
Education Committee

SB 5367

Brief Description: Creating the purple star award for military friendly schools.

Sponsors: Senators Wagoner, Bailey, Warnick, Honeyford and Wilson, L.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Establishes the Purple Star Award, and related administrative and eligibility requirements, to recognize military friendly schools that show a commitment to students and families connected to the nation's military.

Hearing Date: 3/14/19

Staff: Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

Background:

Legislation adopted in 2009 made Washington a member state of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children (Compact). All 50 states are member states under the Compact.

The purpose of the Compact, which applies only to public schools, is to remove barriers to educational success imposed on children of military families because of frequent moves and deployment by their parents. The Compact, in part, is intended to:

- facilitate the timely enrollment of children of military families and ensuring that they are not placed at a disadvantage due to difficulty in the transfer of education records or variations in entrance and age requirements;
- facilitate the student placement process through which children of military families are not disadvantaged by variations in attendance requirements, scheduling, sequencing, grading, course content, or assessment;
- facilitate the qualification and eligibility for enrollment, educational programs, and participation in extracurricular academic, athletic, and social activities; and

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- promote flexibility and cooperation between the educational system, parents, and the student in order to achieve educational success for the student.

Each member state, either through the creation of a state council or the use of an existing body or board, is required to provide for the implementation of the Compact. In Washington, the Interstate Compact Council (State Council) has been established to fulfill those obligations.

The Compact requires the State Council to include: the Superintendent of Public Instruction; a superintendent of a school district with a high concentration of military children; a representative from a military installation; one representative each from the legislative and executive branches of government; and other offices and stakeholder groups the State Council deems appropriate. The Compact also requires the State Council to appoint or designate a military family education liaison to assist military families and the state in implementing the Compact.

Summary of Bill:

Creation and Issuance of Purple Star Award to Military Friendly Schools.

The Purple Star Award (Award) is created to recognize military friendly schools that show a commitment to students and families connected to the nation's military. The award is to be issued every two years, beginning in 2020.

To be eligible for the Award, a school, or school district on behalf of the school, must complete and submit an application to the State Council, and as described below, must complete delineated mandatory actions and at least one optional activity.

Award Eligibility—Required and Optional Activities.

To be considered for the Award, a school must:

- maintain a dedicated page on its website featuring resources for military families; and
- have a staff point of contact for military students and families. The school staff point of contact must:
 - work jointly with the state military family education liaison of the State Council to serve military families;
 - serve as the primary liaison between military families and the school;
 - complete professional development on special considerations for military students and families under relevant state and federal law; and
 - identify and inform teachers of military-connected students in their classrooms and the special considerations military families and students should receive under the Compact.

To receive an Award, a school must also complete one or more of following optional activities:

- provide professional development for additional staff on special considerations for military students and families;
- be a part of a district that passes a resolution publicizing the school's support for military children and families; or
- host a military recognition event that demonstrates a military friendly culture.

Administrative Duties.

In implementing the Award, the State Council must:

- create a simple application for a school or school district to submit for consideration to receive an Award;
- establish a timeline for submittal of an application for consideration and for announcement of the Award recipients;
- create criteria to use when reviewing the applications and determining which school or schools will receive the Award; and
- determine whether an unlimited number of Awards will be issued every two years and whether a school that receives an Award may be eligible to apply again in subsequent years.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on March 11, 2019.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.