MCCs perform in an MCC-focused environment but will also reinforce the potential value of sharing DoDEA's experience and practices through their outreach programs. In addition, two school districts were selected based on availability of MCC differentiated data: The Lincoln Public School system in Massachusetts and the Davis School District in Utah. Finally, we can review what is known about the academic performance of homeschooled students generally and extrapolate the likely application to MCCs.

### 1. DoDEA: SAT, TerraNova, and NAEP Scores Comparison

The performance of MCCs within the DoDEA system can be examined by comparing readily available data against national averages on three assessments: the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), the TerraNova, and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). This examination demonstrates MCC performance in a system attuned to the particular challenges faced by military families and with programs and funding to overcome them. Note also that while DoDEA has recently adopted national Common Core standards, these performance indicators predate implementation of that unfortunate decision.

Three-quarters of DoDEA students took the SAT in 2014 compared to a national average of 52 percent and, overall, they performed better than the national average in the critical reading portion; about the same on the writing portion; slightly lower on the composite score; and lower than the national average by 16 points on the math portion. The average SAT scores chart shows the last three years and makes clear that MCCs attending DoDEA schools are, on average, doing as well or better than national averages, with the possible exception of math. When the SAT performance data are broken down by race and ethnicity, DoDEA MCCs are, on average, exceeding their national peers, with the exception of students identifying as Asian or Pacific-Islander. This group scored lower than national counterparts in all three areas as well

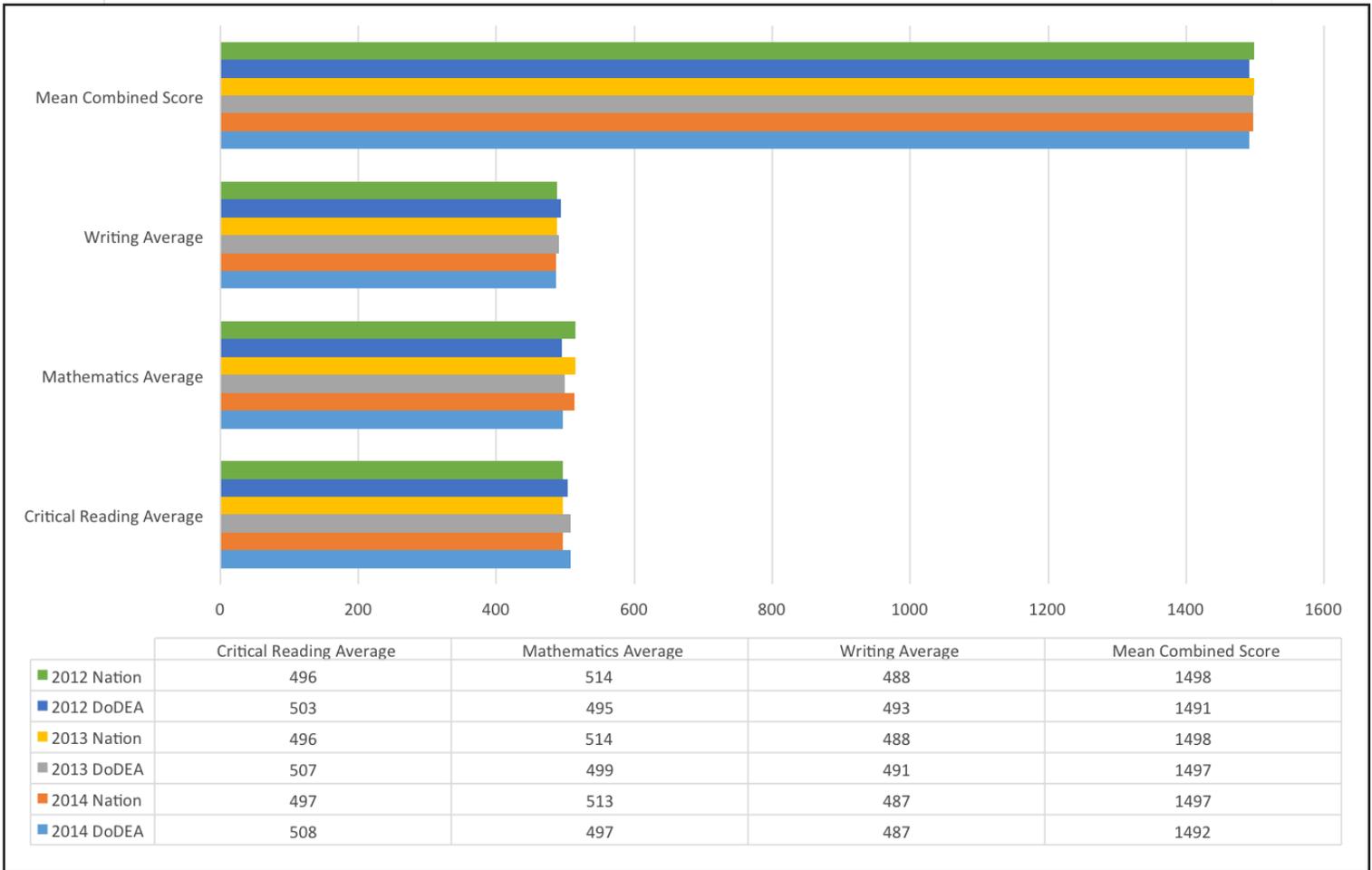
as the composite score, but were very similar to overall national averages.<sup>139</sup>

The TerraNova is a standardized norm-referenced achievement test that compares students' scores to a national sample of students representing all gender, racial, economic, and geographic groups. DoDEA administers TerraNova to all students in grades 3-11 except those who have been approved for an alternate assessment. The scores are reported as percentiles, not percentages, so the national average is always the 50 percentile. On the 2013 TerraNova, DoDEA beat national averages for all tested grade levels in all five areas: Reading, Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. The percentile rankings ranged between the 60th and 75th percentiles.<sup>140</sup>

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is the only nationally representative assessment of what students know and can do in various subjects. It is congressionally-mandated and is commonly called *The Nation's Report Card* because it allows comparison of subject matter achievement by students between states. All of DoDEA participates as a single jurisdiction and is treated within NAEP similar to individual states. The NAEP breaks down test results by grade level and further differentiates subpopulations based on gender, race, or ethnic identification. The NAEP is a representative sampling and does not provide scores for individual students, schools, or districts.<sup>141</sup> Looking at DoDEA NAEP data may not be representative of all MCCs, but because it is a way to compare against a national standard as well as against the performance of other states and jurisdictions, it is an indicator of how some MCCs as a group—and as subpopulations—perform academically.<sup>142</sup> Note that this performance is prior to the DoDEA's implementation of the controversial Common Core national standards which are being phased in over several years.

In math, DoDEA MCCs outperformed the national average in 2013 at both grade levels while also improving over the DoDEA averages

**FIGURE 6. AVERAGE SAT SCORES FOR NATION & DoDEA**



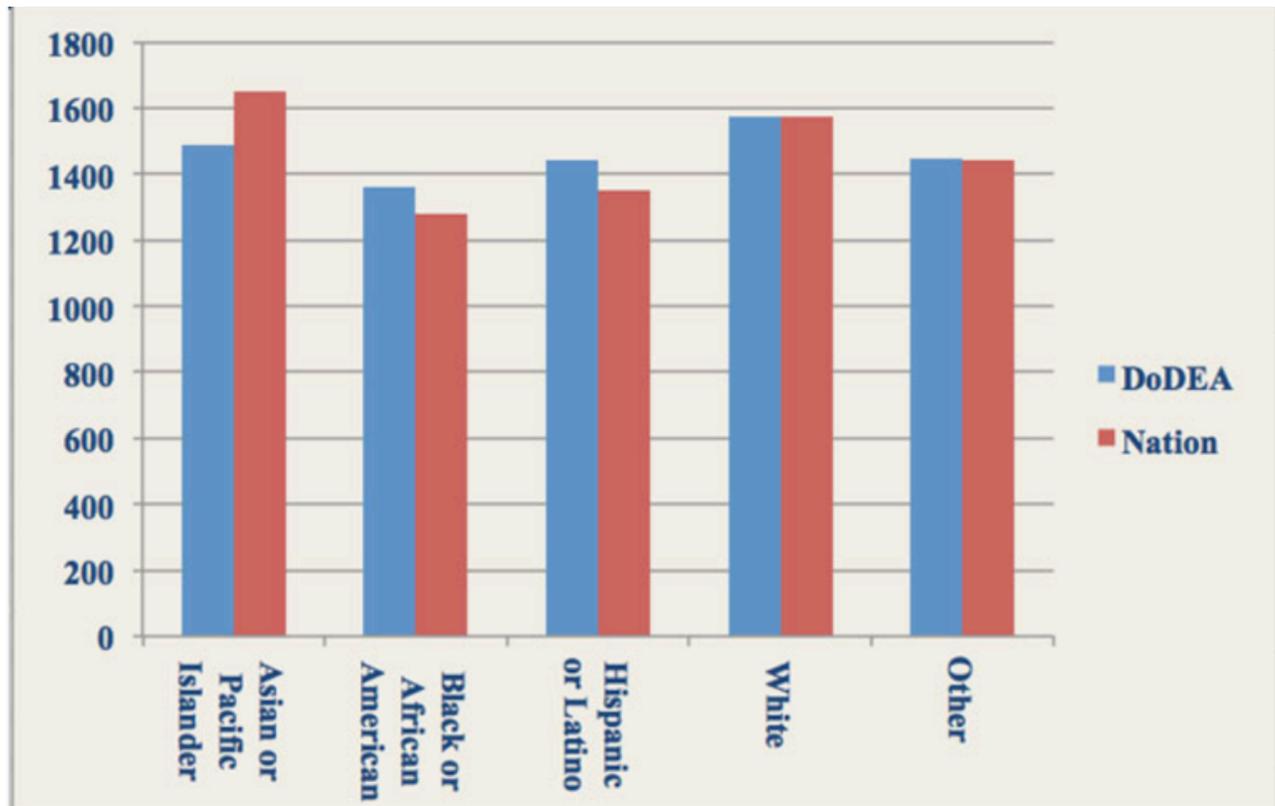
from 2011. DoDEA fourth graders average score was exceeded by only seven states and jurisdictions and eighth graders by only five states or jurisdictions. Both grade levels had higher percentages of MCCs scoring at Proficient or Advanced levels than in 2011 and lower percentages at the Basic or Below Basic levels. DoDEA fourth graders percentage of Proficient or Advanced scores was exceeded by only eight states or jurisdictions and eighth graders by only five states or jurisdictions.<sup>143</sup>

In reading, DoDEA MCCs also outperformed the national average in 2013 at both grade levels while again improving over the DoDEA averages from 2011. DoDEA fourth and eighth grade average scores were higher than 48 states/jurisdictions and not statistically different from

3. Both grade levels had higher percentages of MCCs scoring at Proficient or Advanced levels than in 2011 and lower percentages at the Basic or Below Basic levels. DoDEA fourth graders percentage of Proficient or Advanced scores was exceeded by only 1 state and eighth graders percentage was higher than 43 states or jurisdictions and not statistically different from 8.<sup>144</sup>

In 2013, DoDEA's African American and Hispanic students again scored higher than national counterparts at both 4th and 8th grade levels in reading and mathematics. While DoDEA Asian students did consistently score lower than their national counterparts, the results were mixed. The difference at both grade levels in reading was only one to two points

**FIGURE 7. DoDEA & NATIONAL AVG SAT COMPOSITE SCORES BY RACE & ETHNICITY (2014)**



and each result was still higher than the White national average. The differences in math were more significant: 12 points lower than national counterparts at the 4th grade level and 7 points lower at the 8th grade level. However, the 8th graders were still eight points higher than the White national average and 4th graders lagged the White national average by only two points. While score gaps between DoDEA White

students and minority groups are consistently smaller than the gaps based on national averages, and while DoDEA minority averages tend to be higher than White national averages, DoDEA continues to pursue methods of reducing the gap within DoDEA.<sup>145</sup>

Taken as a whole, these three assessments suggest that DoDEA is succeeding in its vision “to be

**TABLE 2. DoDEA & NATIONAL AVERAGES: NAEP GRADE 4 MATH**

Grade 4 Average Scores in NAEP Mathematics for Public School Students										
by Race/Ethnicity: 2011 and 2013										
	All Students		White		Black		Hispanic		Asian	
	2011	2013	2011	2013	2011	2013	2011	2013	2011	2013
Nation (public)	240	241	249	250	224	224	229	230	257	260
DoDEA	241	245	246	250	228	233	236	240	247	248
Difference (DoDEA - Nation)	1	4	-3	0	4	9	7	10	-10	-12

among the world’s leaders in education, enriching the lives of military-connected students and the communities in which they live.”<sup>146</sup> Math might be the one area in which DoDEA MCCs show some disparity. The slight drop in SAT performance in math can be seen as offset by the

TerraNova scores and NAEP performance. Math as a particular challenge for active duty, mobile MCCs can be traced back at least to the pre-AVF era. Mary Edwards Wertsch, herself a daughter of an Army officer, conducted interviews with 80 MCCs born between 1932 and 1964. She notes

**TABLE 3. DoDEA & NATIONAL AVERAGES: NAEP GRADE 8 MATH**  
**Grade 8 Average Scores in NAEP Mathematics for Public School Students**  
 by Race/Ethnicity: 2011 and 2013

	All Students		White		Black		Hispanic		Asian	
	2011	2013	2011	2013	2011	2013	2011	2013	2011	2013
Nation (public)	283	284	293	293	262	263	269	271	305	308
DoDEA	288	290	295	296	274	276	282	283	292	301
Difference (DoDEA - Nation)	5	6	2	3	12	13	13	12	-13	-7

**TABLE 4. DoDEA & NATIONAL AVERAGES: NAEP GRADE 4 READING**  
**Grade 4 Average Scores in NAEP Reading for Public School Students**  
 by Race/Ethnicity: 2011 and 2013

	All Students		White		Black		Hispanic		Asian	
	2011	2013	2011	2013	2011	2013	2011	2013	2011	2013
Nation (public)	220	221	230	231	205	205	205	207	236	237
DoDEA	229	232	233	236	222	222	226	228	233	235
Difference (DoDEA - Nation)	9	11	3	5	17	17	21	21	-3	-2

**TABLE 5. DoDEA & NATIONAL AVERAGES: NAEP GRADE 8 READING**  
**Grade 8 Average Scores in NAEP Reading for Public School Students**  
 by Race/Ethnicity: 2011 and 2013

	All Students		White		Black		Hispanic		Asian	
	2011	2013	2011	2013	2011	2013	2011	2013	2011	2013
Nation (public)	264	266	272	275	248	250	251	255	277	280
DoDEA	272	277	277	282	263	266	268	274	272	279
Difference (DoDEA - Nation)	8	11	5	7	15	16	17	19	-5	-1

that “a striking number of military brats told of getting top grades in everything but math.” The examples given in the interviews seem to suggest that disruption of sequential math learning was harder to overcome than disruptions in other course work.<sup>147</sup>

As a further indication of the lower ages of active duty MCCs, it must be noted that when the NAEP tests twelfth graders, they cannot include DoDEA due to an insufficient representative sample population.<sup>148</sup> The scores of DoDEA’s minority population compared to their national counterparts and the smaller—and shrinking—performance gap between White and minority students are also both noteworthy. Clearly, the decision in 2007 to export DoDEA’s successes—gained without a national Common Core scheme—through outreaches to LEAs, as detailed earlier, and to fund similar or related programs at these LEAs through the targeted grants was a wise move.

## 2. Lincoln Public Schools via Public Standardized Test Results

The Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) have been serving the active duty MCCs of Hanscom Air Force Base in Massachusetts for more than 50 years; since before the creation of either ED or DoDEA. In April 2012, DoDEA once again selected LPS under a five-year contract to “provide educational services to the children who reside on Hanscom Air Force Base.”<sup>149</sup> LPS falls under the requirements of the Massachusetts Education Reform Law of 1993 and therefore participates in the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) testing program, a standards-based assessment.<sup>150</sup> The aggregate results of MCAS tests are publically available online for individual schools and for districts.<sup>151</sup> These public results can provide a snapshot of MCC academic performance within LPS by comparing the aggregate scores of Hanscom students to aggregate scores of the district’s off base school.<sup>152</sup> LPS consists of two schools on the base—Hanscom Primary for PK thru third grade and Hanscom Middle for grades four through

eight—and one local school—Lincoln School for PK thru eighth grade. High school students attend a school in a different district where the public MCAS data could not be easily separated into MCCs and non-MCCs.<sup>153</sup>

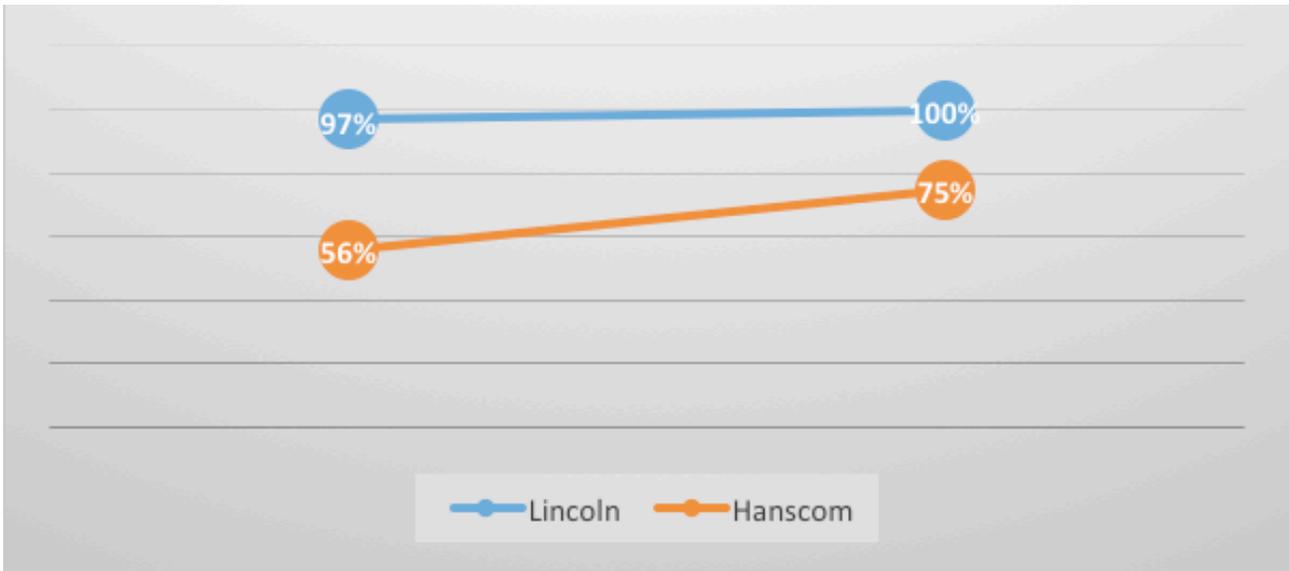
Comparing the MCAS report card overviews and full MCAS reports on the three schools, several conclusions can be drawn. The issue of military moves becomes evident by reviewing the Student Growth Percentile (SGP) scores. The MCAS calculates the SGP for “each student who participated in the MCAS ELA or Mathematics tests in grades 4-8 or 10 and who also took the last MCAS test.”<sup>154</sup> The SGP compares a student’s MCAS score relative to the scores of all other students in the state in the same grade who earned similar MCAS scores in previous years. A higher number indicates higher growth and a lower number lower growth. The school and district reports show the SGP as an average and “most school and district median SGPs tend to range between 40 and 60.”<sup>155</sup> These reports also detail how many students were included in the SGP as well as how many students took the test. The difference reveals how many students have not previously taken the MCAS, a potential and reasonable indicator of being new to the state. This difference was consistently more pronounced for Hanscom students, i.e. MCCs.<sup>156</sup>

Overall, LPS MCAS grade level average scores seem to indicate that the MCCs do less well than their non-MCC peers. For LPS, the MCAS tests grades three through eight. The raw scores are correlated to one of four rankings.<sup>157</sup>

With few exceptions, the overall population of Hanscom students<sup>158</sup> at all grade levels and in all tested areas had fewer *A* and *P* rankings and more *NI* and *W* rankings. This was particularly noteworthy at higher grade levels in math and ELA as well as in Science & Tech/Engineering.

Given the previously discussed demographics and mobility information,<sup>159</sup> part of the explanation for the differences likely involves the greater mobility of Hanscom students.<sup>160</sup>

**FIGURE 8. AGGREGATE SGP RANGES (A MEASURE OF MOBILITY WITHIN LPS) (2013)**



**TABLE 6. DEFINITIONS OF MCAS RANKINGS**

Ranking	Which means students
<i>Advanced (A)</i>	“demonstrate a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of rigorous subject matter and provide sophisticated solutions to complex problems”
<i>Proficient (P)</i>	“demonstrate a solid understanding of challenging subject matter and solve a wide variety of problems”
<i>Needs Improvement (NI)</i>	“demonstrate a partial understanding of subject matter and solve some simple problems”
<i>Warning (W)</i>	“demonstrate a minimal understanding of subject matter and do not solve simple problems”

Since the base is Air Force and, as noted earlier, Clever and Segal determined that both Air Force and Navy members tend to serve longer and have older MCCs, it is important to note that longer service and older MCCs also tend to equate to more moves with the resulting increase in academic learning disruptions, which, while potentially affecting all academic areas, seem to do so particularly with regard to mathematical reasoning. Beyond that, older MCCs would also likely have spent lower grades at a different location, under a different system, outside the rigorous curriculum and methodology associated

with the MCAS system. They would thus not only be less familiar with the test, but, more importantly, be potentially less well prepared with more potential gaps than peers who have spent most or all of their academic careers under MCAS.

These considerations might be even more relevant for MCCs who have mainly lived stateside since overseas assignments tend to be a specific length with more rigorous personnel management controls and stateside assignments have historically tended, for a variety of reasons, to be more fluid, less predictable, and also potentially

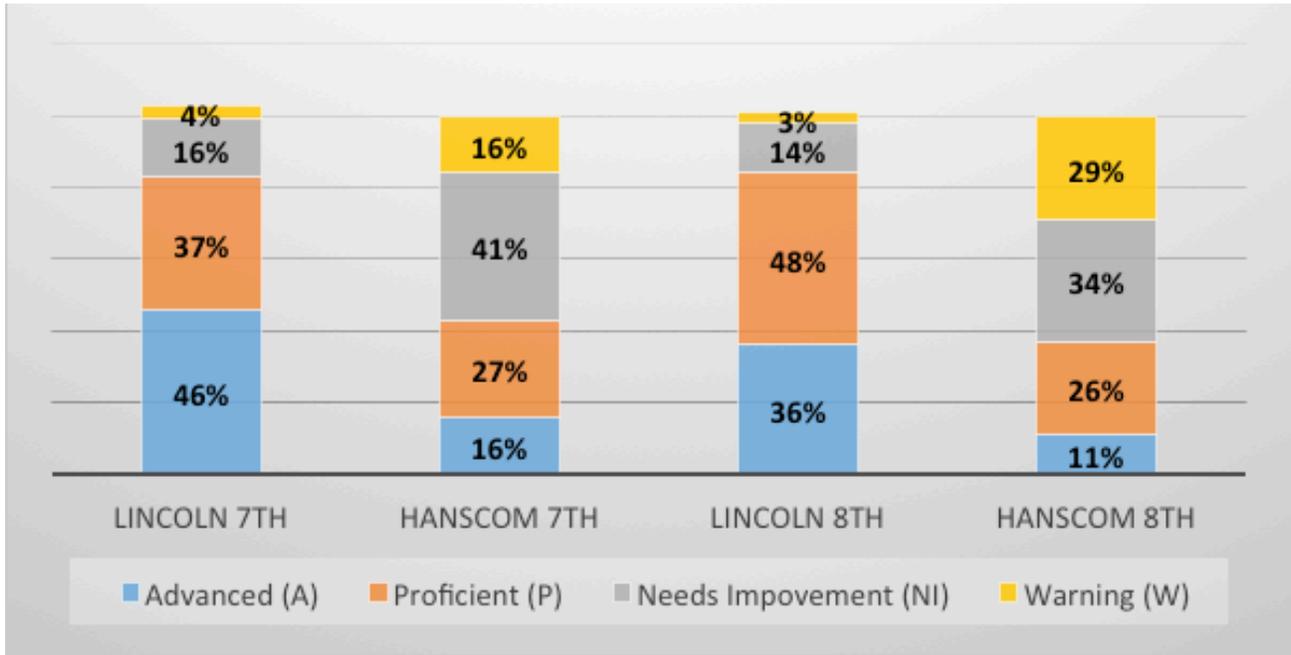
less likely to include a DoDEA operated school. Advanced knowledge of a forthcoming move can contribute to experiencing a smoother, less disruptive transition.

### 3. Davis School District via De-Identified, Aggregate Standardized Test Results

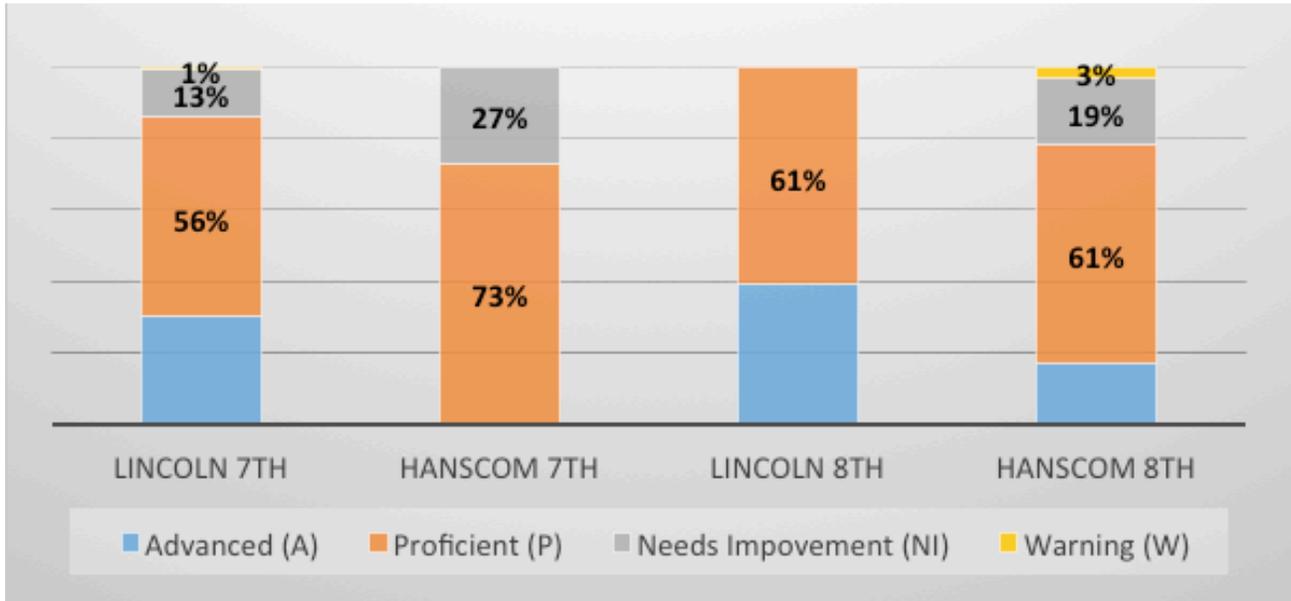
The Davis School District (DSD) is the second largest district in the state of Utah and the fifty-

second largest in the United States. Located in the northern part of the state, it serves more than 69 thousand students, including those associated with Hill Air Force Base. Operating more than 88 schools, it is the second largest employer in the county with nearly 6 thousand full-time equivalent employees. The DSD maintains internal data which identifies MCCs as a subpopulation. Data restrictions prevented

**FIGURE 9. JUNIOR HIGH MCAS MATH COMPARISON (LPS) (2013)**



**FIGURE 10. JUNIOR HIGH MCAS ELA COMPARISON (LPS) (2013)**



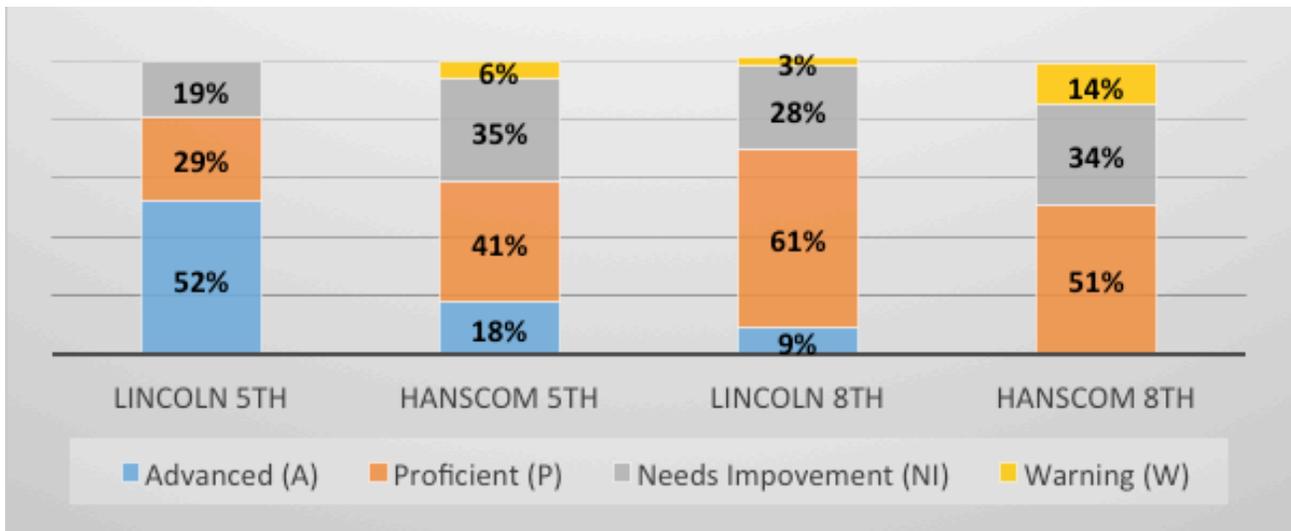
them from releasing data except in the form of statistical analysis<sup>161</sup> using de-identified, aggregate information from the Utah Criterion-Referenced Test (CRT).<sup>162</sup> The data table that was produced used results from tests administered to students in the 2011/12 and 2012/13 school years.<sup>163</sup>

The table is focused on schools with a population that included at least 5 percent MCCs. This resulted in 9 of DSD’s 88 schools being identified: 7 elementary and 1 each for junior high and high school. Over the two school years

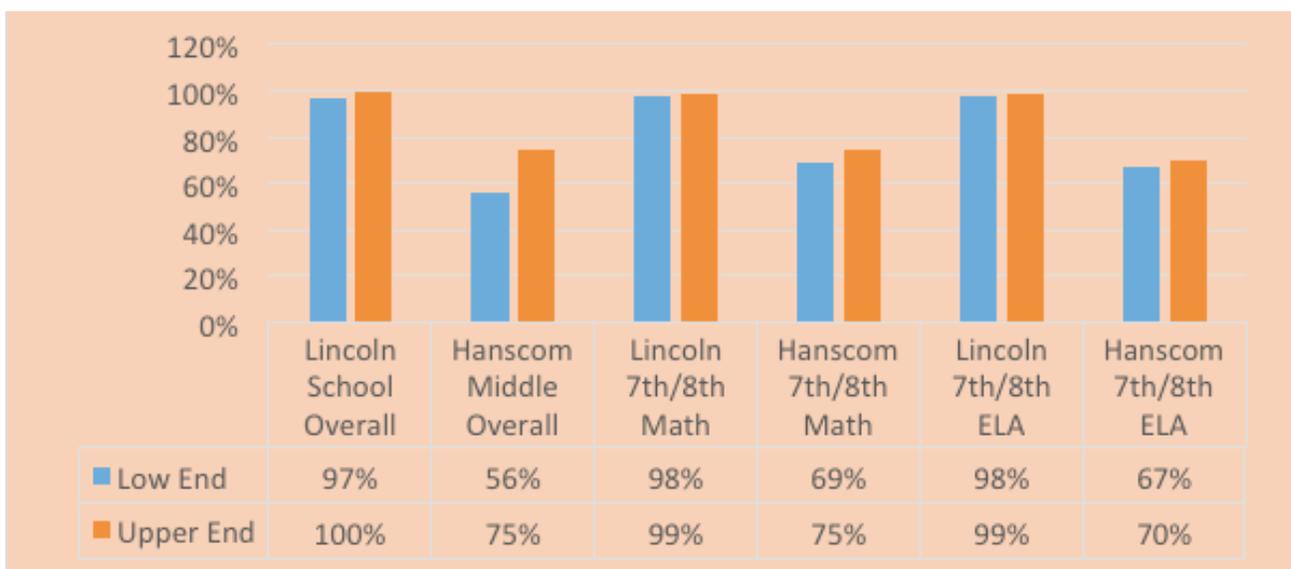
considered, MCCs represented 12 to 13 percent of the combined elementary school population, 12.1 to 13.6 percent of the junior high population, and 6 to 8 percent of the high school population. There was insufficient diversity to run subgroups except on socioeconomic status (SES) and that was done using the Free, Reduced, or Paid Lunch (FRPL) status.<sup>164</sup>

The table that resulted from this study flagged any differences in performance between MCCs and non-MCCs on the CRT where, when considering confidence intervals, such differences

**FIGURE 11. MCAS SCIENCE & TECH/ENG COMPARISON (LPS) (2013)**



**FIGURE 12. AGGREGATE SGP RANGES (A MEASURE OF MOBILITY WITHIN LPS) (2013)**



had statistical significance. From that table a couple relevant observations can be made. In every case, FERPL status was a statistically significant factor in the academic performance of non-MCCs compared to their fellow non-MCC peers who were non-FERPL. This was, however, *never* the case for MCCs, where FERPL status did not result in statistically significant differences in academic performance. This result seems to mirror assertions that when considering SES, higher income may not be the only relevant factor and that families with more stable income, access to more financial and other support resources, more parental involvement in the children's education, and with higher parental education<sup>165</sup> correlate to better performance by children on academic assessments, both national and state-based standardized testing as well as school level grades and placement tests.<sup>166</sup>

When comparing MCCs to non-MCCs at all tested grade levels, there was only one instance where the difference in academic performance of MCCs relative to non-MCCs was statistically significant. It occurred in the assessment for the 2012-2013 school year at the high school level—and it was on the math portions of the CRT. The difference this time: the averages were *higher* for MCCs than their non-MCC peers.<sup>167</sup> In peeling back the potential explanations, one possibility is DoDEA outreach and grant programs. Northridge High School, the high school in the data table, participates in the previously mentioned National Math Science Initiative's AP Training and Incentive Program. As well, the elementary school of the seven with the highest number of MCCs, Hill Field Elementary, as well as the secondary schools from the table, North Layton Junior High and Northridge High School, all received DoDEA Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) grants four of the last five years. Although it cannot be directly validated by the available data, it seems plausible to suggest that the investment towards improving the academic performance of MCCs in STEM is working. It also again suggests that value of tracking MCCs as one or more subgroups.<sup>168</sup>

#### 4. Performance of Homeschooled Students Using Two Comprehensive Studies

While there have been several studies endeavoring to ascertain the academic performance of home educated students relative to national averages, none have identified MCCs as a subgroup. However, briefly reviewing the academic performance of homeschooled students, generally, relative to national averages, can still provide insight into the likely performance of homeschooled MCCs. The two best sources for assessing the academic performance of American homeschooled students are the *Homeschool Progress Report 2009: Academic Achievement and Demographics*, by Dr. Ray of the National Home Education Research Institute and *Home Schooling Works*, completed in 1998, by Dr. Rudner, Director of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation, College of Library and Information Services, University of Maryland.<sup>169</sup>

Rudner's study involved 20 thousand homeschooled students and was paradigm-shifting in that it discovered that homeschooled students, on average, scored about 30 percentile points higher than national averages on the *Iowa Test of Basic Skills*. Even when compared to Catholic/private schools, they performed 15 to 25 percentile points higher. Additionally, when Rudner examined year-to-year gains, he found a gap between homeschooled and public schooled students. While each group experienced gains, the homeschoolers' gain was an average of 3 percentage points more each year, indicating an annually widening achievement gap. As well, students who were homeschooled their entire academic life had higher achievement scores than students who had attended other educational programs. Lastly, nearly one-quarter of the homeschooled students in the study were studying at one or more grade levels about their age-level peers in public and private schools.<sup>170</sup>

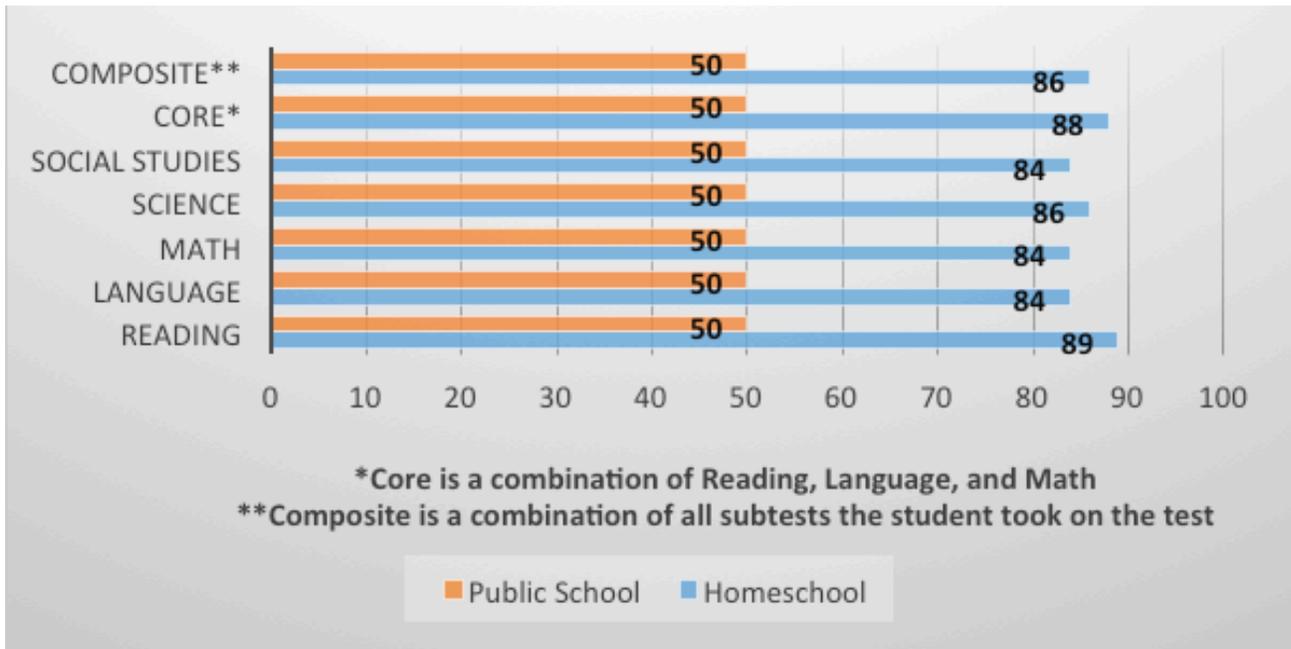
The *Progress Report* is the most comprehensive homeschool academic study completed to date. It drew on the results of 3 different tests, administered by 15 different independent

testing services, involving nearly 12 thousand students, and with representation from all 50 states. The three tests were the *Iowa Test of Basic Skills*, *California Achievement Test*, and *Stanford Achievement Test*. The results again reveal that homeschooled students tend to outperform national averages, but additional insights also revealed that many of the factors that stubbornly thwart advancement in both public and private

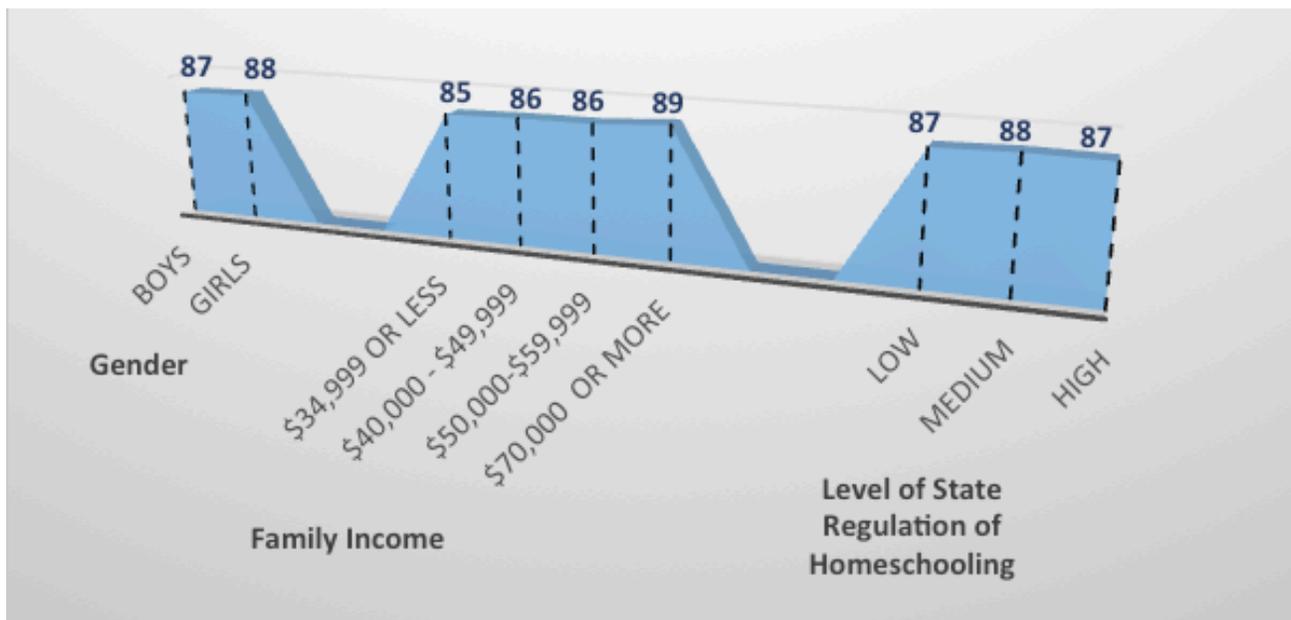
schools seem to have little or no impact on the performance of homeschooled students, as the below charts reveal.

While the education level of the parents did make a noteworthy difference, the performance of homeschooled children where neither parent had a college degree was still significantly above the national average (83rd versus 50th percentile).

**FIGURE 13. HOMESCHOOL & NATIONAL AVERAGE PERCENTILE SCORES**

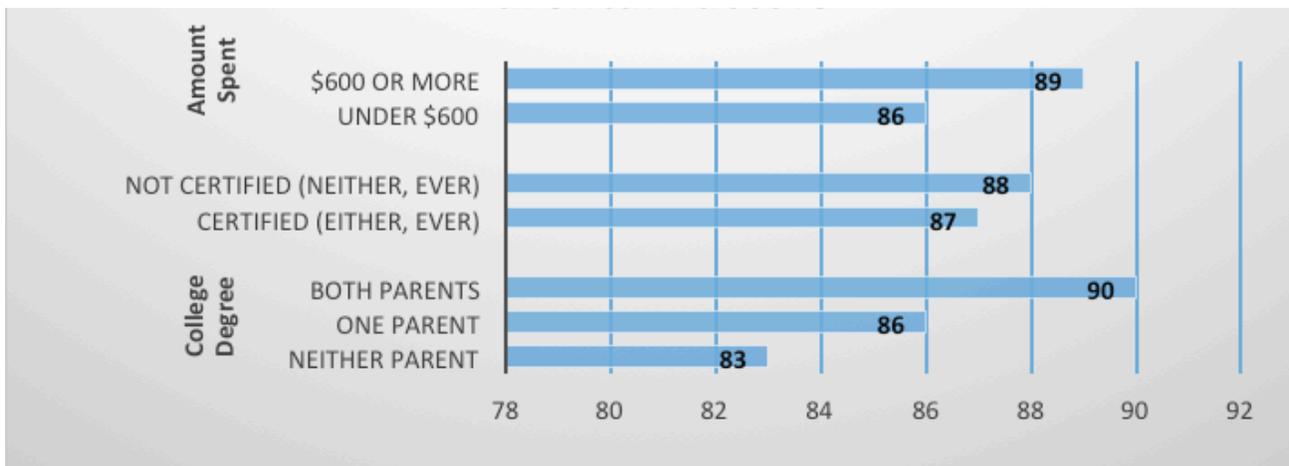


**FIGURE 14. FACTORS HAVING LITTLE IMPACT ON HOMESCHOOL PERCENTILE RANKING**



**TABLE 7. HSLDA DEFINITIONS FOR LEVEL OF STATE REGULATION**

Level of State Regulation	Definition
Low Regulation	No state requirement for parents to initiate any contact or State requires parental notification only
Moderate Regulation	State requires parents to send notification, test scores, and/or professional evaluation of student progress
High Regulation	State requires parents to send notification or achievement test scores and/or professional evaluation, plus other requirements (e.g. curriculum approval by the state, teacher qualification of parents, or home visits by state officials)

**FIGURE 15. IMPACT OF VARIOUS PARENTAL FACTORS ON HOMESCHOOL PERCENTILE RANKINGS**

Whether either or neither parent had ever been certified was insignificant and the amount spent had little impact.

If one extrapolates that these numbers would also be typical for homeschooled MCCs, then there is clearly value in supporting those military families who choose to homeschool, whether they are active duty, guard, or reserve; irrespective of their military service; and whether overseas or stateside.

## V. THE WAY AHEAD: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ASSESSING AND ENHANCING THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF MCCs

A nearly 200-year tradition exists of efforts to support the educational needs of America's MCCs—variable and halting at the start but more rigorous and committed as of late. Many successes have been achieved: Educators, administrators, and policy leaders are more cognizant; targeted grants now supplement general impact aid; more academic resources are available now than ever before; there is greater interest in MCC-focused research; DoDEA and DoD have adopted policies and programs supportive of the parental choice to homeschool;

all 50 states have entered the Compact giving military families even more tools for navigating the challenges of a mobile military lifestyle; though the regulatory burden varies, all 50 states now acknowledge the right of parents to homeschool their children; and there is growing understanding that while MCCs share many of the same experiences, they are far from a monolithic group. Yet, some hurdles remain.

The largest hurdle in terms of assessing the academic performance of MCCs as well as the impact of efforts to improve that performance is the *lack of standardized coding and tracking* of MCCs. At a minimum, coding which identifies the MCC as a member of a singular MCC subgroup, similar to how race or gender or SES is coded, is essential. However, coding that differentiates the military service of the parent(s) (e.g. Army, Navy, etc.) as well as the status of that service (e.g. active duty, Guard, etc.) would be better. Additional stratifications could also be considered, but these few would enable some of the deeper understanding currently sought by researchers and needed by educators, parents, and policy leaders. This coding combined with education program coding (e.g. public, private, homeschool, etc.) would also be informative.

Given the mobility component, as well as the fact that most AD MCCs are preschool and early school age and most standardized testing doesn't begin until the third grade, *longitudinal studies are vital* to any detailed picture of the academic performance of MCCs. Modern communications technologies and innovative research projects can likely overcome the considerable challenges involved in following mobile military families. In fact, there is an ongoing longitudinal study focused on 2 thousand active duty Army and Navy MCCs and there has been a longitudinal analysis of "Military Child Education" in Hawaii.<sup>171</sup> Such efforts must be continued and will benefit not only MCCs but would potentially benefit other children impacted by parental separation and educational interruptions. In both cases—coding and tracking within systems of assessment as well as conducting longitudinal

studies—it will be essential to *maintain strict privacy protocols* and *avoid any tendency to pigeonhole* or establish default "tracks" for students based solely on standardized scores.<sup>172</sup> As well, longitudinal studies should not overlook the impact of deployments and mobilization on MCCs whose parents serve in the Guard or Reserve.

The Compact has just recently attained the full membership of all 50 states and the District of Columbia. However, implementation varies widely. Some military parents and even some military leaders are unaware of its existence. The compact is binding on all public schools in all signatory states, yet it is inconsistently understood and utilized, and sometimes educators and administrators are unaware of their state's participation in it. The military community through SLOs and "Welcome" programs for new arrivals at a base, as well as via orientations for new leaders, must *continue to get the word out*. As well, even though all 50 states are now signatories, military support and advocacy websites should continue to spotlight and discuss the Compact, particularly as implementation continues at different rates in different places. Newer signatory states must *develop their councils* and the State Departments of Education of all the individual states must continue to *educate the educators and administrators* within their state. When possible, discussion and understanding of the Compact should be *a component of teacher preparation programs*, particularly in, but certainly not limited to, the states with the highest numbers of MCCs and largest military populations. It should also be *a recurring part of continuing education* as state and local policies stemming from the Compact evolve and change. Lastly, given the increasing rate of homeschooling generally and the higher participation rate by military families in particular, consideration should be given to using the Compact to smooth transitions for homeschooling families with regard to differing levels of regulation between states and the applicability to non-residents stationed within the

state. This is particularly true given the extremely negligible impact higher government regulation had on the academic performance of homeschool children.

Military advocacy groups, military leadership, and DoDEA should reexamine their prior advocacy for and *immediately withdraw support of Common Core*, particularly in view of the evidence it will not result in increased academic performance for MCCs or future military members and may actually derail highly effective schools, districts, and states.<sup>173</sup> As well, the abandonment and reversal of decisions to participate by many state legislatures and state departments of education should also be considered. Many—if not most—of the concerns about MCCs and mobility that were asserted as justifications for supporting the Common Core can be addressed under the Compact. The Compact enjoys broad support and is aimed at keeping education policy and curriculum decisions at the state and local level while providing a means for accommodating MCCs as they move and as their military parent(s) are deployed. *Keeping decisions and accommodations at the state and local level is a sound policy*<sup>174</sup> and pairs well with the idea that “the best policies and programs to help military families and children are flexible and adaptable rather than rigidly structured.”<sup>175</sup>

Additionally, as discussed earlier, demographics suggest that the majority of MCCs will experience the bulk of their moves at younger ages—either before kindergarten or in the lower grades, when accommodations under the compact will be the easiest. Yet, for older students, *the compact still provides a means for resolving many if not most of the academic and extracurricular challenges* associated with mobility. There is every indication such accommodations will become more common and more systematic now that a structure exists to facilitate them nationwide.

As well, another option that should be considered would be to expand access to the DoDEA Virtual School for older active duty MCCs,

for whom military moves are likely to be the most disruptive to academic success. As stated previously, few older MCCs are currently eligible tuition-free and even fewer (a subset of those in transition from overseas to stateside) with tuition payment. Congress should give serious consideration to expanding access to at least all active duty MCCs of high school age on a tuition basis—and possibly tuition-free for those most subject to mobility requirements, deployments, or frequent moves. This would be in keeping with the DoDEA outreach efforts which helped them positively impact more than 92 percent of MCCs who do not directly attend a DoDEA school.<sup>176</sup>

Congress (and DoD) must remember that educating MCCs is part of the cost of the AVF and must not be treated as a fringe benefit. Additionally, as Congress seeks to update ESEA (aka NCLB), they must *enable at least the singular level coding of MCCs as a subgroup* to help evaluate their academic performance, as discussed earlier. This will assist in getting the best value and making prudent decisions about both targeted grants and general impact aid. Obviously, Congress must move cautiously and circumspectly on any changes to amounts or methodologies in impact aid programs. DoD/DoDEA should continue to target grants to specific situations and goals, but *add in a reporting requirement using MCC coding within available measures of academic performance*.

Finally, it is important to *avoid only focusing on the challenges and hardships* that MCCs often face, as this tends to constitute a “deficit approach” and tends to paint MCCs primarily as victims who are acted upon. Such framing overlooks the remarkable resiliency exhibited by most MCCs as well as the possibility that with transition they can reinvent themselves, dropping bad habits and embracing new roles. Easterbrooks, Ginsburg, and Lerner, writing in *Future of Children*, note “...most military children turn out fine...to better serve military children, we must understand the sources of their strength that help them cope with adversity and thrive. In other words, we must understand their resiliency.”<sup>177</sup>

Such appreciation, study, and understanding of resiliency must also apply to their academic performance.

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**Lieutenant General Rick Lynch** distinguished himself while commanding at all levels throughout his Army career. Whether directly leading 100 soldiers or more than 65,000, and whether managing all U.S. Army installations or leading "The Surge" in Iraq with only six weeks lead time, Lieutenant General Lynch applied insight born from overcoming adversity and achieved exemplary results. With his exceptional leadership experience, demonstrated skills as a strategist, and his ability to connect with leaders from all walks of life, he is highly regarded as both a speaker and author. His new book, *Adapt or Die: Leadership Principles from an American General*, provides unprecedented clarity to leaders on how to gain the confidence needed to lead in our ever-changing world.

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## Endnotes

1. The CSSP analyzes geographic and other data on service members and veterans. This data is utilized by the Veteran's Administration (VA) and various civilian healthcare providers. For more information, please see: Lt. Col. William R. Abb (Ret.), "Citizen Soldier Support Program: CSSP Mapping and Data Center," presentation to the Veterans, Reservists, and Military Families Data and Research Workshop, Washington, September 26, 2012, as cited in Molly Clever and David R. Segal, "The Demographics of Military Children and Families," ed. Sara McLanahan et al., *The Future of Children* 23, no. 2, Military Children and Families (Fall 2013): 29, fn55.
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5. All such "sutling" activities are generally now handled by the three military exchange services: Army Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES), Navy Exchange Service (NEX), and the Marine Corps Exchange Service (MCX). Their separate, unique histories are documented on their separate websites.
6. Scott, *Military Institutes*, 70–72.
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8. See Article 23, Para 192, Regulations for the Army of the United States; See also Lori M. Sekela, "The 19th Century Establishment of Post Libraries," *U.S. Army Military History Institute, United States Army*, last modified May 11, 2009, accessed August 25, 2014, <http://www.army.mil/article/20928/>.
9. Ibid.
10. John Eaton, *Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Year 1880 with Accompanying Papers*, Google eBook Digital Edition. (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1882), CCXLII–CCXLIII, accessed August 7, 2014, <http://books.google.com/books?id=9o0VAAAAIAAJ>; Note that the report for 1879 also confirms some of this information but lacks the tabular data.
11. This position predates the creation of modern U.S. Department of Education (aka "ED") by PL 96-88, which was signed into law by President Carter on 17 October 1979.
12. Using the earliest year available in BLS Inflation Calculator, which is 1913, the value of those items in 2015 would be over \$802,000; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Inflation Calculator," *U.S. Department of Labor: Databases, Tables & Calculators by Subject*, accessed March 24, 2015, [http://www.bls.gov/data/inflation\\_calculator.htm](http://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm).
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21. Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), “About DoDEA.”
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27. Rostker, *I Want You*, 2.
28. President Nixon established the Gates Commission in 1969 to advise him on the viability of the AVF after his campaign pledge to end the draft met with resistance from both DoD and Congress. It concluded unanimously “that the nation’s interests will be better served by an all-volunteer force, supported by an effective standby draft, than by a mixed force of volunteers and conscripts; that steps should be taken promptly to move in this direction; and that the first indispensable step is to remove the present inequity in the pay of men serving their first term in the armed forces.” After contentious Senate wrangling, Nixon signed a new law in September 1971 that extended induction authority two more years, which was anathema to many who wanted a more immediate end to the draft, but which also, in accordance with the Gates Commission recommendations, placed the selective service structure on standby and ultimately ended the draft in January 1973. The new law also increased military pay to more readily induce

military volunteers, another suggestion by the Gates Commission, although significant steps to make military pay competitive would not begin in earnest until the 1980s. President Carter would later issue Presidential Proclamation 4771 on 2 July 1980, under the authority given him by the Military Selective Service Act, reinstating the selective service registration requirement for young men born after 1 January 1960. There would also be Congressional action in 1989 that would order the Selective Service System to establish a system whereby individuals qualified in healthcare or professional occupations could be drafted if Congress were to so order a special skills draft. For more information please see: Gates et al., *Gates Commission Report*, iii; Roger A. Lalich, “Health Care Personnel Delivery System: Another Doctor Draft?” *Wisconsin Medical Journal* 103, no. 1 (2004): 21–24; Rostker, *I Want You*, 3–5.

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30. Especially given the fact that beginning with the advent of the AVF in the 1970s, the majority of soldiers were married. For more details, please see: Clever and Segal, “The Demographics,” 16.
31. “Across the service branches, the military has acted to improve these systems that support service members and their families. These efforts reflect the military’s implicit or explicit belief that children’s wellbeing influences the successful functioning of their service member parents, and that the military’s collective effectiveness depends, now and in the future, on the success of the children and families who serve along with their parents, spouses, and partners.” Ann S. Masten, “Afterword: What We Can Learn from Military Children and Families,” ed. Sara McLanahan et al., *The Future of Children* 23, no. 2, Military Children and Families (Fall 2013): 199.
32. Vivian Greentree et al., *Blue Star Families 2013 Military Family Lifestyle Survey: Comprehensive Report* (Washington, DC: Blue Star Families, Department of Research and Policy, May 1, 2013), 16.
33. For specific details, please see the following: Charles Toth, “DoDEA Schools: The Military’s Global Education System,” *The State Education Standard*, March 2010, 48; Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), “About DoDEA”; Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), “DoDEA History”; Davis and Taft, “Black Book I.”
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  60. For in-depth understanding of Impact Aid as regards MCCs, please see this Rand study: Richard J. Buddin, Brian P. Gill, and Ron W. Zimmer, *Impact Aid and the Education of Military Children*, Digital., Prepared for the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) (Santa Monica, CA: Rand National Defense Research Institute, 2001); For a quick summary view from an LEA perspective, please consult this fact sheet: American Association of School Administrators, "Fact Sheet on Impact Aid," *AASA Toolkit: Supporting the Military Child*, accessed July 8, 2014, <http://www.aasa.org/content.aspx?id=9000>; Please note that an association exists in support of military-focused Impact Aid: Military Impacted Schools Association (MISA), "Impact Aid Law," *MISA...providing for the Needs of Military Children*, accessed July 8, 2014, <http://militaryimpactedschoolsassociation.org/207/impact-aid-law>; For a view of Impact Aid as presented by DoD for military families, please see: Military OneSource, "Impact Aid Program," DoD-Funded website, *Military OneSource: K-12 and College Education*, accessed October 31, 2014,

- [http://www.militaryonesource.mil/k-12-and-college-education?content\\_id=271111](http://www.militaryonesource.mil/k-12-and-college-education?content_id=271111); For a summary of an analysis that suggests perhaps impact aid sometimes overcompensates, please see: Sami Kitmitto et al., *Educational Options and Performance of Military-Connected School Districts Research Study: Final Report* (San Mateo, CA: American Institutes for Research for U.S. Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), May 24, 2011), 7, accessed December 3, 2014, <http://www.militaryk12partners.dodea.edu/docs/2011-air-report.pdf>; Finally, for an excellent summary of how all the various aid programs are potentially benefitting MCCs, please see: Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), *Assistance to Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) for Defense Dependents' Education* (Update), Report to Congress (Alexandria, VA: DoDEA, February 2014), 16–19, 25–29, accessed December 3, 2014, <http://www.dodea.edu/Partnership/upload/Report-to-Congress-2014-Assistance-to-LEAs.pdf>.
61. Tuition is set annually in accordance with the Government Accountability Office guidelines. Current tuition is \$549 per semester unit and includes cost of any required printed materials. Tuition must be made in full prior to beginning a course. If the sponsor is unable to pay by the semester, a request can be made to make payments by the quarter. Requests to make quarterly payments must be arranged in writing, with an explanation of the circumstance. Advance approval by the DVHS Administrative Office is required. For more information, please see: Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), “DoDEA Virtual High School: Domestic Transition Program for Students of Active-Duty Members Moving Stateside,” n.d., accessed April 3, 2015, <http://www.dodea.edu/virtualhs/DV/HS/dvhs/upload/VS.pdf>.
  62. Ibid.; Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), “DoDEA Eligibility.”
  63. William Parry, *Handbook for Garrison Commanders and a Reference for School Superintendents*, Digital. (Harker Heights, TX: Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC), 2008), 48, accessed June 10, 2014, [http://www.militarychild.org/public/upload/files/Handbook\\_for\\_Garrison\\_Commanders.pdf](http://www.militarychild.org/public/upload/files/Handbook_for_Garrison_Commanders.pdf); For additional information on DoD's role, please see: Robert L. Gordon, “The Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children,” DoD Live, last modified September 16, 2011, accessed November 19, 2014, <http://www.dodlive.mil/index.php/2011/09/the-interstate-compact-on-educational-opportunity-for-military-children-2/comment-page-1/>; and please also see: Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), *Assistance to LEAs*, 9.
  64. For a more detailed overview of the legal status of the compact, please see the following articles: Rick Masters, “Enforcement Issues and MIC3,” *MIC3 Newsletter - News, Views, and Transitions*, December 2011, Digital edition, sec. The Legal Brief, 3–4; Rick Masters, “An Important Legal Victory for Interstate Compacts,” *MIC3 Newsletter - News, Views, and Transitions*, December 2012, Digital edition, sec. The Legal Brief, 6; Rick Masters, “The U.S. Supreme Court Reaffirms the Contractual Nature of Compacts,” *MIC3 Newsletter - News, Views, and Transitions*, June 2013, digital edition, sec. The Legal Brief, 6.
  65. National PTA, “The Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children,” *At School*, accessed September 9, 2014, <http://www.pta.org/programs/content.cfm?ItemNumber=3627&RDtoken=32846&userID=>.
  66. Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission (MIC3), “MIC3 FAQ,” *MIC3: Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission*, last modified 2013, accessed June 25, 2014, [http://mic3.net/pages/FAQ/faq\\_indexnew.aspx](http://mic3.net/pages/FAQ/faq_indexnew.aspx).
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  68. For more information about the controversy associated with state adoption of the Common Core, please see the following: AccountabilityWorks, *National Cost of Aligning States and Localities to the Common Core Standards*, Pioneer

- Institute White Paper No. 82, A Pioneer Institute and American Principles Project White Paper (Boston, MA: Pioneer Institute for Public Policy Research, February 2, 2012), <http://pioneerinstitute.org/download/national-cost-of-aligning-states-and-localities-to-the-common-core-standards/>; Center for School Reform, “Claims and Facts about Common Core” (Pioneer Institute for Public Policy Research, n.d.), <http://pioneerinstitute.org/download/claims-and-facts-about-common-core/>; Sandra Stotsky, “Common Core Facts” (Pioneer Institute for Public Policy Research, n.d.), <http://pioneerinstitute.org/download/common-core-facts/>; James Stergios, “Transcript of Testimony to the Utah 2012 Education Interim Committee Concerning Common Core National Standards and Assessments” (Pioneer Institute for Public Policy Research, August 2012), <http://pioneerinstitute.org/download/testimony-to-the-utah-2012-education-interim-committee/>; James Stergios, “Transcript of Testimony to the Kansas House Standing Committee on Education Regarding HB2621” (Pioneer Institute for Public Policy Research, February 2014), <http://pioneerinstitute.org/download/testimony-to-the-kansas-house-standing-committee-on-education/>; James Stergios, “Transcript of Testimony to Missouri Elementary and Secondary Education Committee Regarding HB1490” (Pioneer Institute for Public Policy Research, February 2014), <http://pioneerinstitute.org/download/testimony-to-the-missouri-elementary-and-secondary-education-committee/>; AccountabilityWorks, “Summary: The National Cost of Aligning States and Localities to the Common Core Standards” (Pioneer Institute for Public Policy Research, April 2012), <http://pioneerinstitute.org/download/summary-national-cost-of-aligning-states-and-localities-to-the-common-core-standards/>.
69. Military Interstate Children’s Compact Commission (MIC3), “Common Core State Standards (CCSS)” (Military Interstate Children’s Compact Commission, n.d.), accessed November 18, 2014, <http://mic3.net/documents/CommonCoreStateStandards.pdf>.
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  72. The U.S. Coast Guard, while technically under the Department of Homeland Security, has also created SLO positions. For more information, please see: U.S. Coast Guard, “Office of Work-Life Programs: School Liaison Program,” *Human Resources: Health, Safety, and Work-Life* (CG-11), last modified June 12, 2014, accessed September 19, 2014, [http://www.uscg.mil/worklife/school\\_liaison.asp](http://www.uscg.mil/worklife/school_liaison.asp).
  73. For additional insight into the function and roles of a SLO, please see this study where SLOs were interviewed to help ascertain the challenges faced by MCCs and their parents: Kitmitto et al., *Military-Connected School Districts Research Study*, 46–55.
  74. Note also that through a program funded by the DoD MWR Library Program, the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program, and the Navy General Library Program, MCCs are able to take advantage of the resources of Tutor.com. Although eligibility can vary by military service and component, generally, MCCs and their parent(s) who are part of the Armed Forces (Army, Navy, Air Force, or Marines) and are on active duty or in the National Guard or Reserves or are Wounded Warriors are eligible. Also eligible are children of deployed DoD civilians. Active Duty Coast Guard personnel and their dependents and U.S. Military Veterans and Retirees and their dependents are not eligible. For

- more information, please see: “Free Tutoring Military Family Program – Tutor.com for U.S. Military Families,” *Tutor.com | Learn Better*, accessed June 17, 2014, <http://military.tutor.com/>.
75. National Military Family Association (NMFA), “School Liaison Officers,” Get Info, accessed December 3, 2014, <http://www.militaryfamily.org/get-info/military-kids/education/school-liaison-officers.html>.
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  83. Department of Defense (DoD), *Report on Charter Schools on Military Installations*, Report to Congress (Washington, DC: DoD, August 2012), 5–7, 9, 13, 16, 19, 22, 25, accessed November 3, 2014, <http://www.dodea.edu/Partnership/upload/Charter-Schools-on-Military-Installations-Report-to-Congress.pdf>; See also: Carrie Jasper, ed., “Department Representative Hosts Panel to Discuss Charter Schools on Military Installations,” *Touching Base — U.S. Department of Education Quarterly Newsletter for the Military Community* 4, no. 2 (August 9, 2011), accessed June 17, 2014, <http://www2.ed.gov/news/newsletters/touchingbase/vol4-2.html>.
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  108. Kitmitto et al., *Military-Connected School Districts Research Study*, iii.
  109. Department of Defense (DoD), *Report on Charter Schools on Military Installations*, 11, 15, 18, 20, 24.
  110. As noted earlier, the percentage varied by school with the range of MCCs being 42 to 85 percent of the student population.
  111. This limits the data to those schools and, correspondingly, mostly to active duty MCCs. It would not necessarily adequately consider all MCCs. However, it is a comprehensive study for the datasets incorporated.
  112. Buddin, Gill, and Zimmer, *Impact Aid and the Education of Military Children*, xii–xv, 25–38, 52–58, 60–72, 81–82, 96–98.
  113. All states listed in descending order from largest number of MCCs to least. Note that while the cited guide says fourteen states for Guard and Reserve forces, it only lists thirteen, so only thirteen are noted. For more details, please see: Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC), “A Policy Leaders’ Guide to Military Children,” 41–43.
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  115. The CSSP analyzes geographic and other data on service members and veterans. This data is utilized by the Veteran’s Administration (VA) and various civilian healthcare providers. For more information, please see: Lt. Col. William R. Abb (Ret.), “Citizen Soldier Support Program: CSSP Mapping and Data Center,” presentation to the Veterans, Reservists, and Military Families Data and Research Workshop, Washington, September 26, 2012, as cited in Clever and Segal, “The Demographics,” 29, fn55.
  116. *Ibid.*, 13. Emphasis added.
  117. *Ibid.*, 13, 20–21.

118. The authors additionally note that “because women are more likely to leave the force once they start a family, military men of all races are more likely than military women to have children at home.” *Ibid.*, 23.
119. *Ibid.*, 13–18.
120. NMFA, along with the White House, MCEC, DoD, DoDEA, and numerous organizations and websites, all state an average of 6 to 9 moves K-12. NMFA also asserts an average of 2 moves while in high school. Earlier pre-AVF estimates, stemming from interviews of 80 MCCs born between 1932 and 1964, documented by Wertsch, herself a daughter of an Army officer, establish an average of 9.5 times K-12. However, there were some extremes also, such as 18 to 20 moves K-12 and situations with 4 or more moves in the same school year. For more information, please see: National Military Family Association (NMFA), “Education,” Get Info, accessed October 7, 2014, <http://www.militaryfamily.org/get-info/military-kids/education/>; Mary Edwards Wertsch, *Military Brats: Legacies of Childhood Inside the Fortress*, 1st ed. (New York, NY: Harmony, 1991), 251–252.
121. Note, however, that the U.S. Marine Corps has an emphasis on younger military members so active duty MCCs therein breakout as 47 percent preschool and only 11 percent high school. For more details, please see: Clever and Segal, “The Demographics,” 21.
122. Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC), “A Policy Leaders’ Guide to Military Children,” 38.
123. Clever and Segal, “The Demographics,” 21; Note also that Wertsch’s interviews of largely pre-AVF “military brats” seem to show MCCs of active duty Navy families having fewer school disruptions because the families sometimes chose not to move if the military member was going on ship duty or, alternately, they would move to the duty station where the member was scheduled to report after ship duty. This phenomenon of educational disruption impacting families’ geographic move decisions continues in the AVF as documented in the 2012 Military Family Lifestyle Survey. For more details, please see: Wertsch, *Military Brats*, 230–233; Greentree et al., *2013 Military Family Lifestyle Survey*, 16.
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130. George A. Scott, *Education of Military Dependent Students: Better Information Needed to Assess Student Performance. Report to Congressional Committees*, Report to Congressional Committees (Washington, DC: US Government Accountability Office, March 2011), 16–18, accessed June 5, 2014, <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED516836.pdf>.
131. Note that DoD’s advocacy on this issue, cognizant of MCCs at schools with smaller populations of MCCs, is not merely tied to receipt of Impact Aid as advocated by the GAO and WH reports. For more information, please see: Department of Defense (DoD), “Assign an Identifier for Military Children in Education Data Systems (Issue #9),”

- USA4MilitaryFamilies: Department of Defense and States, Partnering to Support Military Families*, accessed June 25, 2014, [http://www.usa4militaryfamilies.dod.mil/MOS/f?p=USA4:ISSUE:0:::P2\\_ISSUE:9](http://www.usa4militaryfamilies.dod.mil/MOS/f?p=USA4:ISSUE:0:::P2_ISSUE:9).
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136. James H. Shelton, “Appendix IV: Comments from the Department of Education,” in *Education of Military Dependent Students: Better Information Needed to Assess Student Performance*, Report to Congressional Committees: GAO-11-231 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education (ED), 2011), 42, accessed June 5, 2014, <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED516836.pdf>; After the report was released, ED noted, in their “Touching Base” newsletter, that “in the study of 118 of the 154 Impact Aid schools with high concentrations of military students, GAO researchers ... found that fewer than 20 percent of the districts surveyed separately tracked their spending to support military students. None tracked how military students as a group fared at their schools.” Please see: Carrie Jasper, ed., “Touching Base — U.S. Department of Education Quarterly Newsletter for the Military Community” 4, no. 2 (August 9, 2011), accessed June 17, 2014, <http://www2.ed.gov/news/newsletters/touchingbase/vol4-2.html>.
137. Carrie Jasper, ed., “Touching Base — U.S. Department of Education Quarterly Newsletter for the Military Community,” *Touching Base* 6, no. 2 (June 2013), accessed June 6, 2014, <http://www2.ed.gov/news/newsletters/touchingbase/vol6-2.html>.
138. Department of Defense (DoD), “Assign an Identifier for Military Children in Education Data Systems (Issue #9).”
139. For more details, please see the DoDEA press release and both SAT data tables: Frank X. O’Gara and Elaine Kanellis, *DoDEA Announces 2014 SAT Results*, Press Release (Alexandria, VA: Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), October 7, 2014), accessed November 3, 2014, <http://www.dodea.edu/newsroom/pressreleases/20141007.cfm>; The College Board, *SAT Percentile Ranks for 2014 College-Bound Seniors: Critical Reading, Mathematics, and Writing Percentile Ranks by Gender and Ethnic Groups*, SAT Data Tables (New York, NY: The College Board, n.d.), accessed November 24, 2014, <https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/digitalServices/pdf/sat/sat-percentile-ranks-gender-ethnicity-2014.pdf>; The College Board, *SAT Percentile Ranks: 2014 College-Bound Seniors — Critical Reading, Mathematics, and Writing Percentile Ranks*, SAT Data Tables (New York, NY: The College Board, n.d.), accessed November 28, 2014, <https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/digitalServices/pdf/sat/sat-percentile-ranks-crit-reading-math-writing-2014.pdf>.
140. For specifics on scores, please see the test results. For more information about the test, please see the earlier DoDEA press release and the CTB/McGraw Hill Education website: Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), *DoDEA Wide: 2013 TerraNova 3 Scores - All Students, All Subjects*, Test Results (Alexandria, VA: Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), n.d.), accessed June 23, 2014, <http://www.dodea.edu/datacenter/tdSystem.cfm?dodaac=DODEA&year=2013&dId=tn>; Frank X. O’Gara and Elaine Kanellis, *DoDEA’s Students’ TerraNova Scores Remain Higher than National Average*, Press Release (Alexandria, VA: Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), July 28, 2008), accessed June 23, 2014, <http://www.dodea.edu/newsroom/pressreleases/20080728.cfm>; CTB/McGraw-Hill, “TerraNova Multiple Assessments,” *Norm-Referenced Achievement Tests*, accessed June 23, 2014,

<http://www.ctb.com/ctb.com/control/ctbProductViewAction?productFamilyId=449&productId=721&cp=products>.

141. For more information on the NAEP, please see The Nations Report Card website, the most recent DoDEA press release, or the related news article on DoDEA results: National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), “National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP): The Nation’s Report Card,” *Institute of Education Sciences*, accessed July 9, 2014, <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/>; Elaine Kanellis and Frank X. O’Gara, *DoDEA 4th and 8th Grade Students Continue Strong Performance*, Press Release (Alexandria, VA: Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), November 13, 2013), accessed July 24, 2014, <http://www.dodea.edu/newsroom/pressreleases/20131113.cfm>; Jennifer H. Svan, “DoDEA 4th- and 8th-Graders Exceed National Average on Math, Reading Tests,” *Stars and Stripes* (Kaiserslautern, Germany, November 14, 2013), Digital edition, sec. Home > News, accessed August 13, 2014, <http://www.stripes.com/news/dodea-4th-and-8th-graders-exceed-national-average-on-math-reading-tests-1.252835>.
142. Note that there is no way to know whether and how many MCCs participated in the representative samples of other jurisdictions and states. The inclusion of MCCs as a subpopulation in the representative sampling and the use of an MCC identifier code (or multiple MCC Identifier codes to flag differences in service or status) as part of the NAEP would be very helpful. Note also that DoDEA data does not differentiate between the majority population of MCCs and the minority population of children of DoD Civilians enrolled as students (nearly all overseas) which can range from four percent to nearly 18 percent. However, a GAO report suggests that the DoDEA student population consists primarily of MCCs. For more information see the following sources: Clever and Segal, “The Demographics,” 22; Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), “Student Enrollment by Service,” *About DoDEA - Demographics*, accessed January 7, 2015, <http://www.dodea.edu/aboutDoDEA/demographics.cfm>; Larry Horinko et al., *DOD Dependents Schools: Enrollment Categories, Numbers, and Locations*, Report to Congressional Committees (Washington, DC: Government Accountability Office (GAO), September 1995), 2–4, accessed June 19, 2014, <http://www.gao.gov/products/HEHS-95-149>.
143. Kanellis and O’Gara, *DoDEA 4th and 8th Grade Students Continue Strong Performance*; National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), *A First Look: 2013 Mathematics and Reading: NAEP at Grades 4 and 8*, Test Results (Washington, D.C, n.d.), accessed August 14, 2014, <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/pubs/main2013/2014451.aspx>.
144. Kanellis and O’Gara, *DoDEA 4th and 8th Grade Students Continue Strong Performance*; National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), *A First Look: The Nation’s Report Card 2013*.
145. Kanellis and O’Gara, *DoDEA 4th and 8th Grade Students Continue Strong Performance*; National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), *A First Look: The Nation’s Report Card 2013*; Svan, “DoDEA 4th- and 8th-Graders Exceed National Average on Math, Reading Tests.”
146. Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), “DoDEA’s Mission and Vision,” *Community Strategic Plan*, last modified 2013, accessed July 18, 2014, <http://dodea.edu/CSP/missionAndVision.cfm>.
147. For more information, please see: Wertsch, *Military Brats*, 254–256.
148. In fact, sometimes it is tight at the eighth grade level. Leesa Rompre, “Telephone Discussion with Leesa Rompre, Assessment & Accountability Branch, DoDEA HQ,” interview by Bruce Wykes, Telephone, June 17, 2014.
149. Note also that LPS employs a “Parent Ambassador” on the Hanscom campus “to facilitate a collaborative relationship between families and the schools” and to work “to increase and improve parent/family and community involvement, provide information in order to encourage participation in the school activities, welcomes arriving families to Hanscom, and assists in the school registration process.” As well, the Parent Ambassador on Hanscom “contacts parents to encourage them to serve on committees” while also attending events on base as a representative of LPS. For more information on the Lincoln Public Schools or the Parent Ambassador program, please see the following sources: “Lincoln Public Schools Student & Parent Handbook (2012-2013),” July 2012, accessed August 19, 2014, <http://www.lincnet.org/cms/lib05/MA01001239/Centricity/shared/district/LPSStudentParentHandbook1213.pdf>; Lincoln Public Schools, “Mission Statement and Core Values,” *Welcome and Homepage*, 19–20, accessed July 17, 2014,

<http://www.lincnet.org/Page/1>.

150. "Lincoln Public Schools Student & Parent Handbook (2012-2013)," 13; To view a sample Parent/Guardian Report, please see: *Sample Spring 2014 MCAS Tests Parent/Guardian Report*, Blank Parent/Guardian Report, Massachusetts 2014 MCAS Individual Student Report to Parents/Guardians (Boston, MA: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE), 2014), accessed December 23, 2014, <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/2014/pgguide/g3-8-10English.pdf>.
151. Reports can be obtained via a query tool on the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as well as by way of media outlets: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE), "School and District Profiles," *Search for Your Report Card*, accessed October 7, 2014, <http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/>; The Boston Globe, "Lincoln Public Schools 2013 MCAS Results," Boston.com, accessed October 22, 2014, <http://www.boston.com/news/special/education/mcas/scores13/results/lincoln.html>.
152. Bruce Wykes to Rebecca McFall, "Case Study on the Academic Performance of Military-Connected Children," August 26, 2014; Rebecca McFall to Bruce Wykes, "Case Study on the Academic Performance of Military-Connected Children," September 22, 2014; Rebecca McFall, "LPS as a Case Study on the Academic Performance of Military-Connected Children," interview by Bruce Wykes, Telephone, September 25, 2014.
153. Note, however, that in conversations with education leaders at several different schools, it was suggested that changes in attendance reporting that link military status to a student identification number might now enable the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to do statewide and district studies, even longitudinal ones for as long as the student participated in MCAS, on the academic performance of MCCs as a subpopulation.
154. This exact verbiage is from an actual report card such as this one: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE), *2013 Report Card - Hanscom Middle*, Full Report, Massachusetts 2013 MCAS School and District Profiles (Boston, MA: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE), 2013), 24, accessed October 7, 2014, [http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/pdf/-reportcard-rc.aspx\(6\).pdf](http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/pdf/-reportcard-rc.aspx(6).pdf); For more information on the SGP, please see: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE), "Massachusetts Student Growth Percentiles - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)," *Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS)*, accessed January 7, 2015, <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/growth/faq.html?section=technical>.
155. This exact verbiage is from an actual report card such as this one: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE), *2013 Report Card - Hanscom Middle*, 24; For more information on the SGP, please see: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE), "Massachusetts Student Growth Percentiles - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)."
156. The SGP is not calculated at the primary school level. To see a comparison of Lincoln School and Hanscom Middle, please see: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE), *2013 Report Card - Lincoln School*, Full Report, Massachusetts 2013 MCAS School and District Profiles (Boston, MA: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE), 2013), accessed October 7, 2014, [http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/pdf/-reportcard-rc.aspx\(7\).pdf](http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/pdf/-reportcard-rc.aspx(7).pdf); Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE), *2013 Report Card - Hanscom Middle*.
157. Note that the "Warning" category is technically "Warning/Failure" with warning applying to grades three thru eight and "Failure" applying to high school grades. Since LPS does not have high school grades, only the "Warning" portion was used. For more information on MCAS achievement level definitions, please see: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE), "MCAS Achievement Level Definitions," *Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System*, last modified May 1, 2013, accessed January 7, 2015, <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/tdd/pld/>.

158. Because achievement levels percentages in the MCAS district and school reports are not calculated for subgroups with fewer than ten students, subgroup information was not consistently available for comparison, which necessitated using only overall population achievement level percentages for comparisons. For more details, please see: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE), *2013 Report Card - Hanscom Middle*, 2; Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE), *2013 Report Card - Lincoln School*, 2; Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE), *2013 Report Card - Hanscom Primary*, Full Report, Massachusetts 2013 MCAS School and District Profiles (Boston, MA: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE), 2013), 2, accessed October 7, 2014, [http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/pdf/-reportcard-rc.aspx\(10\).pdf](http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/pdf/-reportcard-rc.aspx(10).pdf).
159. Remembering again the inability to have a true “apples to apples” comparison given the limits of the publically available reports, but operating on the understanding that Hanscom schools are nearly all MCCs and Lincoln School is nearly all non-MCCs.
160. There is no SGP computed for the Science and Tech/Eng portion. For more information please see: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE), *2013 Report Card - Hanscom Primary*; Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE), *2013 Report Card - Lincoln School*.
161. Logan Toone, “Data Request Inquiry on the Academic Performance of MCCs,” interview by Bruce Wykes, Telephone, September 24, 2014; Logan Toone to Bruce Wykes, “Re: Request for De-Identified, Existent Data to Assess the Academic Performance of Military-Connected Children (with Attached Request Form and Statement of Intent),” September 25, 2014; Logan Toone, “Committee Disapproval of Request,” interview by Bruce Wykes, Telephone, October 3, 2014; Logan Toone, “Committee Decision and Aggregated CRT Data Table,” interview by Bruce Wykes, Voicemail, October 7, 2014; Logan Toone, “Follow up on Committee Decision and Aggregated CRT Data Table,” interview by Bruce Wykes, Voicemail, October 9, 2014; Logan Toone, “Follow up on Committee Decision and Aggregated CRT Data Table,” interview by Bruce Wykes, Voicemail, October 15, 2014; Logan Toone, “Follow up on Committee Decision and Aggregated CRT Data Table,” interview by Bruce Wykes, Voicemail, October 22, 2014.
162. Utah has recently adopted the Student Assessment of Growth and Excellence (SAGE) in place of the CRT, but the SAGE is too new to provide meaningful analysis and data restrictions required use of existing aggregate data.
163. Logan Toone to Bruce Wykes, “Re: Request for De-Identified, Existent Data to Assess the Academic Performance of Military-Connected Children,” December 12, 2014; Logan Toone, “Aggregate CRT Data and Academic Performance of MCCs,” interview by Bruce Wykes, Telephone, January 6, 2014.
164. Toone to Wykes, “Re: Request for De-Identified, Existent Data to Assess the Academic Performance of Military-Connected Children”; Toone, “Aggregate CRT Data and Academic Performance of MCCs”; Logan Toone, “Follow Up on Aggregate CRT Data and Academic Performance of MCCs,” interview by Bruce Wykes, Telephone, January 7, 2014.
165. Military culture tends to emphasize both technical/vocation and academic education and at some locations and/or in some circumstances, scholarships and assistance are even available to non-military spouses.
166. For a scholarly treatment of this topic, please see: Wayne J. Camara and Amy Elizabeth Schmidt, *Group Differences in Standardized Testing and Social Stratification*, Research Report (New York, NY: College Entrance Examination Board, 1999), 8–13, accessed November 7, 2015, <http://research.collegeboard.org/sites/default/files/publications/2012/7/researchreport-1999-5-group-differences-standardized-testing-social-stratification.pdf>.
167. Toone to Wykes, “Re: Request for De-Identified, Existent Data to Assess the Academic Performance of Military-Connected Children”; Toone, “Aggregate CRT Data and Academic Performance of MCCs”; Toone, “Follow Up on Aggregate CRT Data and Academic Performance of MCCs.”
168. Toone, “Follow Up on Aggregate CRT Data and Academic Performance of MCCs”; Department of Defense

- Education Activity (DoDEA), “DoDEA Grantees > Utah,” *Military K-12 Partners | Evaluation Technical Assistance Center (ETAC)*, accessed June 25, 2014, <http://www.dodk12grants.org/grantees.aspx>.
169. Brian D. Ray, *Homeschool Progress Report 2009: Academic Achievement and Demographics*, Commissioned through National Home Education Research Institute, Salem, OR (Purcellville, VA: Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA), 2009), accessed March 25, 2015, [http://www.hslda.org/docs/study/ray2009/2009\\_Ray\\_StudyFINAL.pdf](http://www.hslda.org/docs/study/ray2009/2009_Ray_StudyFINAL.pdf); Michael Farris and Lawrence M. Rudner, “Home Schooling Works--Pass It On!,” Online Press Conference, March 23, 1999, accessed March 25, 2015, <http://www.hslda.org/docs/study/rudner1999/HSWorksAudioTranscript.pdf>.
170. Ian Slatter, “New Nationwide Study Confirms Homeschool Academic Achievement” (Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA), August 10, 2009), accessed March 25, 2015, <http://www.hslda.org/docs/news/200908100.asp>; Farris and Rudner, “Home Schooling Works--Pass It On!,” 2–3.
171. For more information on either, please check their respective websites that follow. For more general information about longitudinal studies, please see the Chandra and London article: Blum et al., *The Military Child Education in Hawaii Study (aka The Longitudinal Study of Military Child Education in Hawaii): Final Report*; Military Child Initiative (MCI), “The Longitudinal Study of Deployment and Military Families”; Chandra and London, “Unlocking Insights,” 187–197 (esp 194–195).
172. For more information on legitimate uses of student data and the threats posed by national systems of collection of student data, please see this Pioneer White Paper and the associated press release: Emmett McGroarty, Joy Pullmann, and Jane Robbins, *Cogs in the Machine: Big Data, Common Core, and National Testing*, Pioneer Institute White Paper No. 114 (Boston, MA: Pioneer Institute for Public Policy Research, May 2014), <http://pioneerinstitute.org/download/cogs-in-the-machine-big-data-common-core-and-national-testing/>; *Study Finds That New Technology, Relaxation of Protections Threaten Student Privacy*, Press Release (Boston, MA: Pioneer Institute for Public Policy Research, May 22, 2014), <http://pioneerinstitute.org/featured/study-new-technology-relaxation-of-protections-threaten-student-privacy/>.
173. While not accepting funding from interested parties, Pioneer Institute has commissioned—from the most highly qualified scholars and experts in the country—and subsequently published an extensive library of peer reviewed and often nationally cited documents pertaining to Common Core and specific curriculum areas (such as history, poetry, math, ELA), state and local control of education policy and curriculum, costs of implementation, legality, quality, etc. Included in this collection is testimony given by Pioneer before committees of several state legislatures. For more information, please see: “Document Library > Common Core,” *Pioneer Institute*, sec. Common Core, <http://pioneerinstitute.org/document-library/>.
174. For more information on the challenges to state and local autonomy over K-12 education, please see: Robert Scott, *A Republic of Republics: How Common Core Undermines State and Local Autonomy over K-12 Education*, Pioneer Institute White Paper No. 102 (Boston, MA: Pioneer Institute for Public Policy Research, September 2013), <http://pioneerinstitute.org/download/a-republic-of-republics-how-common-core-undermines-state-and-local-autonomy-over-k-12-education/>.
175. Clever and Segal, “The Demographics,” 13; For a look at opposition to Common Core’s “one-size-fits-all” approach, please see: Sandra Stotsky and Ze’ev Wurman, *The Emperor’s New Clothes*, Pioneer Institute White Paper No. 61 (Boston, MA: Pioneer Institute for Public Policy Research, May 2010), <http://pioneerinstitute.org/download/the-emperors-new-clothes/>.
176. For more information on the John Warner NDAA for Fiscal Year 2007, see Section III. B. Capitalizing on and Expanding DoDEA’s Successes.
177. M. Ann Easterbrooks, Kenneth Ginsburg, and Richard M. Lerner, “Resilience Among Military Youth,” ed. Sara McLanahan et al., *The Future of Children* 23, no. 2, Military Children and Families (Fall 2013): 99.







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