



West Virginia DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

West Virginia Council for the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

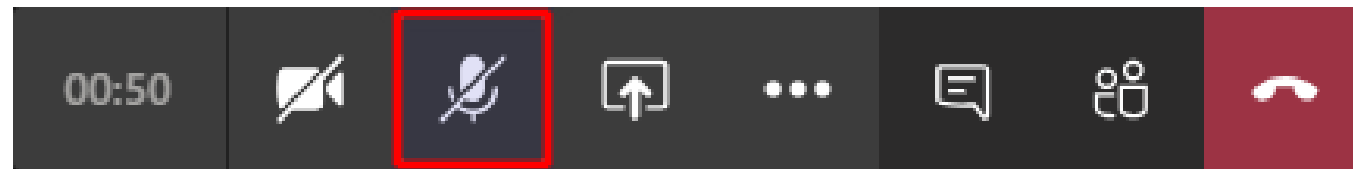
FY 2026 Meeting
Thursday, January 15, 2026

Microsoft Teams Meeting Information

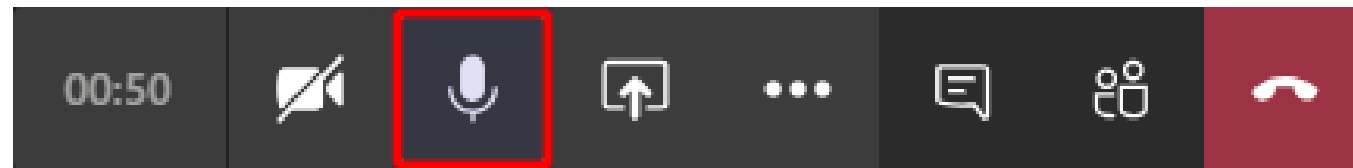
As we begin the meeting:

- If you are using a computer or cell phone application, please note that you may use the menu bar near the bottom of your screen to:
 - Turn your camera on or off
 - Mute and unmute your microphone

Camera and microphone turned off



Camera off and microphone on



*On a telephone, *6 will mute or unmute your audio. Press *1 for a complete list of telephone options.*

Meeting Agenda

1. Welcome, Roll Call and Introductions
 - *Military Family Education Liaison, Mr. Robert Mellace*
2. Approval of Agenda/Minutes and Remarks from the State Compact Commissioner
 - *Compact Commissioner, Mr. Nickolas Lambruno*
3. Remarks from the State Superintendent of Schools
 - *State Superintendent of Schools, Ms. Michele Blatt*
4. Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission (MIC3) Overview
5. Common Ground Partnership Overview
6. Roundtable Discussion on MIC3 and the Common Ground Partnership

Welcome

Office of Educator Development

Mr. Robert Mellace

Coordinator

Phone: 1-304-558-3119

E-mail: rmellace@k12.wv.us

Roll Call and Introductions

State Council Members:

Compact Commissioner – Mr. Nickolas Lambruno

State Superintendent of Schools – Ms. Michele Blatt

County Superintendent of Schools – Berkeley County Schools – Dr. Ryan Saxe

Military Installation Representative – Vacant Position

Executive Branch Representative – Vacant Position

WV Senate Member – Mr. Ryan Weld

WV House of Delegates Member – Mr. Bill Anderson

Military Family Education Liaison – Mr. Robert Mellace

DOD Representative:

NRMA Regional School Liaison – Ms. Marcella Atwood

Approval of Agenda/Minutes

Remarks

State Compact Commissioner

Mr. Nickolas Lambruno

- Director West Virginia Mountaineer ChalleNGe Program



Remarks

State Superintendent of Schools

Ms. Michele Blatt

- 34th State Superintendent of Schools
- Appointed in June 2023
- Previously served as the following at the WVDE:
 - Leadership Development Coordinator
 - Executive Director of the Office of School Improvement
 - Chief Accountability Officer
 - Assistant Superintendent for the Division of Support and Accountability
 - Deputy State Superintendent





MILITARY INTERSTATE
CHILDREN'S COMPACT
COMMISSION

Overview

Summary Information

National Annual Business Meeting Update

West Virginia Case Update



MILITARY INTERSTATE
CHILDREN'S COMPACT
COMMISSION

The Military Interstate Children's Compact was developed in 2006 and has been adopted by all 50 states, the District of Columbia and the Department of Defense Education Activity. The Compact eases the educational challenges that military children encounter, and supports uniform treatment as they transfer between school districts.

The Compact only applies to public schools.

Compact Quick Fact Guide

Goal of the Compact

To overcome transitional issues experienced by military families when their children move to a new school in another state.

Member States

All states and the District of Columbia.

Applies to

Active duty members of uniformed services including the National Guard and Reserve members on active duty orders pursuant to 10 U.S.C. §1209 and 1211, as well as veterans who are severely injured and medically discharged for one year after medical discharge or retirement, and veterans who die on active duty for a period of one year after death.

Educational Records

Receiving member states must accept unofficial records for initial enrollment and then the sending member state must submit official records within 10 days of receipt of the request for records.

Immunizations

A child who is unable to provide official documented proof of at least one dose of each required vaccination must be automatically enrolled and/or homebound services will be provided within 3 days, to ensure educational services are immediately provided while the first dose(s) of all required immunizations are confirmed. Note: Tuberculosis testing is currently not required for enrollment in WV schools.

Kindergarten and 1st Grade

Entrance Age

A student who moves may continue in the same grade in the receiving state regardless of the entrance age requirements of the receiving state.

Course and Educational Program Placement

School districts must initially honor equivalent course enrollment or program placement (ex. Gifted, AP, etc.), if available. Then, evaluation may occur to ensure appropriate placement. Space must be available, and member states must demonstrate reasonable accommodations.

Special Education

Receiving schools must use the sending state's IEP until a new IEP may be conducted/evaluated.

Placement Flexibility

The Compact encourages schools to waive course prerequisites as appropriate to the content, when similar coursework was completed (ex. Requirement to pass Geometry before taking Algebra).

Absence Related to Deployment

The Compact establishes guidelines for enhanced flexibility with excused absences for military families on active duty orders (one month before deployment and six months after return).

Enrollment

During deployments it may be necessary for students to stay with a non-custodial parent or someone in loco parentis. Guardianship of a student under these circumstances should not prevent or negatively impact enrollment (a power of attorney is sufficient). The family may keep their school as long as the guardian provides transportation.

Extracurricular Participation

Deadlines for application are not grounds for disqualification. The school must demonstrate reasonable accommodation, but is not required to hold open or create additional space on teams.

Course Waivers

Substituting equivalent coursework is required (ex. West Virginia History for Ohio History). Reasonable justification is required for denial of a course waiver.

Transfers as a Senior in High School

The receiving state works with the sending school district to issue a diploma, if the student is a senior in High School (ex. using a memorandum of understanding between schools).



Importance of MIC3 in WV

- Military children transition between 6-9 times during K-12.
- Soldiers experiencing deployments can focus on missions knowing provisions protect their families.
- The participation of every state in the Compact supports military readiness across the nation.
- Soldiers with families transitioning from other states into West Virginia receive reasonable accommodations provided by Compact.
- Soldiers from West Virginia transitioning into other states for the completion of their active-duty military orders are supported by other states participating in the Compact.

West Virginia's Approach:

Proactive Communications with Educators and Military Families Statewide

Including -

- Annual State Superintendent's update message or presentation at County Superintendent meeting
- Distribution of brochures and handouts at conferences and events
- WV Common Ground Partnership Activities
 - WVDE MIC3 page on the Common Ground website
 - Purple Star School Military Family Points of Contact receive MIC3 training
 - MIC3 professional development video

MIC3 Annual Business Meeting (ABM)

- Meeting in 2025, was in Indianapolis, IN.
- Meeting in 2026, will be in Indianapolis, IN.
- Approval of the FY 2027 budget.
- Procedural votes occurring on bylaws and rules amendments, etc.

MIC3 Annual Business Meeting (ABM)

- West Virginia identified as fully compliant in FY 2025.
- [Rule Amendment for the Dues Formula](#) passed
 - States in tier 4 of military population, including West Virginia, have [dues raised](#) from \$2,300 annually to \$4,000 annually beginning in 2027.
 - The change to the formula was made due to inflation occurring since 2008, when the dues formula was last modified.
- States encouraged to make technical corrections to existing MIC3 Compact language. 20 of 50 States have taken this action.

MIC3 Annual Business Meeting (ABM)

- [Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policies](#) were amended to include State Commissioners, (MIC3) staff, and ex-officious and passed. Requires maintaining reasonable competence, acting ethically, and abiding by rules of the commission.
- [Compliance Fee Assessment Policy](#) was amended and passed, now requiring states to pay fees for instances when annual compliance goals are not met.



MILITARY INTERSTATE
CHILDREN'S COMPACT
COMMISSION

Cases Reported to the State and Qualifying for Provisions of MIC3:

FY 2020 – 1

FY 2022 – 0 (1 inquiry reported, did not qualify)

FY 2024 – 0 (1 inquiry reported, did not seek qualification)

FY 2025 – 1

FY 2026 - 0



Qualifying Inquiry Example – Occurring FY 2020

Issue: A student moved from WY to WV with a high school level integrated science course completed, but high school equivalency was not identified on the transcript and the name of the course did not match Earth and Space Science, which was a required prerequisite in WV for the student to begin Biology I at the appropriate grade level.

Resolution: The student received course credit equivalent to Earth and Space Science at the high school level in WV, allowing enrollment in Biology I at the appropriate grade level.

MIC3

MILITARY INTERSTATE
CHILDREN'S COMPACT
COMMISSION



Overview: Common Ground Partnership



Mission Established in 2011:
Supporting the Success of All Students

West Virginia Board of Education Career Readiness Goals:

**Every Student
Prepared for Success:**

Education, Employment, or Enlistment



24 Partnering Organizations

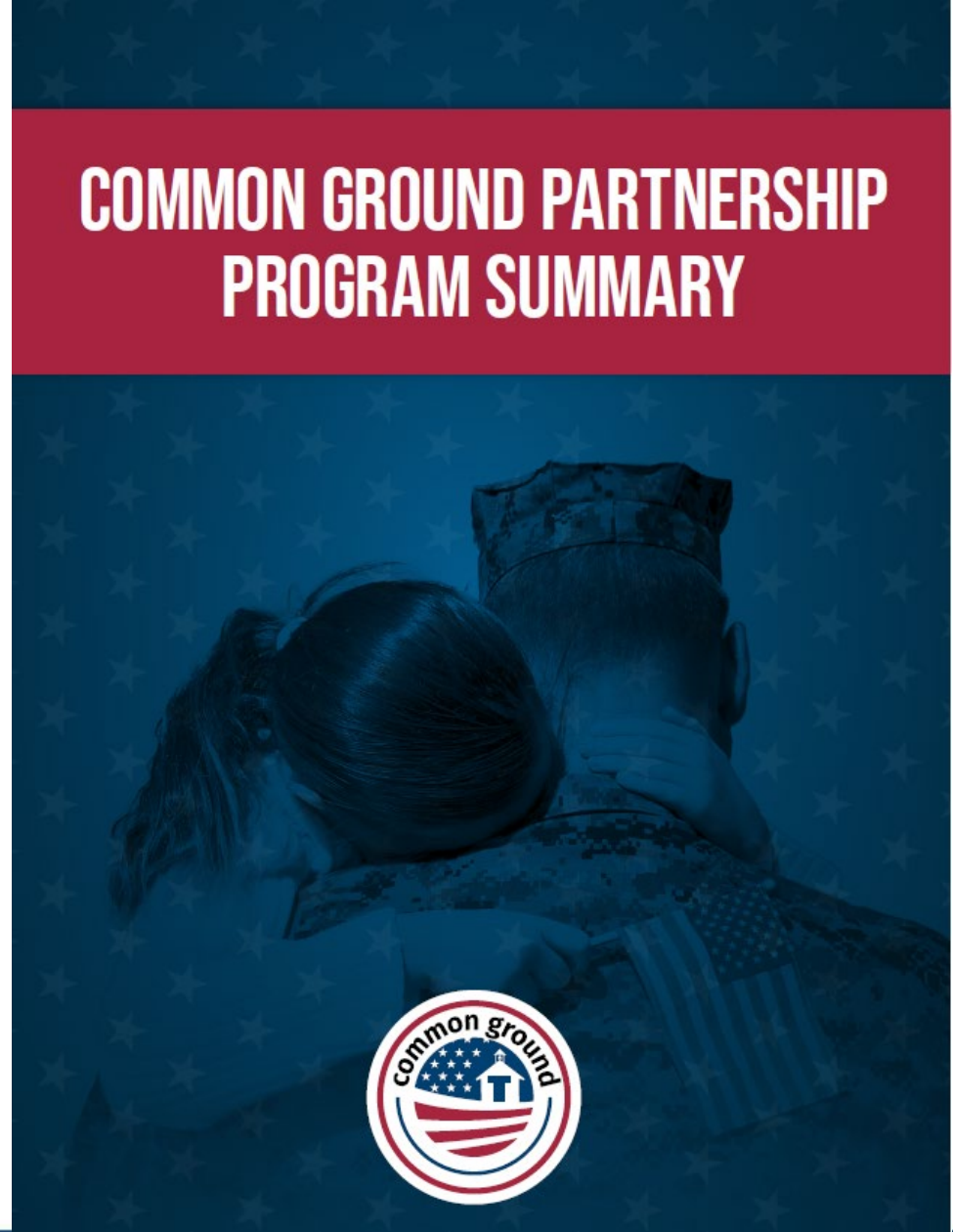
- 338th Recruiting Squadron of Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio
- Department of West Virginia Marine Corps League
- Military Entrance Processing Command Beckley
- Military Officers Association of America for West Virginia
- Navy Talent Acquisition Group Ohio River Valley
- Navy Talent Acquisition Group Pittsburgh, PA
- Office of the Governor of West Virginia
- Prevent Suicide West Virginia
- United States Army Recruiting Battalion Columbus, OH
- United States Army Recruiting Battalion Richmond, VA
- United States Marine Corps Recruiting Stations in West Virginia (KY and MD Command)
- West Virginia Board of Education
- West Virginia Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc.
- West Virginia Department of Education
- West Virginia Department of Veterans Assistance
- West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission
- Office of Veterans Education and Training Programs
- West Virginia National Guard
- West Virginia Task Force Miner
- West Virginia University Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math Technical Assistance Center
- West Virginia Veterans of Foreign Wars
- West Virginia Wing of the Civil Air Patrol
- United States Coast Guard Marine Safety Unit Huntington
- West Virginia American Legion

Common Ground Compact Signing



November 12, 2024

COMMON GROUND PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM SUMMARY



Speaker Series

Topics:

- Career exploration
- Promoting literacy
- Substance abuse prevention
- Bullying prevention
- Importance of staying in school and graduating
- American flag protocols
- Patriotic holidays or events
- Other





PURPLE STAR AWARD

WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Summary Document



OCTOBER 2025

History of the Purple Star Award Nationally



In 2017, the first Purple Star Award was issued by the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce. The award program was designed to become an effective vehicle for promoting information about special provisions made available to support the education of military families. While the award program is not an initiative of the [Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission](#) (MIC3), which oversees state implementation of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children statute, it serves to raise awareness of legal requirements established under the law. The award's requirements have led many schools to focus on the importance of fostering school climates and cultures that are both inviting and supportive of military-connected children. Since then, 42 additional states have created similar programs for recognizing schools displaying their commitment to meeting the needs of military-connected children.



History of the Purple Star Award In West Virginia



In 2021, on Pearl Harbor Day (December 7), the West Virginia Department of Education gathered with Common Ground Partners to proudly announce its first class of 130 schools and three districts receiving a West Virginia Purple Star Award, proving that the Mountain State is home to educational systems that are highly dedicated to being supportive of military families. In the most recent class, the number of Purple Star Schools and Districts grew to 315 schools and 17 districts. The West Virginia Purple Star Award program is one of many strategies being utilized by the Common Ground Partnership to support the success of all students and contributes to veterans perceiving the state as the greatest location in the nation to live, work, and raise a family.



West Liberty Elementary School (WLES) West Liberty, West Virginia



At WLES, Principal Drew Villani and staff identify military-connected students, using guidance from the Common Ground Partnership's website and the West Virginia Educational Information System (WVEIS), so that the school can provide appropriate educational and community resources. Students joining the school as transfers from another state receive information about the Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission (MIC3). Routine check-ins are held with students experiencing the deployment of a family member to ensure they are receiving adequate academic support and counseling services.

To connect education about empathy and academics to classroom learning experiences, the school has held special online communications between military children, the deployed parent, and classmates who get a chance to show that they are a team in hard times and learn about jobs which serve and protect the community. As service members return, the school has found many creative ways to celebrate reunification between students and soldiers. Students have also honored fallen soldiers by placing flags on their graves and participated in donation drives aimed to assist local veteran organizations. The array of events and resources WLES provides is among the best in the state and reflects success in their efforts to meet the needs of military families.



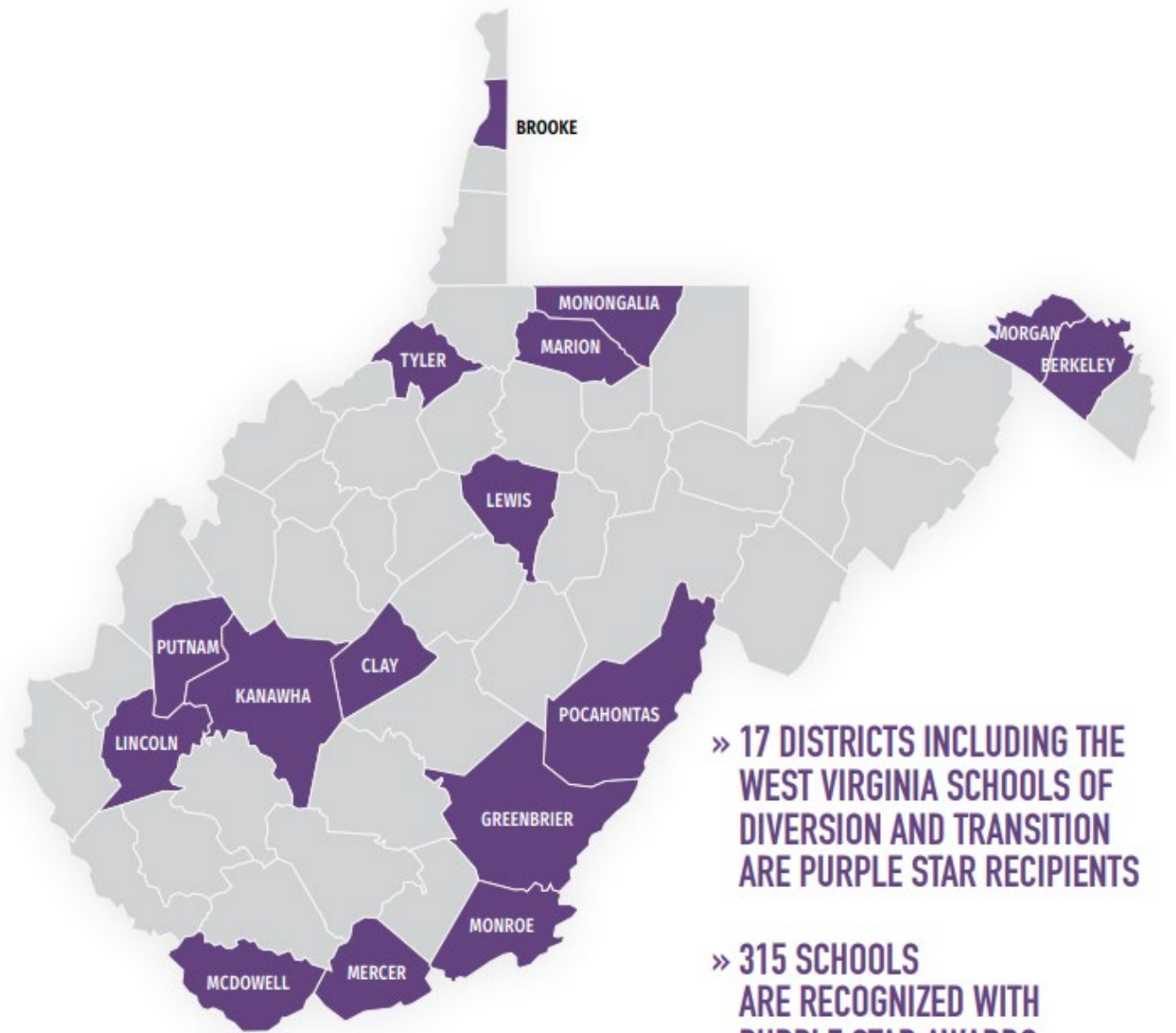
Scan to explore the school's website

Purple Star Schools



PURPLE STAR AWARD

WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



» 17 DISTRICTS INCLUDING THE WEST VIRGINIA SCHOOLS OF DIVERSION AND TRANSITION ARE PURPLE STAR RECIPIENTS

» 315 SCHOOLS ARE RECOGNIZED WITH PURPLE STAR AWARDS





Purple Star Informer Issue 17
November 4, 2025

Military Family Appreciation Month



To celebrate November as Military Family Appreciation Month, the Common Ground Partnership and the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) are proud to release the [West Virginia Purple Star Award Summary Document](#). This summary explains how Purple Star Schools and Districts are ensuring our state is the best place for veterans to educate and raise their families. It showcases the wonderful ways West Virginia's Purple Star Schools are meeting the needs of military-connected students and their families. Please share it with school staff who might consider applying to receive the award.

Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps



Tune in to [the WVDE's Facebook page](#) the week of November 17th for an entry in the Keeping Connected video series explaining the value of the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) by highlighting an exciting extracurricular activity, Raiders Competitions. These events challenge students to display their knowledge, demonstrate physical fitness, exhibit leadership skills, and work as a team. High schools interested in establishing a JROTC or a [county funded] National Defense Cadet Corps program may visit the [Common Ground Partnership's website](#) to learn about opportunities coming from every branch of the military.

Veteran Town Hall

The West Virginia Department of Veterans Assistance (WVDVA) is hosting a Veteran Town Hall event at the Stonewall Resort in Roanoke, West Virginia on Saturday, November 15, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. Veterans, military families, surviving spouses, and community partners are invited to hear from Cabinet Secretary Ryan Kennedy and participate in the moderated Q & A panel with Director of Benefits Steve Mooney, Women Veteran Program Director Jessica Lynch, and others. For complete details, call the WVDVA at (304) 558-3661.

Wreaths Across America



On December 13, 2025, more than two million volunteers and supporters will gather to remember, honor, and teach by participating in National Wreaths Across America Day. The Wreaths Across America organization is a non-profit 501(c)(3). Learn how to [get involved](#) in the day's activities.

JROTC, NDCC, FLP

- Veteran instructors
- Instill citizenship, public service, personal responsibility, and a sense of accomplishment

JROTC and NDCC

- 2024 NDAA removed the statutory requirement of “fair and equitable distribution” of units throughout the nation
- 2025 NDAA approved up to 200 additional units nationally

Parents

Discover resources for parenting, testing, and college preparation. Learn about high school programs which instill citizenship, promote graduation and post-secondary education.

Areas of Support

ParentGuidance.org →

ParentGuidance.org is a 24/7 online platform to help families, educators, and other caregivers assist students with their mental health needs. Tools include one-on-one coaching, on-demand parenting sessions and online courses.

CFWW →

CFWW is a free website from the WV Higher Education Policy Commission that offers college and career exploration and planning resources.

U.S. Selective Service →

Federal law requires nearly all male U.S. citizens and male immigrants, 18 to 25, to register with the Selective Service. The Selective Service System ensures operational readiness in a fair and equitable manner. Failure to register could result in loss of federal student loans, job training, or government jobs.

Armed Forces Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) →

The ASVAB tests students' skills and identifies their jobs and career interests. The assessment may be used for enlistment purposes. Students interested in help preparing for the ASVAB can access self-help resources or request a mentor.

March2Success →

March2Success is a free, online and self-paced academic readiness program providing high school and college students assistance in preparing for the SAT, ACT, and ASVAB. Educators can also access free resources to supplement their lesson plans.

Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) →

Programs offered by branches of the United States Armed Forces to instill the values of citizenship, public service to the United States, personal responsibility and a sense of accomplishment among students.

Future Leaders Program (FLP) →

A program offered by the West Virginia National Guard in several high schools across the state. It utilizes a curriculum which promotes leadership, citizenship, and life skills among students.

Mountaineer Challenge Academy (MCA) →

A National Guard Youth Challenge Program with the mission of training and mentoring selected at-risk youth to become contributing members of society in a quasi-military environment, during a 22-week residential and one-year Post-Residential follow-up period.

JROTC and NDCC Program Application Information for Schools

Schools seeking to host a JROTC or National Defense Cadet Corps (NDCC) program may apply.

To review the requirements and application process of each individual branch of military service, review the following links:

- [Army](#)
 - [How to establish a program brochure \[PDF\]](#)
 - [JROTC program guide for administrators \[PDF\]](#)
 - ["The Power of U. S. Army Junior ROTC" brochure \[PDF\]](#)
- [Navy](#)
- [Marines](#)
- [Coast Guard](#)
- [Air Force](#)

JROTC Raiders Challenge Highlights

As part of our Keeping ConnectED video series, we featured various JROTC programs competing in a Raiders Challenge. These students receive real-world skills that can be applied to several career fields as a result of their participation in JROTC.



April is...



MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

Our PURPLE UP!

day is...

April

23rd

WEAR PURPLE

to support our military students!

www.MilitaryChild.org



[View the Purple Up Month Toolkit](#)

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD SPIRIT WEEK



MONDAY 20 APRIL

Military Monday

Army, Air Force, Marine, Navy, Coast Guard... wear a shirt to show your favorite branch.

TUESDAY 21 APRIL

Crazy Camo Day

Wear your favorite camouflage clothing.

WEDNESDAY 22 APRIL

Red, White & Blue Day

Wear red, white, and blue to support our military families.

THURSDAY 23 APRIL

Purple Up Day

Wear purple in honor of our military kids.

FRIDAY 24 APRIL

RED Day

Wear red to remember everyone deployed.

Thank you for taking part in supporting military kids!

We are excited to see your photos supporting our military kids during Spirit Week! Email Susan and Robert below or post to social media using the hashtags:

#NGCYS26 #WVNGCYP #COMMONGROUNDWV

Send photos to:

Susan Izzo: susan.c.izzo.nfg@army.mil | Robert Mellace: rmellace@k12.wv.us



West Virginia DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



MILITARY SIGNING WEEK

April 20 - 24, 2026

- School registration launched on December 8, 2025
- 20 Schools holding local events recognizing students committing to public service in the military
- Review the [complete event list](#) on the Common Ground Partnership website



2026 Event Week Schedule (April 20-24)

County	School	Date	Time
Pleasants	Saint Marys High School	Monday, April 20, 2026	9:00am
Lewis	Lewis County High School	Monday, April 20, 2026	1:00pm
McDowell	Riverview High School	Tuesday, April 21, 2026	9:00am
Cabell	Cabell Midland High School	Tuesday, April 21, 2026	6:00pm
Grant	Petersburg High School	Tuesday, April 21, 2026	To Be Determined
Greenbrier	Greenbrier East High School	Wednesday, April 22, 2026	9:00am
Marion	North Marion High School	Wednesday, April 22, 2026	12:30pm
Preston	Preston High School	Thursday, April 23, 2026	9:00am
Berkeley	Martinsburg High School	Thursday, April 23, 2026	9:00am
Monroe	James Monroe High School	Thursday, April 23, 2026	10:00am
Marion	Fairmont Senior High School	Thursday, April 23, 2026	12:00pm
Berkeley	Hedgesville High School	Thursday, April 23, 2026	1:00pm
Kanawha	Riverside High School	Thursday, April 23, 2026	1:15pm

Military Signing Events Outside Scheduled Dates

County	School	Date	Time
Marion	East Fairmont High School	Wednesday, March 25, 2026	1:00pm
Ritchie	Ritchie County High School	Thursday, April 9, 2026	10:00am
Berkeley	Musselman High School	Thursday, April 30, 2026	1:00pm
Ohio	Wheeling Park High School	Friday, May 1, 2026	9:00am
Mercer	Mercer County Technical Education Center	Tuesday, May 5, 2026	9:00am and 1:00pm
Barbour	Philip Barbour High School	May (Date To Be Determined)	8:30am
Berkeley	Spring Mills High School	To Be Determined	To Be Determined



MILITARY SIGNING WEEK

First Military Signing Week on April 25 – 29, 2022, and related events

10 Schools participated

Second Military Signing Week on April 24 – 28, 2023, and related events

35 Schools participated

181 Students recognized

Third Military Signing Week on April 22 – 26, 2024, and related events

46 Schools participated

259 Students recognized

Fourth Military Signing Week on April 7 – 11, 2025, and related events

49 Schools participated

288 Students recognized

Speaker Series Educator Request System

WVDE will reach out to all military partners to determine which of their branch's unique opportunities they would like to have highlighted on the website.

A system of notification, similar to the Speaker Series or Military Signing Week is being developed for launch in Summer/Fall 2026.



Example: Army (Active and Reserve) STEM Trucks



Proposed cooperation with two schools as a model:

- 1 Elementary school from Kanawha County
- 1 Elementary school from Putnam County

Goals:

- Support in planning outdoor learning spaces of elementary schools
- Veteran guest visits with students and professional development



Cooperative Communications:

- E-mails
- Social media posts
- Summary rack card
- Transition assistance information



Veterans may be eligible for an initial Professional Teaching Certificate under W. Va. Code §18A-3-2a(a)(1)(D).

Option 5 Steps

STEP ONE **Submit Application (Form MR) for Eligibility Determination**

- » Include proof of honorable service in most recent discharge (i.e. DD 214, NGB 22, or NGB 23)
- » Submit official transcripts showing a minimum of a conferred bachelor's degree from an accredited institution of higher education related to a teaching position
- » Meet GPA requirements (2.5 minimum or exemption per WV Licensure Testing Directory)
- » You'll be notified which endorsement areas match your degree
- » If none qualify, explore certification under Options 1-4 at wvde.us/educator-staff-development/become-teacher/plan-your-future

STEP TWO **Meeting Testing Requirements for the Identified Endorsement Areas**

- » Pass basic skills and content tests or qualify for testing exemptions

STEP THREE **Apply for Teaching Positions**

- » Seek jobs in the endorsement area(s) in West Virginia county school

STEP FOUR **Submit Licensure Application Form 20M**

- » When the most successful applicant for the position is selected, submit Form 20M with passing test scores or exemption proof in the eligible endorsement area

Lead. Teach. Inspire.

Members of the United States armed forces gain **valuable skills and strong values** during their military service, making them great role models for students.

The program helps veterans explore five paths to becoming certified educators, including one that honors military service, referred to as **Option 5**.



Start today at teachwv.com



Operation Recognition

Operation Recognition provides qualifying veterans of WWII, the Korean War, and the Vietnam Conflict with a high school diploma

Cooperative Communications:

- E-mails
- Social media
- One-page flyer distribution (on right)



West Virginia National Guard in Education

MCA and FLP



Roundtable Discussion:



Closing Remarks

Compact Commissioner:

Mr. Nickolas Lambruno

nickolas.w.lambruno@wv.gov

Military Family Education Liaison:

Mr. Robert Mellace

rmellace@k12.wv.us or 1-304-558-3119