



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

DIRECTOR

November 9, 2023

Dear State Director of Special Education and State Part C Coordinator,

Our nation depends on the strength and readiness of our military. Thus, we all have an obligation to care for our military community, including ensuring high-expectations supported through a high-quality education for military-connected children with disabilities. As you are well-aware, children with disabilities and their families face many challenges. The families of military-connected children with disabilities may also have the added challenges of frequent separation from family and support networks and disruptions in the continuity of early intervention services and special education and related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) because of frequent transitions. The purpose of this letter is to provide States with a useful resource to share with parents and families of military-connected children with disabilities.

The White House, the United States Department of Education (Department) and other Executive branch agencies have many resources to support our military families, but those resources are scattered across websites. Today, I am delighted to share with you a [list that pulls together useful key resources](#) from across the Federal government for States to provide to parents and families of military-connected children with disabilities. Some are familiar, including the 2023 IDEA general supervision guidance and OSEP's 2022 letter on ensuring a high-quality education for highly mobile children. The combination of these two resources offer a clear explanation of the procedures every military-connected family with a child who is eligible for or receiving IDEA services should expect from the education system when they move from one jurisdiction to another.

Moreover, as we think about military-connected children with disabilities, we know that transitions are a fact of life. Through *Expect, Engage, and Empower: Successful Transitions for All!*, OSEP will provide resources that support universal high expectations for children with disabilities and resources to engage families about what their child wants to experience as an adult. We are encouraging families and schools to consider the multiple transitions in their child's life and how each stage — from transition from early intervention services to special education and related services to adult services — is informed by the previous experience. It is critical that communication about high expectations and planning for future transitions is a given and not an afterthought.

Families serve as the most central connection to children with disabilities, including military-connected children with disabilities, and their role is therefore critical in ensuring high expectations and supporting them through successful transitions throughout their educational careers. I appreciate the work that you do to support military-connected children with disabilities and their families. Thank you for your continued partnership and broadly disseminating the attached resource document.

Sincerely,

/s/

Valerie C. Williams