

2019

EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF MILITARY- CONNECTED STUDENTS

Report



**SC EDUCATION
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

PO Box 11867 | 227 Blatt Building | Columbia SC 29211 | WWW.SCEOC.ORG

Educational Performance of Military-Connected Students, 2019

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Acknowledgements	2
Summary of Findings and Recommendations	3
Section I: Recent Developments	7
Section II: Demographics of Military-Connected Students	11
Section III: Student Performance	15
Section IV: Support and Engagement of Military-Connected Families and Educators	25
Appendix A: Resources for Military-Connected Students and Families	29
Appendix B: Military-Connected Students by District, February 2018	33
Appendix C: MCEC Participant Data and Survey Reports	35

Introduction

May 20, 2019

In 2014, the General Assembly passed Act 289, the Military Family Quality of Life Enhancement Act. The Act's purpose is to "enhance many 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 2019 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 2017-18; and
- A summary of the trainings for educators and families to enhance support of military-connected students at home and in school.

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

Acknowledgements

The EOC is grateful for the assistance of local, state and national organizations and staff in the development of this report. Report contributors include:

Kevin Bruch, Department of Defense State Liaison Office

Judy Glennon, Military Child Education Coalition

Cynthia Hearn, SC Department of Education

Annette Farmer, Military Child Education Coalition

Keith Martin, Military Child Education Coalition

South Carolina School Liaison Officers

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

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 14,456 military-connected students in South Carolina's public schools in school year 2017-18. Almost 70 percent of military-connected students have at least one parent who is active duty, like the prior school year.
2. The 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, October 25, 2018²

New 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 14,456 military-connected students reported by school districts to SCDE in school year 2017-18, approximately 90 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.

² SC State Reporting Updates, Update dated October 25, 2018. Accessed at <https://ed.sc.gov/data/information-systems/power-school/sc-state-reporting-updates/>.

Districts with Highest Military-Connected Student Populations, School Year 2017-18

District	Frequency	Percent
Richland 2	3,831	27.23
Dorchester 2	1,583	11.25
Berkeley	1,575	11.22
Beaufort	1,138	8.09
Horry	1,024	7.28
Lexington 1	1,010	7.18
Kershaw	724	5.15
Sumter	717	5.10
Lexington 5	563	4.00
SC Public Charter School District	326	2.32
Charleston	226	1.61
Total	12,717	90.44

Source: SC Department of Education, February 2019 data provided to EOC.

4. Approximately 1,550 military-connected students had at least one parent who was deployed in school year 2018, representing a slight increase from 2017. In addition, 62 military-connected students were reported to have a parent who was on active duty but died within the last year. Another 717 military-connected students have a parent who was on active duty and wounded within the last year. While it is a small percentage of the overall number of military-connected students, the number of military-connected students with a parent who was wounded in 2018 more than quadrupled from 2016. About 73 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 outperform their peers on state-administered standardized tests in all subjects and grades. The performance of military-connected students is most significant in third through fifth grades. For example, during the 2017-18 school year in English language arts, 62.2 percent of third grade military-connected students scored Meets or Exceeds Expectations on SC READY as 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.
6. During the 2017-18 school year, military-connected students outperformed all students statewide on the End-of-Course Examination Program exams (Algebra 1, English 1 and Biology), but the gap between military-connected students and all students is closing. On average, military-connected students' mean scores were 3.8 points higher; in the prior year the military-connected students' mean scores were higher by 4.5 points.

7. During the 2017-18 school year, the high school graduation rate for military-connected students remained constant at 94.1 percent, including National Guard and Reserves. The state on-time graduation rate was 81.0 percent.
8. Between October 2018 through March 2019, the Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) facilitated 78 workshops or training events with 1,490 participants, including SPARC workshops, military transitions course, Student 2 Student and Parent to Parent programs. Military Student Transition Consultants welcomed 207 students; assisted 144 students with transition and problem-solving support; connected with 262 parents; and provided support to 563 school, installation and community personnel to benefit military-connected students. In general, participants agreed the MCEC-facilitated activities were beneficial, as noted in Appendix C. EOC staff did not receive or review MCEC-related participant rosters or surveys.

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 the 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 10111:

“(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

³ National Conference of State Legislatures, “Summary of the 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>.

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 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 its most recent 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

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, October 25, 2018⁸

New 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.

⁸ SC State Reporting Updates, Update dated October 25, 2018. Accessed at <https://ed.sc.gov/data/information-systems/power-school/sc-state-reporting-updates/>.

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 2018 data provided by SC Department of Education in February 2019 (for 2016 through 2018 school years) and includes National Guard, Reserves and active duty military personnel. Approximately 1,550 military-connected students had at least one parent who was deployed in school year 2018, representing a slight increase from 2017. In addition, 62 military-connected students were reported to have a parent who was on active duty but died within the last year. Another 717 military-connected students have a parent who was on active duty and wounded within the last year. While it is a small percentage of the overall number of military-connected students, the number of military-connected students with a parent who was wounded in 2018 more than quadrupled from 2016. About 73 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 to 2018 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, 2016-18 School Years

Military Connection	School Year 2016		School Year 2017		School Year 2018	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
National Guard - Not Deployed	1,546	12.20%	1,839	13.08%	2,116	14.64%
Reserves - Not Deployed	1,231	9.72%	1,628	11.57%	1,784	12.34%
National Guard - Deployed	161	1.27%	315	2.24%	326	2.26%

Military Connection	School Year 2016		School Year 2017		School Year 2018	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Reserves - Deployed	111	0.88%	168	1.19%	227	1.57%
Active Duty Military - Not Deployed	8,649	68.26%	8,837	62.83%	8,530	59.01%
Active Duty Military - Deployed	883	6.97%	954	6.78%	997	6.90%
Active Duty Military - Deceased in last year	24	0.19%	49	0.35%	62	0.43%
Active Duty Military - Wounded in last year	66	0.52%	275	1.96%	414	2.86%
Subtotal Active Duty	9,622		10,115		10,003	
Total	12,671		14,070		14,456	

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

Of the 14,456 military-connected students reported by school districts to SCDE, approximately 88 percent of the students attend one of the eleven school districts listed in Table 3 below. 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 a number of 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.⁹

⁹ 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 2016-17 and 2017-2018

School Year 2016-17			School Year 2017-18		
District	Frequency	Percent	District	Frequency	Percent
Richland 2	3,831	27.23	Richland 2	4011	27.75
Dorchester 2	1,583	11.25	Dorchester 2	1593	11.02
Berkeley	1,575	11.22	Horry	1475	10.2
Beaufort	1,138	8.09	Beaufort	1176	8.14
Horry	1,024	7.28	Berkeley	1062	7.35
Lexington 1	1,010	7.18	Lexington 1	981	6.79
Kershaw	724	5.15	Sumter	702	4.86
Sumter	717	5.10	Kershaw	599	4.14
Lexington 5	563	4.00	Lexington/Richland 5	551	3.81
SC Public Charter School District	326	2.32	SC Public Charter School District	335	2.32
Charleston	226	1.61	Anderson 1	213	1.47
Total	12,717	90.44		12,698	87.85

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

III. Student Performance

This section provides academic and attendance data for military-connected students for school year 2017-18 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 2017-18 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.¹⁰

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).¹¹

¹⁰ Information accessed on SCDE website at <https://ed.sc.gov/tests/middle/sc-ready/> on May 6, 2019.

¹¹ 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 outperform their peers in all subjects and grades. In the tables “State” represents all South Carolina students, including military-connected students. For 2017-18 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 2017-18 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 8.9 and 17.0 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 7.3 and 16.4 percent. In science, the percentage of military-connected students scoring Meets or Exceeds Expectations surpassed the state average by between 10.3 and 15.8 percent.

Table 4a**2015-16 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 Met or Exemplary
3	1,118	58.9	43.7	1,122	68.0	53.6	0	0	0
4	952	55.8	43.4	954	61.4	46.7	957	79.6	65.0
5	941	55.9	41.2	943	57.4	44.3	942	78.5	65.7
6	880	51.9	41.0	882	48.5	39.5	879	76.0	62.1
7	950	50.6	40.7	951	41.1	34.7	951	81.5	70.6
8	877	53.6	44.7	876	38.6	32.4	874	77.1	66.2

Source: SC Department of Education, February 2017 reported to EOC.

Table 4b**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 4c¹²

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

¹² 2017-18 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>.

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.

Table 5
End-of-Course Assessment Performance of
Military Connected Students and All Students Statewide in 2017-18 School Year

Academic Year	Military Connected Students			All South Carolina Students	
	Number of Students	Mean	Letter Grade	Mean	Letter Grade
Algebra 1					
2013	398	83.5	C	78.2	C
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
English 1					
2013	350	81.3	C	75.3	D
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
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

Source: SC Department of Education, March 2019 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 2017-18 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 2017-18 school year, the high school graduation rate for military-connected students was 94.1 percent, including National Guard and Reserves. The state on-time graduation rate was 81.0 percent, representing a four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate:

Table 6
2013 – 2018 High School Graduation Rates for
Military-Connected Students (MCS) and State

Year	Total Number of MCS	MCS Graduates	State
2013	237	96.5	77.5
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

Source: SC Department of Education, March 2019 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.¹⁴

¹³ Ibid.

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>.

Student attendance rates were computed using information provided by SCDE. During the 2016-17 school year, average number of days absent was 4.4 days. Table 7 shows 14 districts reported military-connected students were absent for more than 4.4 school days. In 2016-17, Aiken and Colleton had the highest average absence rate (6.1 days) and the SC Public Charter School District the lowest absence rate of 3 days. During the 2017-18 school year, Charleston had the lowest absence rate of 1.3 days. Districts in **bold** exceeded the average of 4.4 days absent.

Table 7
Average Number of Days Absent in School Districts with
at least 30 Military-Connected Students (MCS), 2016-17 School Year

District	Number of MCS	Average Number of Days Absent
Aiken	73	6.1
Colleton	79	6.1
Lexington 2	40	6
Pickens	143	5.9
Orangeburg 5	44	5.5
Spartanburg 7	94	5.2
Florence 1	108	5
Hampton 1	74	5
Horry	1,024	5
Greenville	78	4.9
Lexington 1	1,010	4.8
Sumter	717	4.6
Oconee	133	4.5
Richland 2	3,831	4.5
Beaufort	1,138	4.4
Kershaw	724	4.4
Spartanburg 2	50	4.4
Dorchester 2	1,583	4.3
Edgefield	64	4.1
York 3 (Rock Hill)	60	4.1
Berkeley	1,575	3.9
Charleston	226	3.8
Lancaster	97	3.7
Lexington/Richland 5	563	3.6
SC Public Charter District	326	3.0

Source: SC Department of Education, February 2018 data reported to EOC.

During the 2017-18 school year, the average number of days absent among all schools was 5.6 days, representing a 27 percent increase from the 2016-17 school year average of 4.4 days. Like 2016-17 school year, Table 8 lists 13 school districts with military-connected students exceeded the 5.6-day average. Districts in **bold** exceeded the 5.6-day absent average. The average number of days absent among military students was 4.7 days. Hampton 1 had the highest number of average days absent among military students (6.8 days), and the S.C. Public Charter School

District continued to have the lowest number of average days absent among military students (2.4 days).

Table 8
Average Number of Days Absent in School Districts with
at least 30 Military-Connected Students (MCS), 2017-18 School Year

District	Number of MCS	Average Number of Days Absent
Aiken	63	6.5
Colleton	80	7.3
Pickens	157	6.2
Orangeburg 5	39	5.4
Spartanburg 7	77	7.3
Florence 1	105	6.7
Hampton 1	63	6.8
Horry	1,475	5.6
Greenville	94	5.1
Lexington 1	981	5.6
Sumter	702	6.3
Oconee	163	5.9
Richland 2	4,011	4.9
Beaufort	1,176	4.8
Kershaw	599	5.7
Spartanburg 2	58	5.3
Dorchester 2	1,593	5.9
York 3 (Rock Hill)	57	5.4
Berkeley	1,062	5.7
Charleston	163	1.3
Lancaster	45	5.5
Lexington/Richland 5	551	4.7
SC Public Charter District	335	2.4

Source: SC Department of Education, February 2019 data reported to EOC.

IV. Support and Engagement of Military-Connected Families and Educators

Proviso 1A.69 of the Fiscal Year 2018-19 General Appropriation Act directed the Education Oversight Committee to expend \$225,000 of the funds for Partnerships for Innovation to:

“initiate in at least two school districts with high military density, a pilot program that will provide trainings, services, resources and research to teachers, counselors, mental health professionals, school nurses, service providers and military parents. The objective of the pilot is to increase the level of educational quality and support for military-connected children...Pursuant to its responsibilities under Act 289 of 2014, the Education Oversight Committee will report on the expenditure of these funds and post-training evaluation in its annual report on the educational performance of military-connected children.”

The Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) received the 1A.69 funding and \$350,000 in SC Lottery Funds to implement programs and support for educators and military-connected families. MCEC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, world-wide organization, focused on ensuring quality educational opportunities for all military children affected by mobility, family separation, and transition. MCEC is also an Authorized Provider by the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET).

During the 2018-19 school year, EOC staff worked closely with the Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) to ensure the intent of the proviso was met. School liaison officers also provided support and guidance about workshop content and family engagement.

Between October 2018 through March 2019, the Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) facilitated 78 workshops or training events with 1,490 participants, including SPARC workshops, military transitions course, Student 2 Student and Parent to Parent programs. Military Student Transition Consultants welcomed 207 students; assisted 144 students with transition and problem-solving support; connected with 262 parents; and provided support to 563 school, installation and community personnel to benefit military-connected students. In general, participants agreed the MCEC-facilitated activities were beneficial, as noted in Appendix C.¹⁵

MCEC strategies include:

- retaining a Military Transition Consultant Affiliate (MSTA) in some locations. An MSTA is an employee of the LEA assigned to a campus. In addition to this Guidance Professional's responsibilities, participation as an Affiliate provides additional resources and support through the MCEC network to assist military-connected students.
- implementing the “Tell Me A Story” program. TMAS’ mission is to empower military children by using literature and their own stories in a way that fosters skills for resilience, strong peer and parent connections, a sense of pride and accomplishment, and a caring community. Tell Me A Story is a family literacy event geared toward children ages 4-12.

¹⁵ EOC staff did not receive or review MCEC-related participant rosters or surveys.

TMAS provides opportunities to open discussion on difficult topics such as deployment, separation and moving. We want children to have the skills they need to be resilient. Through TMAS, children (and parents) can recognize that they are an active part of a caring community-not just recipients of this care, but also participants in caring for others. TMAS can help give children the tools needed to be resilient and have a positive optimistic outlook.

- Providing workshops to enhance military families' skills or understanding of their children's needs, such as "Kids in the Kitchen."
- establishing peer support programs. Established in 2004, Student 2 Student (S2S) is a high school level student program that brings military and civilian students together to welcome new students, create a positive environment, support academic excellence, and ease transitions. MCEC Parent to Parent community-based teams offer workshops with practical ideas, proven techniques, and solid resources to support military families. Staffed with military-connected parents who are professionally trained and sourced with materials based on the latest research on a wide range of topics of interest to military families. The first teams were placed in military communities in 2006 and since that time, more than 236,000 participants have come through our MCEC Parent to Parent workshops world-wide.

Begun in 2006, Parent to Parent teams usually consist of two to four highly-trained professionals and they concentrate on providing the parent workshops to families in their region. The teams are familiar with the needs of the parents in their home communities because they are personally involved in their children's schools and other organizations where parents come together. They use their knowledge and training to bring the most important information and resources to these same school and organization constituents in interactive and informative workshops designed to educate parents and other caring adults as they guide our military-connected children through their educational journey.

Support for educators and military families has increased overtime: \$100,000 in FY 2016-17, \$300,00 in FY 2017-18, to \$575,000 in FY 2018-19. Due to the increased funding amount, MCEC worked directly with multiple districts to determine appropriate programs and activities. MCEC's financial expenditures are included in Table 12, with implementation details noted below.

- Beaufort: MSTA identified and trained. Ready to begin service and will attend 4 days of training at National Training Seminar
- Charleston: Workshops presented as of April 2019 include Charleston AFB Library, Naval Weapons Station Library, and Midland Park Primary School (total of 33 so far). Multiple workshops scheduled in the next few months (22 scheduled for April and May) at Marrington Elementary School, Goose Creek Elementary School, the AFB youth center, and Philip Simmons Middle School. One workshop participant provided feedback through a Facebook post about how she utilized information learned in the Kids in the Kitchen workshop she attended. The mom reported that she included her seven-year-old child in meal planning, grocery shopping, and packing her own lunch as was suggested in the workshop to allow children some independence and autonomy. The mom stated that she

was pleasantly surprised to see the healthy choices her child made which helped their family to bond around food rather than their previous experiences of "power struggle" over what the child would eat.

- Columbia: Team Columbia has been marketing throughout Richland 1 and Richland 2 Schools and the Columbia area. We have good community, school, and military-connected relationships. Team Columbia has presented 80 workshops to date and currently have 12 additional workshops booked as we continue to market to new and existing venues. The team hosted 2 TMAS events, 1 mini TMAS, and have another TMAS booked for April 2019. There are regularly-scheduled team meetings with the following partners: Richland School District Two Director of Family and Parent Programs and DODEA Grant Group (Counselors/Administrators/SLOs) and SC National Guard Service Member and Family Care. These groups have been extremely helpful and significant in our marketing and advertising efforts.

MCEC continues to develop its partnership with Richland One and has participated in several marketing events and connected with over 20 Family Engagement Specialists for the district. Also, The Month of Military Child efforts in SC has been extremely positive in our Parent to Parent success as we anticipate April 2019 to be full of events as it was last year. We are optimistic regarding our frequently booked venues to include: Richland County Library, Chick-Fil-A, and Fort Jackson New Parent Support Program. The newest venue is WholeFoods. Participants from all age groups, birth through high school, have been reached. MCEC scheduled 73 workshops with 901 workshop participants. 61 Workshop attendees have provided survey data for us and that data indicates that the team has an overall approval rating of 90 percent.

- Sumter: To maintain continuity in service, MCEC is supporting the MSTA position until additional funds are received later in the year.
- Aiken: Both North Augusta High School and Silver Bluff High School participated in the "Student to Student" peer program.

Between October 2018 through March 2019, the Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) facilitated 78 workshops or training events with 1,490 participants, including SPARC workshops, military transitions course, Student 2 Student and Parent to Parent programs. Military Student Transition Consultants welcomed 207 students; assisted 144 students with transition and problem-solving support; connected with 262 parents; and provided support to 563 school, installation and community personnel to benefit military-connected students. In general, participants agreed the MCEC-facilitated activities were beneficial, as noted in Appendix C. EOC staff did not receive or review MCEC-related participant rosters or surveys.

Appendix A Resources for Military-Connected Students and Families

South Carolina School Support Resources

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 child care 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
Number of Military-Connected Students (MCS) by District, February 2019

District	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percent
Abbeville	1	0.01	1	0.01
Aiken	63	0.44	64	0.44
Allendale	6	0.04	70	0.48
Anderson 1	213	1.47	283	1.96
Anderson 2	2	0.01	285	1.97
Anderson 4	8	0.06	293	2.03
Bamberg 1	4	0.03	297	2.05
Beaufort	1,176	8.14	1,473	10.19
Berkeley	1,062	7.35	2,535	17.54
Charleston	163	1.13	2,698	18.66
Cherokee	7	0.05	2,705	18.71
Chesterfield	9	0.06	2,714	18.77
Clarendon 2	13	0.09	2,727	18.86
Clarendon 3	1	0.01	2,728	18.87
Colleton	80	0.55	2,808	19.42
Darlington	171	1.18	2,979	20.61
Dillon 4	3	0.02	2,982	20.63
Dorchester 2	1,593	11.02	4,575	31.65
Edgefield	19	0.13	4,594	31.78
Fairfield	5	0.03	4,599	31.81
Florence 1	105	0.73	4,704	32.54
Florence 2	26	0.18	4,730	32.72
Florence 3	1	0.01	4,731	32.73
Georgetown	26	0.18	4,757	32.91
Greenville	94	0.65	4,851	33.56
Greenwood 50	9	0.06	4,860	33.62
Hampton 1	63	0.44	4,923	34.06
Horry	1,475	10.20	6,398	44.26
Jasper	2	0.01	6,400	44.27
Kershaw	599	4.14	6,999	48.42
Lancaster	45	0.31	7,044	48.73
Laurens 55	3	0.02	7,047	48.75
Laurens 56	8	0.06	7,055	48.80
Lee	1	0.01	7,056	48.81
Lexington 1	981	6.79	8,037	55.60
Lexington 2	14	0.10	8,051	55.69
Lexington 3	1	0.01	8,052	55.70

District	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percent
Lexington 4	14	0.10	8,066	55.80
Lexington/Richland 5	551	3.81	8,617	59.61
Marion 10	3	0.02	8,620	59.63
Marlboro	1	0.01	8,621	59.64
Newberry	17	0.12	8,638	59.75
Oconee	163	1.13	8,801	60.88
Orangeburg 3	1	0.01	8,802	60.89
Orangeburg 4	2	0.01	8,804	60.90
Orangeburg 5	39	0.27	8,843	61.17
Pickens	157	1.09	9,000	62.26
Richland 1	130	0.90	9,130	63.16
Richland 2	4,011	27.75	13,141	90.90
S.C. School for Deaf and Blind	1	0.01	13,142	90.91
SC Public Charter School District	335	2.32	13,477	93.23
Saluda	10	0.07	13,487	93.30
Spartanburg 1	2	0.01	13,489	93.31
Spartanburg 2	58	0.40	13,547	93.71
Spartanburg 3	11	0.08	13,558	93.79
Spartanburg 5	4	0.03	13,562	93.82
Spartanburg 6	1	0.01	13,563	93.82
Spartanburg 7	77	0.53	13,640	94.36
Sumter	702	4.86	14,342	99.21
Union	9	0.06	14,351	99.27
Williamsburg	15	0.10	14,366	99.38
York 1	20	0.14	14,386	99.52
York 2	5	0.03	14,391	99.55
York 3 (Rock Hill)	57	0.39	14,448	99.94
York 4	8	0.06	14,456	100.00

Source: SC Department of Education

Appendix C
Summary of MCEC Activities during FY 2018-19

Location	Program	Cost	Date	Participant Type							Total Attendance
				Educator					Parent	Other	
				Student	Counselor	Teacher	Admin	Other			
Beaufort	MSTA	\$16,000.00	Trained week of March 18								0
	TOTAL	\$16,000.00									0
Charleston (Dorchester & Berkeley)	Parent to Parent Team (2 team members)	\$60,000.00	In place	196			9	54	277		536
	MSTA	\$16,000.00	In place	99				254	260	158	771
	TOTAL	\$76,000.00									
Columbia (Richland 1 & 2)	Parent to Parent Team (2 team members)	\$48,500.00	In place	399	37	12	16	54	608		1126
	TOTAL	\$48,500.00									
Sumter	Parent to Parent (2 team members)	\$30,000.00	In place	0	0	0	0	0	55	0	55
	MSTA- MCEC is supporting the MST A position (\$16,000) until additional funds are received later in the fiscal year.		In Place	116				128	62	17	323
	TOTAL	\$30,000.00									
Aiken	S2S	\$14,000.00	1/10-11/2019	11	1	1		1			14
	SMCST-F	\$13,250.00	11/7/2018		43	2	3				48
	TOTAL	\$27,250.00									
Edgefield	JS2S	\$14,000.00	3/14-15/19	9	2	1					12
	SPARC	\$13,250.00	12/5/2018		14	5	3			3	25
	TOTAL	\$27,250.00									
Statewide funds	GRAND TOTAL	\$225,000.00									

* The above costs are paid for with non-recurring EIA funds.

	Program Distribution	Lottery Funding directly to MCEC Jun '19
Beaufort	PES	\$7,200
Sumter	MSTA	\$32,000
	Parent to Parent Team (2 pers tm)	\$30,000
	Sumter S2S team to NTS	\$8,000
Charleston (Dorchester & Berkeley)	Parent to Parent Team	\$40,000
	S2S (2 schools)	\$14,000
	J/S2S Booster for 3 schools	\$9,600
	PD (1 of their choice)	\$27,000
Columbia (Richland 1 & 2)	Parent to Parent Team (3 person)	\$110,800
Outreach (SCDE and SCNG)	PD (4 trainings)	\$54,000
	TMAS (2 each)	\$3,000
	PES (2 each)	\$14,400
	Total	\$350,000

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.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you have questions, please contact the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) staff for additional information. The phone number is 803.734.6148. Also, please visit the EOC website at www.eoc.sc.gov for additional resources.

The Education Oversight Committee does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, or handicap in its practices relating to employment or establishment and administration of its programs and initiatives. Inquiries regarding employment, programs and initiatives of the Committee should be directed to the Executive Director 803.734.6148.