

Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children Fact Sheet

What is the Interstate Compact?

The Interstate Compact is a powerful, durable, and adaptive tool for ensuring cooperative action among the states. The Compact provides a state-developed structure for collaborative and dynamic action: developing and enforcing stringent standards, while providing an adaptive structure which can evolve to meet new and increased demands over time.

The Compact is designed to resolve transition issues (primarily procedural and policy concerns) only and does not impact the quality of education nor require a state to waive any of its state standards or exit exams. The Compact provisions specifically provide for flexibility and local discretion in course and program placement and on-time graduation within criteria established by the state. ND's Century Code will still take precedence.

ENROLLMENT

Records

The receiving school of a member state agrees to accept the unofficial student records to enroll and place the student, pending the receipt of official records. Once a student is enrolled, the new school will request official records. A school district in a member state must send these records within 10 days of receiving a request. What constitutes an "unofficial record" is determined in the rule-making process of the Compact Commission.

Immunizations

A child transferring to a member state who needs additional immunizations is allowed to enroll and begin attending school. He or she is then given 30 days to obtain the needed immunizations. If a series of immunizations is required, it must be started within 30 days of enrollment.

Kindergarten and 1st Grade Entrance Age

A student who moves to a member state may continue in the same grade in the receiving state regardless of the entrance age requirements in that state if he or she has already stated K or 1st grade in an accredited school in the sending state. This also allows the child to move onto the next grade level regardless of age requirements if they successfully completed K or 1st grade in the sending state.

PLACEMENT and ATTENDANCE

Course and Educational Program Placement

A receiving school district in a member state agrees to initially honor placement of a student based on the student's enrolment in the sending state as long as that school has a similar or equivalent program. However, the compact allows the school to perform an evaluation to ensure the child is placed appropriately according to the new school's requirements. The Compact does not require the receiving school district to create a course or program that is not currently offered or where space is not available, but does require that the district demonstrate reasonable accommodation.

Special Education Services

The Compact requires that students covered by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) receive the same services (although not necessarily identical programs) identified in the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) from the sending state. The receiving state may perform an evaluation to ensure the appropriate placement for the student.

Placement Flexibility

The Compact encourages school districts to take extra steps to determine if they can waive course or program prerequisites where similar coursework has been completed in the sending school district. This will allow students to take more advanced courses rather than repeat similar basic courses.

Absence Related to Deployment Activities

The Compact allows students to request additional, excused absences to visit with their parent or legal guardian during deployment, which is defined as one month before the service member's departure from their home station through six months after return to their home station. As with other provisions, school districts are given leeway in determining whether or not to grant these additional absences.

ELIGIBILITY

Enrollment

During deployments, it is often necessary for students to stay with a non-custodial parent or guardian serving *in loco parentis*. If that person resides outside of the student's current school district, the new school district may not charge tuition to the student. If the non-custodial parent or person serving *in loco parentis* lives outside the student's current school geographic area and is willing to transport the student back to the current school, the child may continue to attend his/her current school. The Compact also stipulates that the POA for guardianship given during deployment is sufficient for enrollment and all other actions requiring parental participation or consent.

Extracurricular Participation

Member states agree to be creative in providing transferring students the opportunity for inclusion in extracurricular activities regardless of the deadlines for application as long as the child is otherwise qualified. Although the receiving school must demonstrate they are making reasonable accommodation for military students, they are not required to hold open or create additional spaces. Privately run organizations are not subject to provisions under the Compact.

GRADUATION

Course Waivers

The Compact allows school districts to waive courses required for graduation if similar coursework has been completed in another school district. (Example: various state history courses). Waivers are not mandatory under the Compact, but a school district must show reasonable justification for denial of a waiver.

Exit Exams

School districts also agree to demonstrate flexibility in accepting sending state exit or end-of-course exams, national achievement tests, or alternative testing in lieu of testing requirements for graduation to the receiving state. Mandatory waiver of the exit exams or acceptance of alternative results is not required under the Compact and each state may determine what they are willing to accept or require.

Transfers During Senior Year

If a student moves in his/her senior year and the receiving state cannot waive graduation requirements for similar coursework or make accommodations in testing (A & B above), then the receiving school district agrees to work with the sending school district to obtain a diploma so the student can graduate on time. Of course, the student must have met the graduation requirements in the sending state.