2020

EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF MILITARY–CONNECTED STUDENTS

Annual Report

SC EDUCATION
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Reporting facts. Measuring change. Promoting progress.

Educational Performance of Military-Connected Students, 2020

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Introduction

June 13, 2020

In 2014, the General Assembly passed Act 289, the Military Family Quality of Life Enhancement Act. The Act's purpose is to "enhance quality of life issues for members of the armed forces" (Act 289 Preamble). Part V requests the SC Education Oversight Committee (EOC) to develop an annual report on the educational performance of military-connected children:

> The Education Oversight Committee, working with the State Board of Education, is directed to establish a comprehensive annual report concerning the performance of military connected children who attend primary, elementary, middle, and high schools in this State. The comprehensive annual report must be in a reader-friendly format, using graphics wherever possible, published on the state, district, and school websites, and, upon request, printed by the school districts. The annual comprehensive report must address at least attendance, academic performance in reading, math, and science, and graduation rates of military connected children.[1]

The EOC evaluation team worked closely with the military and education community as it developed this report. Professionals, who directly support military families, provided input. Both the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) and Defense Manpower Data Center provided data. The 2020 report provides:

- An overview of the federal Impact Aid program.
- Details regarding the demographics of military-connected students.
- An update on the academic performance and school attendance of military-connected students as reported for school year 2018-19; and
- A summary of the trainings for educators and families to enhance support of military-connected students at home and in school.

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[1] Section 59-18-900(H) of the South Carolina Code of Laws.

Acknowledgements

Summary of Findings

1. Data reported by the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) regarding military-connected students are based on district entry of student information into PowerSchool. As a state, South Carolina's reporting of the number of military-connected students has improved over time. Data provided by the SCDE to the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) indicate there were 16,515 military-connected students in South Carolina's public schools in school year 2018-19. Almost 74 percent of military-connected students have at least one parent who is active duty, a slight increase from the prior school year.

2. Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires the identification and collection of military-connected student data, and South Carolina has an established mechanism for collecting this information. SCDE manages PowerSchool, the student data information system that is provided to school districts. It is the primary source for student data and is often used for state and federal reporting requirements. In PowerSchool, a "Parent Military Status" field includes a list with seven possible student status options, as shown in below.

Military-Connected Student Data Collected in PowerSchool, as of May 13, 2020[2]

Values
(blank) – Neither Parent nor Guardian is serving in any military service.
01 - A Parent or Guardian is serving Full-time in the National Guard and is not currently deployed.
02 - A Parent or Guardian is serving Full-time in the Reserves and is not currently deployed.
03 - A Parent or Guardian is serving Full-time in the National Guard and is currently deployed.
04 - A Parent or Guardian is serving Full-time in the Reserves and is currently deployed.
05 - A Parent or Guardian is serving in the military on active duty and is not deployed.
06 - A Parent or Guardian is serving in the military on active duty and is currently deployed.

In response to ESSA, the SCDE provides more detailed academic performance data on military-connected students that can be disaggregated by gender, economic status, English learner status, disability status, gender, homeless status, gifted and talented status, and foster care status.

3. Of the 16,515, military-connected students reported by school districts to SCDE in school year 2018-19 approximately 83 percent of the students attended one of the eleven school districts listed in the table below. Appendix B provides additional detail for all school districts.

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[2] SC State Reporting Updates, Update dated May 13, 2020. Accessed at
https://ed.sc.gov/data/information-systems/power-school/sc-state-reporting-updates/.

Districts with Highest Military-Connected Student Populations, School Year 2018-19

District	Students	Percent
Richland 2	4,101	24.83
Horry	1,793	10.86
Dorchester 2	1,521	9.21
Beaufort	1,360	8.23
Berkley	1,075	6.51
Lexington 1	1,041	6.30
Sumter	846	5.12
Kershaw	693	4.20
Lexington 5	570	3.45
Aiken	409	2.48
SC Public Charter School District	371	1.61
Total	**13,780**	**82.80**

Source: SC Department of Education, February 2020 data provided to EOC.

4. Approximately 1,632 military-connected students had at least one parent who was deployed in school year 2019, representing an increase from 2018. In addition, 82 military-connected students were reported to have a parent who was on active duty but died within the last year. Another 591 military-connected students have a parent who was on active duty and wounded in 2019. While this category is a small percentage of the total number of military-connected students, the number of military-connected students with a parent who was wounded in 2019, is 46 percent greater than in 2017. About 74 percent of military-connected students have at least one guardian or parent who is on active duty or deployed.

5. Military-connected students continue to perform better than their peers (tested students of their same age and grade level) on state-administered standardized tests. The performance of military-connected students, as compared to their peers, is most significant in third through fifth grades. For example, during the 2018-19 school year in English language arts, 63.9 percent of third grade military-connected students scored Meets or Exceeds Expectations on SC READY as compared to 49.1 percent of their peers who scored Meets or Exceeds Expectations. In mathematics, 71.9 percent of military-connected third graders scored Meets or Exceeds Expectations, and 57.1 percent of their peers scored Meets or Exceeds Expectations, representing a 14.8 percent difference.

6. During the 2018-19 school year, military-connected students outperformed all students statewide on the End-of-Course Examination Program exams (Algebra 1, English 1), but the gap between military-connected students and all students is closing. On average, military-connected students' mean scores were 3.2 points higher; in the prior year, the military-connected students' mean scores were higher by 3.8 points. Biology End-of-Course Examination Program scores were not reported for 2018-19.

7. During the 2018-19 school year, the high school graduation rate for military-connected students was 86.9 percent, down from 94.1 percent in 2017-18. The state on-time graduation rate was 87.6 percent, up from 81 percent in 2017-18.

8. During the 2019-20 school year, the South Carolina Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) was relocated to the Division of Veterans Affairs and Department of Commerce(budget). School liaison officers continue to provide support and guidance about workshop content and family enrichment offerings to military-connected families.

I. Recent Developments

Identification and Collection of Military-Connected Student Data

In December 2015, changes to Impact Aid and the identification of military-connected students were enacted due to the congressional passage of Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Under ESSA, the disaggregation of student-level data is required, including the identification, collection and reporting of military-connected students. ESSA also addresses Impact Aid. Funding authorization for Impact Aid remains stagnant. However, some changes to Impact Aid were made:

- technical and formula changes to federal properties that have already reduced program subjectivity and increased timeliness of payments were made permanent.

- the federal properties "lockout" provision that prevented eligible federally impacted school districts from accessing Impact Aid funding was eliminated.

- the basic support formula was adjusted to ensure equal proration when appropriations are sufficient to fund the Learning Opportunity Threshold; and

- a "hold harmless" provision was included to provide budget certainty to school districts facing a funding cliff or significant changes to their federally connected student enrollment.[3]

ESSA requires the state identification, collection and reporting of military-connected students in Title I, Part A, Section 1011:

"(ii) For all students and disaggregated by each subgroup of students described in subsection (b)(2)(B)(xi), homeless status, status as a child in foster care, and status as a student with a parent who is a member of the Armed Forces (as defined in section 101(a)(4) of title 10, United States Code) on active duty (as defined in section 101(d)(5) of such title), information on student achievement on the academic assessments described in subsection (b)(2) at each level of achievement, as determined by the State under subsection (b)(1).[4]

This federal requirement will provide more consistent, easily identifiable data regarding military-connected students with a parent on active duty. As student identification improves, additional supports may be put into place to assist students who live with perpetual challenges presented by frequent moves, parental and sibling deployments, and transitions that include reintegration and dealing with profoundly changed parents. The well-being of these children depends heavily

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[3] National Conference of State Legislatures, "Summary of Every Student Succeeds Act, Legislation Reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act." May be accessed at: http://www.ncsl.org/documents/capitolforum/2015/onlineresources/summary_12_10.pdf.
[4] Every Student Succeeds Act. More information may be accessed at: https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/index.html.

on a network of supportive adults who are trained to identify early signs of emotional or physical challenge.

SC Collection of Military-Connected Student Data

ESSA requires the identification and collection of military-connected student data. South Carolina has an established mechanism for collecting this information. The SC Department of Education (SCDE) manages PowerSchool, the student data information system that is provided to school districts. It is the primary source for student data and is often used for state and federal reporting requirements. Student level data are input, validated and maintained by local school districts. The data are then transferred (pushed from districts) electronically to the SCDE through the Enrich Data Collection Tool. In PowerSchool, a "Parent Military Status" field includes a list with seven possible student status options, as shown in Table 1 below.[5] This field remains unchanged since the 2015 EOC report on military-connected students. In the PowerSchool Data Collection Manual for January-February 2018 SCDE emphasizes "verifying all foster, homeless, migrant or military-connected students are data accurately indicate their status. If any student meets the definition at any point during the school year, that student should be counted for the entire year."[6]

In response to ESSA, the SCDE provides more detailed academic performance data on military-connected students that can be disaggregated by gender, economic status, English learner status, disability status, gender, homeless status, gifted and talented status, and foster care status.

Data reported by SCDE regarding military-connected students are based on district entry of student information into this field. As noted earlier in this report, districts may also receive federal Impact Aid funding for students who have at least one parent who is federally connected.

The October 25, 2018 update to PowerSchool modified Parent Military Status. Now only students of active or full-time military parents should be coded. The choice set reflects this change. This field determines student's status for the "Military Connected" accountability subgroup in Table 1 below.[7]

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[5] SC Department of Education, "PowerSchool Data Collection Manual, Fall 2016-17," p. 127. May be accessed at: http://www.ed.sc.gov/data/information-systems/power-school-administration/powerschool-manuals-for-s-c-pages/powerschool-data-collection-manual-2016-2017/.

[6] SC Department of Education, "PowerSchool Data Collection Manual, January-February 2018," p. 7. May be accessed at: https://ed.sc.gov/scdoe/assets/File/DataCollectionSched/SC_PS_Data%20Collection-Specific_Fields_Combo%202017-18%20Winter%20Final.pdf, p. 145.

[7] SC State Reporting Updates, Update dated October 25, 2018. Accessed at https://ed.sc.gov/data/information-systems/power-school/sc-state-reporting-updates/.

Table 1
Military-Connected Student Data Collected in PowerSchool

Values
(blank) – Neither Parent nor Guardian is serving in any military service.
01 - A Parent or Guardian is serving Full-time in the National Guard and is not currently deployed.
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05 - A Parent or Guardian is serving in the military on active duty and is not deployed.
06 - A Parent or Guardian is serving in the military on active duty and is currently deployed.

II.   Demographics of Military-Connected Students

National, state, and local district collection of military-connected student data continues to be inconsistent. ESSA requires the disaggregation of student-level data, including military-connected students. When this requirement is fully implemented, data collection should become more consistent and accurate.

Number of Military-Connected Students

Data related to military-connected students are collected and reported by districts in PowerSchool. Table 2 below shows 2019 data provided by SC Department of Education in February 2020 (for 2017 through 2019 school years) and includes National Guard, Reserves, and active duty military personnel. Approximately 1,632 military-connected students had at least one parent who was deployed in school year 2019, representing an increase of 84-students from 2018. In addition, 82 military-connected students were reported to have a parent who was on active duty but died within the last year. Another 591 military-connected students have a parent who was on active duty and wounded in 2019. While this category is a small percentage of the total number of military-connected students, the number of military-connected students with a parent who was wounded in 2019, is 46 percent greater than in 2017. About 74 percent of military-connected students have at least one guardian or parent who is on active duty or deployed.

There was significant improvement in district reporting of military-connected students from 2016-17 to 2018-19 school years. Families and educators need to continue assisting with the reporting of this data, so district and school staff can identify students who may need additional support services. Military-connected students live with perpetual challenges presented by frequent moves, parental and sibling deployments, and additional transitions that include reintegration and dealing with profoundly changed parents. The well-being of these children depends heavily on a network of supportive adults who are trained to identify early signs of emotional, physical, and academic challenges.

Table 2
Military-Connected Students,
by Parental Military Branch and Deployment Status, 2017-19 School Years

Military Connection	School Year 2017		School Year 2018		School Year 2019	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
National Guard - Not Deployed	1,839	13.08%	2,116	14.64%	2631	15.93%
Reserves - Not Deployed	1,628	11.57%	1,784	12.34%	2075	12.56%
National Guard – Deployed	315	2.24%	326	2.26%	506	3.06%
Reserves – Deployed	168	1.19%	227	1.57%	295	1.79%

Military Connection	School Year 2017		School Year 2018		School Year 2019	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Active Duty Military - Not Deployed	8,837	62.83%	8,530	59.01%	9,314	56.40%
Active Duty Military – Deployed	954	6.78%	997	6.90%	1021	6.18
Active Duty Military - Deceased in last year	49	0.35%	62	0.43%	82	.50
Active Duty Military - Wounded in last year	275	1.96%	414	2.86%	591	3.58
Subtotal Active Duty		10,115	10,003		11,008	
Total	14,070		14,456		16,515	

Source: SC Department of Education, data reported to EOC.

Of the 16,515 military-connected students reported by school districts to SCDE, approximately 83 percent of the students attend one of the eleven school districts listed in Table 3. Appendix B provides additional detail for all school districts. South Carolina's largest military installations are in Charleston, Beaufort, Richland, and Sumter counties.

The Charleston Air Force Base and the Naval Weapons Station in Goose Creek comprise Joint Base Charleston (JB CHS). The installation covers almost 24,000 acres, and includes: three seaports, two civilian-military airfields, 39 miles of rail, and 22 miles of coastline. The Charleston Air Force Base Houses C-17 aircraft, and is home to the 437th Air Base Wing, the 628th Air Base Wing, and the 315th Air Wing. The Naval Weapons Station houses several programs, including the Navy's Nuclear Power Training Program, the Naval Information Warfare Center (NIWC) Atlantic, and several other tenant commands. The Naval Health Clinic, and the Air Force Military Treatment Facility, provide many medical services for military members and their families. The base is host to more than 60 Department of Defense and Federal agencies and is associated with approximately 50,000 jobs. The installation provides $3.6 billion in labor income, and an economic impact of $8.7 billion per year.

Both the Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort and Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island/Eastern Recruiting Region are in Beaufort County. Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, home of the Marine Corps' Atlantic Coast fixed-wing, fighter-attack aircraft assets, is in the heart of the South Carolina Lowcountry and is among the United States military's most important and most historically colorful installations. Consisting of some 7,000 acres 70 miles southwest of Charleston, South Carolina on Highway 21, the installation is home to five Marine Corps F/A- 18 squadrons and one F-35B

Fleet Replacement Squadron. Two versions of the F/A-18 Hornet are found aboard MCAS Beaufort, the F/A-18C Hornet and the F/A-18D Hornet. The F-35B squadron is also the only location in the world where pilots train to fly the F-35B. The squadron also trains the United Kingdom's future F-35B pilots and maintainers. The Marine Corps Recruit Depot is located on Parris Island and is one of the most visited military facilities in the world, hosting more than 120,000 guests each year. It is the headquarters of the Eastern Recruiting Region and for recruit training for all females and males east of the Mississippi River.

Fort Jackson and Shaw Air Force Base are in the Midlands. Located in Richland County, Fort Jackson is the Army's main production center for Basic Combat Training. Approximately 50 percent of the Army's Basic Combat Training is completed at Fort Jackson, with more than 48,000 basic training and 12,000 additional advanced training Soldiers every year. Fort Jackson is home to the U.S. Army Soldier Support Institute, the Armed Forces Army Chaplaincy Center and School, the National Center for Credibility Assessment (formerly the Department of Defense Polygraph Institute, and the Drill Sergeant School, which trains all Active Duty and Reserve instructors.

Shaw Air Force Base in Sumter County is home to Air Force's largest combat F-16 wing, the 20th Fighter Wing. Shaw also serves as home to Headquarters Ninth Air Force, U.S. Air Forces Central, Third Army, U.S. Army Central and many other tenant units.[8]

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[8] Information regarding South Carolina's military installations gathered from military installation websites and school liaison officers.

Table 3
Districts with Highest Military-Connected Student Populations,
School Years 2017-18 and 2018-2019

School Year 2017-18			School Year 2018-19		
District	**Students**	**Percent**	**District**	**Students**	**Percent**
Richland 2	4,011	27.75	Richland 2	4101	24.83
Dorchester 2	1,593	11.25	Dorchester 2	1521	9.21
Horry	1,575	11.22	Horry	1793	10.86
Beaufort	1,176	8.14	Beaufort	1,360	8.23
Berkeley	1,062	7.35	Berkeley	1,075	6.51
Lexington 1	981	6.79	Lexington 1	1,041	6.30
Sumter	702	4.86	Sumter	846	5.12
Kershaw	599	4.14	Kershaw	693	4.20
Lexington 5	551	3.81	Lexington/Richland 5	570	3.45
SC Public Charter School District	335	2.32	SC Public Charter School District	371	2.25
Anderson 1	213	1.47	Aiken	409	1.47
Total	**12,698**	**87.85**	**Total**	**12,705**	**82.65**

Source: SC Department of Education, data reported to EOC.

This section provides academic and attendance data for military-connected students for school year 2018-19 including:

- student achievement as measured by SC READY for third through eighth grades in English language arts and mathematics.

- student achievement as measured by SC PASS on science for students in grades 4, 6 and 8.

- student achievement as measured by the End-Of-Course Examination Program (EOCEP).

- high school graduation rates; and

- student attendance.

Academic Data

The academic achievement of military-connected students was compared to the academic achievement of all students in South Carolina, including students in third through eighth grades on SC READY for English language arts (ELA) and mathematics and SC PASS for science for students in grades 4, 6 and 8 For high school students, student performance on the South Carolina End-of-Course Evaluation Program (EOCEP) was considered.

Student Achievement in Grades Three through Eight

The EOC analyzed student achievement in school year 2018-19 in grades 3 through 8 in English language arts, mathematics, and science. According to the South Carolina Department of Education's website,

> The South Carolina College-and Career-Ready Assessments (SC READY) are statewide assessments in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics that measure the academic progress of students against the measure whether students that will meet all of the requirements of Acts 155 and 200, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), and the Assessments Peer Review guidance.[9]

> The South Carolina Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (SCPASS) is a statewide assessment administered to students in grades four, six, and eight for science and grades five and seven for social studies. All students in these grade levels are required to take the SCPASS except those who qualify for the South Carolina Alternate Assessment (SC-Alt). [10]

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[9] Information accessed on SCDE website at https://ed.sc.gov/tests/middle/sc-ready/ on May 6, 2019.
[10] Information accessed on SCDE website at https://ed.sc.gov/tests/middle/scpass/ on May 6, 2019.

Tables 4a, 4b and 4c below show military-connected students typically outperform their peers in all subjects and grades. In the tables "State" represents all South Carolina students, including military-connected students. For 18-19 data, the percentage of students scoring Meets or Exceeds Expectations is defined accordingly:

- Exceeds Expectations – The student exceeds expectations as defined by the grade-level content standards. The student is considered to be *well prepared* for the next grade level.

- Meets Expectations – The student meets expectations as defined by the grade-level content standards. The student is considered to be *prepared* for the next grade level.

The performance of military-connected students is most significant in third through fifth grades. For example, during the 2018-19 school year detailed in Table 4c, in English language arts, 62.2 percent of third grade military-connected students scored Meets or Exceeds Expectations compared to 45.2 percent of their peers who scored Meets or Exceeds Expectations. In mathematics, 72.1 percent of military-connected third graders scored Meets or Exceeds Expectations, and 55.7 percent of their peers scored Meets or Exceeds Expectations, representing a 16.4 percent difference.

Across grades 3 through 8 in ELA, the percentage of military-connected student scoring Meets or Exceeds Expectations surpassed the state average by between 9.9 and 14.8 percent. In mathematics in grades 3 through 8, the percentage of military-connected students scoring Meets or Exceeds Expectations surpassed the state average by between 3.6 and 14.8 percent. In science, the percentage of military-connected students scoring Meets or Exceeds Expectations surpassed the state average by between 10.6 and 16.5 percent.

Table 4a
2016-17 SC READY and SCPASS Performance of Military-Connected Students (MCS) and All Students in South Carolina

Grade Level	SC READY English Language Arts			SC READY Mathematics			SCPASS Science		
	Number MCS Tested	Percent MCS Meets or Exceeds	State Percent Meets or Exceeds	Number MCS Math	Percent Meets or Exceeds	State Percent Meets or Exceeds	Number MCS Science	Percent Met or Exemplary	State Percent Meets or Exceeds
3	1,160	57.7	42.1	1,159	70.8	52.5	0	N/A	
4	1,166	55.1	40.9	1,166	61.8	46.4	1,168	63.4	48.4
5	1,068	50.9	38.3	1,070	44.2	40.0	1,070	61.6	46.1
6	991	53.1	39.7	991	52.1	41.5	993	61.8	48.0
7	1,006	46.6	36.4	1,006	41.7	33.3	1,004	58.8	46.5
8	1,009	47.8	40.1	1,009	42.5	34.5	1,008	61.9	49.0

Table 4b[11]
2017-18 SC READY and SCPASS Performance of Military-Connected Students (MCS) with Active Duty Parents and All Students in South Carolina

Grade Level	SC READY English Language Arts			SC READY Mathematics			SCPASS Science		
	Number MCS Tested	Percent MCS Meets or Exceeds	State Percent Meets or Exceeds	Number MCS Math	Percent Meets or Exceeds	State Percent Meets or Exceeds	Number MCS Science	Percent Meets or Exceeds	State Percent Meets or Exceeds
3	1,032	62.2	45.2	1,035	72.1	55.7			
4	1,085	58.8	43.9	1,088	63.9	48.1	1,088	65.6	49.8
5	1,090	53.8	38.9	1,092	59.1	45.2			
6	1,080	48.8	39.9	1,080	49.9	42.6	1,080	58.0	47.7
7	982	53.5	40.1	982	45.3	34.9			
8	931	48.4	39.2	932	49.0	36.6	930	60.1	48.7

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[11] 2018-19 SC READY and SC PASS results for all students accessed at SCDE website at: https://ed.sc.gov/data/test-scores/state-assessments/sc-ready/2018/State-Scores-By-Grade-Level/?ID=9999999 and https://ed.sc.gov/data/test-scores/state-assessments/scpalmetto-assessment-of-state-standards-pass/2018/state-scores-by-grade-level/?ID=9999999.

Table 4c[12]
2018-19 SC READY and SCPASS Performance of Military-Connected Students (MCS) with Active Duty Parents and All Students in South Carolina

Grade Level	SC READY English Language Arts			SC READY Mathematics			SCPASS Science		
	Number MCS Tested	Percent MCS Meets or Exceeds	State Percent Meets or Exceeds	Number MCS Math	Percent Meets or Exceeds	State Percent Meets or Exceeds	Number MCS Science	Percent Meets or Exceeds	State Percent Meets or Exceeds
3	1,216	63.9	49.1	1,216	71.9	57.1			18.8
4	1,337	64.0	50.3	1,337	63.9	49.7	1,267	65.0	51.3
5	1,343	53.8	40.3	1,343	58.3	44.6	58		43.8
6	1,404	53.8	40.2	1,404	55.9	42.9	1,345	58.0	47.7
7	1,345	52.9	43.0	1,345	42.0	34.4	42		
8	1,169	54.8	43.3	1,169	47.5	35.3	1,120	60.1	48.7

Student Performance in End-of-Course Exams

Table 5 below compares performance on end-of-course exams. During the 2017-18 school year, military-connected students continued to outperform all students statewide on the End-of-Course Examination Program (EOCEP) exams in Algebra 1, English 1 and Biology. On average, military-connected students' mean scores were 3.8 points higher.

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[12] 2018-19 SC READY and SC PASS results for all students accessed at SCDE website at: https://ed.sc.gov/data/test-scores/state-assessments/sc-ready/2019/State-Scores-By-Grade-Level/?ID=9999999 and https://ed.sc.gov/data/test-scores/state-assessments/scpalmetto-assessment-of-state-standards-pass/2018/state-scores-by-grade-level/?ID=9999999.

Table 5
End-of-Course Assessment Performance of
Military-Connected Students and All Students Statewide in 2018-19 School Year

Academic Year	Military Connected Students			All South Carolina Students	
	Number of Students	Mean	Letter Grade	Mean	Letter Grade
Algebra 1					
2014	535	85.7	B	79.8	C
2015	668	85.7	B	82.6	C
2016	857	85.2	B	81.9	C
2017	1,000	72.2	C	69.4	D
2018	1,043	71.9	C	68.2	D
2019	**841**	**72.4**	**C**	**69.8**	**D**
English 1					
2014	537	82.2	C	76.0	D
2015	636	83.6	C	79.4	C
2016	827	83.7	C	79.8	C
2017	1,024	75.9	C	71.4	C
2018	994	78.1	C	74.1	C
2019	**724**	**77.5**	**C**	**74.6**	**C**
Biology					
2013	310	84.2	C	78.1	C
2014	451	85.4	B	79.2	C
2015	580	86.5	B	82.3	B
2016	795	86.9	C	81.6	C
2017	943	81.5	C	75.3	C
2018	921	72.8	C	69.2	D
2019	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Source: SC Department of Education, March 2020 data reported to EOC.

High School Graduation Rate

The federally approved on-time graduation rate identifies a cohort of students who were ninth grade students in a specific year and calculates the percentage of that cohort that graduates four years later. Students are removed from the cohort when they transfer to other degree-granting institutions or programs. Students who transfer into a district are added to the cohort.

For military-connected students this process was not possible because enrollment history of these students was not available. The EOC evaluation team could not determine when students were initially in the ninth grade and could not document transfers into or out of a cohort of students who were initially enrolled in the ninth grade four years prior. Available data identifies students by grade level and graduation status. For students who were identified as being in twelfth grade during the 2018-19 timeframe, the EOC evaluation team could identify: (1) those students who graduated, (2) those who received a certificate or did not graduate, and (3) those students who transferred to other degree-granting institutions and were removed from the graduation cohort. Based on this information, the graduation rates for military-connected students are included below. Table 6 shows during the 2018-19 school year, the high school graduation rate for all military-connected students was 86.9 percent. The state on-time graduation rate was 87.6 percent, representing a four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate:

Table 6
2014 – 2019 High School Graduation Rates for
Military-Connected Students (MCS) and State Avg.

Year	Total Number of MCS	MCS Graduate Avg.	State Avg.
2014	309	97.4	80.1
2015	407	95.3	80.3
2016	536	96.6	82.6
2017	657	94.1	84.6[13]
2018	694	94.1	81.0
2019	868	86.9	87.6

Source: SC Department of Education, March 2020 data reported to EOC.

Attendance Data

School districts want to maximize student instructional time. However, due to deployments and subsequent returns from deployments, there are instances when a military-connected student may need to be excused for absences. Some states, such as Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, Michigan, and Georgia, have detailed guidance for excusing absences for military-connected students.

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[13] Ibid.

[14]Student attendance rate is defined as the number of students present (as opposed to enrolled in) a school during the time it is in session, were computed using information provided by the South Carolina Department of Education. During the 2018-19 school year, the average number of days absent for military connected students was 4.7 days. Table 7 shows the average number of days absent in South Carolina school districts with at least 30 military connected students. 17 of these districts reported that military-connected students were absent for more than 4.7 school days. In 2018-19, Colleton had the highest average absence rate (8.3 days), and Lexington 2 had the lowest absence rate of 3 days. During the 2017-18 school year, the South Carolina Public School District had the lowest absence rate of 2.4 days. Districts in **bold** exceeded the average of 4.7 days absent in this grouping.

Table 7
Average Number of Days Absent in School Districts with
at least 30 Military-Connected Students (MCS), 2018-19 School Year

District	Number of MCS	Average Number of Days Absent
Colleton	**61**	**8.3**
Chesterfield	**286**	**6.4**
Dillon 4	**37**	**5.8**
Aiken	**409**	**5.6**
Horry	**1793**	**5.5**
Spartanburg 7	**118**	**5.4**
Darlington	**252**	**5.3**
Edgefield	**86**	**5.3**
York 1	**48**	**5.3**
Greenville	**126**	**5.1**
Kershaw	**693**	**5.1**
Oconee	**161**	**5.1**
Anderson 1	**276**	**4.9**
Charleston	**246**	**4.9**
Lexington 1	**1041**	**4.8**
Sumter	**846**	**4.8**
York 3	**57**	**4.8**
Lexington 5	570	4.6
Richland 2	4101	4.6
Spartanburg 2	69	4.6
Berkeley	1075	4.5
Dorchester 2	1521	4.5
Lancaster	70	4.3
Georgetown	46	4.2
Beaufort	1360	3.8
Florence 1	98	3.6
Hampton	53	3.6
Richland 1	97	3.5

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[14] For more information, refer to Military Child Education Coalition's "Military-Connected Students and Public-School Attendance Policies." May be accessed at http://www.militarychild.org/public/upload/files/SchoolAttendancePoliciesFINAL.pdf.

District	Number of MCS	Average Number of Days Absent
Orangeburg	33	2.5
SC Public Charter School District	371	2.1
Pickens	157	1.9
Charter Institute at Erskine	73	0.2
Lexington 2	72	0

During the 2018-19 school year, the average number of days absent among all schools was 5.2 days, representing a .4 percent decrease from the 2017-18 school year average of 5.6 days.

Table 8 lists nine school districts with military-connected students exceeding the average number of days absent among all schools Districts listed reported more days absent than the state 5.2 days absent average. The average number of days absent among military students remained constant at 4.7 days in 2018-19. Colleton had the highest number of average days absent for military connected students (8.3 days).

Table 8
School Districts with at least 30 Military-Connected Students (MCS),
Exceeding Average Number of Days Absent (All SC Districts)

District	Number of MCS	Average Number of Days Absent
Colleton	61	8.3
Chesterfield	286	6.4
Dillon 4	37	5.8
Aiken	409	5.6
Horry	1793	5.5
Spartanburg 7	118	5.4
Darlington	252	5.3
Edgefield	86	5.3
York 1	48	5.3

Appendix A
Resources for Military-Connected Students and Families

Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC)

During the 2019-20 school year, the South Carolina Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) was relocated to the Division of Veterans Affairs and Department of Commerce(budget).

In 2019, the Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) updated and revised its portfolio to include additional course offerings, professional offerings, and support to military-connected families. This past year, MCEC trainers presented 80 courses to over 1500 professionals with an extended reach impact on nearly 21,000 adults. Support was continued to over 25,000 military-connected students, their parents, and education professionals across 20 school districts nationwide. Affiliates saw encouraging expansion in 2019, extending across Alabama, Texas, Virginia, Florida, and South Carolina.

South Carolina School Support Resources
School liaison officers continue to provide support and guidance about workshop content and family enrichment offerings to Military-connected families.

School Liaison Officers serve as a primary point of contact for students and their families transitioning to new communities and schools. They are also a resource for schools and school districts. To view a list of school liaison officers by branch, go to: https://www.dodea.edu/Partnership/schoolLiaisonOfficers.cfm.

Fort Jackson School Liaisons provide ongoing educational support for military connected schools. This comprehensive website provides information about public and private schools, homeschooling, and local school districts.

https://jackson.armymwr.com/programs/school-liaison-officer

https://www.facebook.com/Jackson-CYS-School-Liaison-Officer-152018352105106/

Shaw Air Force Base is home to the 20th Fighter Wing, Headquarters Nine Air Force/United States Central Command of Air Forces, and several associate units. Shaw's units are assigned to Air Combat Command, Langley Air Force Base, Virginia. School Liaison information may be found at the website below.

https://www.shaw.af.mil/About-Us/Newcomer-Information/

Marine Corps Air Station and the Marine Corps Recruit Depot are in Beaufort. School support information may be accessed at the website below.

http://www.mccs-sc.com/mil-fam/slp.shtml

Joint Base Charleston School information may be accessed under the "Charleston Area Schools" link at:

https://www.jbcharleston.jb.mil/About-Us/Library/Newcomers

South Carolina Program Resources

The **International Baccalaureate** Program helps students develop skills to create a better and peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. For more information, including a list of South Carolina schools participating in the IB Program, go to https://www.ed.sc.gov/instruction/standards-learning/advanced-academic-programs/international-baccalaureate-programs-ib/.

Four-year-old kindergarten is available in the state and is offered in public schools and private childcare centers. State-funded prekindergarten for four-year-olds serves children in the "most at-risk" category, where family income falls 185% below poverty level or the family is Medicaid eligible. Families may also be eligible for other services such as Even Start, Head Start, state-funded family literacy programs, Social Security, food stamps, Medicaid, or temporary assistance to needy families (TANF).

Children also qualify in case of a documented developmental delay, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) requiring pre-kindergarten, incarceration of a parent, placement in a foster home, or a child who is homeless. Documentation of family or child "most at-risk" conditions must be kept on file for review. Children who participate in free and reduced meal programs at the center/school they attend may also qualify if income eligibility is verified on each child and records are kept on file for review.

Some districts use local funds to serve children who are not in the "at risk" category. Several districts serve all children who request services. A few districts charge a fee for non-qualifying children, but state regulations prohibit any fees for "at risk" children.

State law says that "students may enter kindergarten in the public schools of this State if they will attain the age of four on or before September first of the applicable school year."

https://www.ed.sc.gov/instruction/early-learning-and-literacy/cerdep/

National Resources

Department of Defense Education Activity provides professional development training in a webinar format for school liaison officers. This information is also helpful for local school districts to understand the needs of students and how to support them in a comprehensive manner.

https://www.dodea.edu/

Military Impacted School Association is a national organization of school superintendents. MISA supports school districts with a high concentration of military children by providing detailed, comprehensive information regarding impact aid and resources for families and schools.

http://militaryimpactedschoolsassociation.org/

The **Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission (MIC3)** provides consistent policy in every school district and in every state that voluntarily joins MIC3. MIC3 addresses key educational transition issues such as enrollment, placement, attendance, eligibility, and graduation.

http://www.mic3.net

The **Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC)** focuses on ensuring quality educational opportunities for all military children affected by mobility, family separation, and transition. A 501(c)(3) non-profit, world-wide organization, the MCEC performs research, develops resources, conducts professional institutes, and conferences, and develops and publishes resources for all constituencies.

http://www.militarychild.org/

Military OneSource is a confidential Department of Defense-funded program providing comprehensive information on every aspect of military life at no cost to active duty, National Guard, and reserve members, and their families.

Information includes, but is not limited to, deployment, reunion, relationships, grief, spouse employment and education, parenting, and childhood services. It is a virtual extension to installation services.

The program also provides free resources to schools, including books and videos with relevant topics that help students cope with divorce and deployment.

www.militaryonesource.mil

National Military Family Association (NMFA) a voice for military families advocating on behalf of service members, their spouses, and their children. According to NMFA's website, NMFA is the "go to" source for Administration Officials, Members of Congress, and key decision makers when they want to understand the issues facing military families.

https://www.militaryfamily.org/

Appendix B: Military-Connected Students by District, February 2020

DISTRICT	Number of Military Connected Students (MCS)
Richland 02	4101
Horry 01	1793
Dorchester 02	1521
Beaufort 01	1360
Berkeley 01	1075
Lexington 01	1041
Sumter 01	846
Kershaw 01	693
Lexington 05	570
Aiken 01	409
SC Public Charter School District	371
Chesterfield 01	286
Anderson 01	276
Darlington 01	252
Charleston 01	246
Oconee 01	161
Pickens 01	157
Greenville 01	126
Spartanburg 07	118
Florence 01	98
Richland 01	97
Edgefield 01	86
Charter Institute at Erskine	73
Lexington 02	72
Lancaster 01	70
Spartanburg 02	69
Colleton 01	61

DISTRICT	Number of Military Connected Students (MCS)
York 03	57
Hampton 01	53
York 01	48
Georgetown 01	46
Dillon 04	37
Orangeburg 05	33
Florence 02	23
Lexington 04	18
Newberry 01	17
Cherokee 01	15
Clarendon 02	15
York 02	12
Fairfield 01	10
Greenwood 50	10
Laurens 56	10
Anderson 04	9
Spartanburg 03	9
Union 01	8
Saluda 01	7
York 04	7
Allendale 01	6
Williamsburg 01	6
Abbeville 60	4
Barnwell 29	3
Florence 03	3
Anderson 02	2
Laurens 55	2
Marion 10	2
Orangeburg 04	2

DISTRICT	Number of Military Connected Students (MCS)
Spartanburg 05	2
Anderson 03	1
Bamberg 01	1
Barnwell 45	1
Clarendon 03	1
Deaf & Blind School	1
Jasper 01	1
Lexington 03	1
Marlboro 01	1
Orangeburg 03	1
Spartanburg 01	1
Spartanburg 06	1

The SC Education Oversight Committee is an independent, non-partisan group made up of 18 educators, business persons, and elected leaders. Created in 1998, the committee is dedicated to reporting facts, measuring change, and promoting progress within South Carolina's education system.