



EFM LEGAL ASSISTANCE AND POLICY BRANCH

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Parent Resources Series

Top 5: Back-to-School Tips for EFMP Families

- 1. Request all documentation**
- 2. Military Children's Interstate Compact**
- 3. IEP Review**
- 4. Transfers**
- 5. Transitions**

1. Request all documentation

- ✚ The information you provide may be instrumental in your child receiving comparable services seamlessly; without that information, your child may experience a lapse in services.
- ✚ In the world of special education, there are lots of meetings, paperwork, and documentation to keep track of, whether enrichment, gifted, accelerated, special education or 504 services. Try to ask and keep copies of all records in an organized manner.
- ✚ Hand carrying school records is vital in a school move. Do not send any binder or record-keeping folders with your move, keep them to ensure you can access them in a timely manner and so they do not get lost. The receiving school may send a formal request for records to the sending school, and the documents you provide at the time of registration may be the only information the new school has to make informed placement decisions.
- ✚ Do not assume all documents or records are kept by the school and that all of them will be sent to the incoming school or grade.
- ✚ A new receiving school has a duty to take reasonable steps to promptly obtain the child's records, including the IEP and supporting documents related to special education from the previous school.

2. Military Interstate Children's Compact

- ✚ PCS and back to school go hand and hand. The average military child will move 6 to 9 times during their school career, an average of 3 times more frequently than non-military families (Ruff & Kiem, 2014).
- ✚ Is an agreement amongst states that was created to assist military kids to experience seamless transfers between schools with consistency in transfers, enrollment, attendance, eligibility and graduation requirements.
- ✚ Receiving schools must initially honor student placement based upon enrollment in the previous educational program, comparable special education services, and waive prerequisites for placements. (among other rights)
- ✚ For graduations, schools shall accept exit exams from sending schools, course requirements may be waived for similar completed coursework, and the sending school shall ensure receipt of diploma if the student is ineligible to graduate from the receiving school.
- ✚ Although all states have signed on to a version, gaps in education transfers still exist.

3. IEP Review

- ✚ The IEP is the cornerstone of your child's educational program, so it's important that you have a clear understanding of it.
- ✚ An initial evaluation must be conducted within 60 days of receiving parental consent for the evaluation to determine if the child has a qualifying disability and to determine the educational needs of the child.
- ✚ The IEP team must meet at least annually to determine whether the goals for the child are being achieved and to review the IEP.
- ✚ Reevaluations must be conducted at least once every three years, unless the parent and the school agree that reevaluation is unnecessary, or earlier at the request of a school or parent.
- ✚ The IEP review or development is a collaborative process between the school and the parents, parents do not have an obligation to accept all or some of the content of a proposed IEP, any proposed changes or any refusals to provide certain accommodations or services.

4. Transfers

- ✚ For moves during the school year, IDEA clearly states the new district must provide comparable services until new evaluations or IEP is developed.
- ✚ For summer school moves, the state has the choice to adopt the existing IEP, develop a new one, or to re-evaluate the child.
- ✚ Calling the person in charge of registration, likely a counselor or registrar, several weeks prior to the move will give time to copy these documents. It will also give the counselor or registrar the opportunity to let you know what you need to do to withdraw your child from the school.
- ✚ Meeting your child's principal or assistant principal, counselor, and teachers will go far to establish a personal connection. They may go further out of their way to ensure your child adjusts well.
- ✚ Before school starts, particularly Kindergarten and 6th grade, double-check if the new school or next grade level requires updated shots or other special accommodations, testing, or documentation that were not requested of the previous schools.

5. Transitions

- ✚ From the time a child is 16 years old or will turn 16 during the school year, the IEP must include appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon the student's potential.
- ✚ The IEP shall also include the transition services needed to assist the child in reaching those goals.
- ✚ A special needs child can participate in IEP meetings, and be part of the IEP team at any age, but it may be particularly relevant when transitions are being discussed.
- ✚ Specific transition goals, special education, and related services designed to meet a child with special needs shall be those that prepare them for further education, employment, and/or independent living.
- ✚ Parents can request any training for themselves that they believe necessary to enforce and continue those independent living skills or educational goals at home.

Closing reminder – Check out the video library on DAF Family Vector

<https://daffamilyvector.us.af.mil/MemberSite/Content?TaxonId=4> or see your nearest legal assistance office to consult with an attorney for any issues your family may be facing.