Date of Hearing:

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS
Pilar Schiavo, Chair
AB 2467 (Committee on Education) – As Introduced February 20, 2026

SUBJECT: Pupil enrollment: military dependents.

SUMMARY: Expands the documentation and housing options for military families, enabling them to register their children in a California school district ahead of their relocation. Contains an urgency clause to ensure that the provisions of this bill go into immediate effect upon enactment. Specifically, **this bill**:

1) Clarifies the documentation an active-duty military parent can use to establish residency in a school district for the advance enrollment of their child includes any of the following:

    a) Property tax payment receipts;
    b) Rental property contract, lease, or payment receipts;
    c) Utility service contract, statement, or payment receipts;
    d) Pay stubs;
    e) Voter registration;
    f) Correspondence from a government agency; and,
    g) Declaration of residency executed by the parent or legal guardian of a pupil.

2) Expands the addresses an active-duty military parent can use for purposes of establishing residency in a school district for the advance enrollment of their child, to include an off-base hotel, on-base military housing, and other temporary housing.

EXISTING LAW:

1) Defines a "student who is a child of a military family" as a school-aged child living in the household of an active-duty service member. This is the same definition used in current law for purposes of Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children (Compact). (Education Code (EC) § 49701)

2) States that a pupil complies with the residency requirements for school attendance in a school district, if the pupil is a pupil whose parent is transferred or is pending transfer to a military installation within the state while on active military duty pursuant to an official military order. Requires that a parent provide proof of residence in the school district within ten days after the published arrival date provided on official documentation. Permits parents to use the following addresses as proof of residence:

    a) A temporary on-base billeting facility;
    b) A purchased or leased home or apartment; or,
    c) Federal government or public-private venture off-base military housing. (EC § 48204.3.)

3) Establishes the Compact, which addresses educational transition challenges faced by children in military families, which, among other provisions:

a) Requires a receiving state to make reasonable accommodations and modifications to address the needs of incoming students with disabilities, subject to an existing Section 504 or Title II Plan, to provide the student with equal access to education. States that this does not preclude the school in the receiving state from performing subsequent evaluations to ensure appropriate placement of the student; and,

b) Requires, in the event that official education records cannot be released to the parents for the purpose of transfer, the custodian of the records in the sending state to prepare and furnish to the parent a complete set of unofficial educational records containing uniform information as determined by the Interstate Commission on Educational Opportunity for Military Children. Requires, upon receipt of the unofficial education records by a school in the receiving state, that the school enroll and appropriately place the student based on the information provided in the unofficial records, pending validation by the official records, as quickly as possible. (EC § 49701)

4) Prohibits a school district of residence from prohibiting the transfer of a student who is a child of an active-duty military duty parent to a school in any school district, if the school district to which the parents of the student applies approves the application for transfer. (EC § 49700)

5) Requires a local educational agency (LEA) to accept coursework satisfactorily completed by a student of a military family while attending another public school, even if the student did not complete the entire course and requires that the student be issued full or partial credit for work completed. (EC § 51225.2)

6) Prohibits a student who is a child of a military family from being required to take a course if the student has satisfactorily completed the entire course in another school. (EC § 51225.2)

7) Requires that a student who is the child of a military family be allowed to remain in his or her school of origin, and to matriculate with his or her peers in accordance with the established feeder patterns of school districts. (EC § 48204.6)

FISCAL EFFECT: This bill has not been analyzed by a fiscal committee.

COMMENTS:

1) **PURPOSE OF THIS BILL**. According to the author, "AB 2467 addresses challenges in enrolling children of military families in school, strengthening local implementation of Advance Enrollment by making technical changes to existing law, and removing barriers and clarifying requirements for school districts. It reinforces California's commitment to being a welcoming state for military families and ensures a stable educational environment for their children."

2) **BACKGROUND**.

   a) *Advance enrollment for military-connected students.* California enacted the first Advance Enrollment law in 2016, which allows military families to enroll their children prior to entering the state. This policy is intended to minimize delays in school attendance for students relocating to California due to a military transfer.

Current law requires that a student whose parent is transferred or is pending transfer to a military installation within the state while on active military duty pursuant to an official military order has complied with the residency requirements for school attendance in any school district. While it has been effective in easing a major challenge for families, after a decade of practice, some administrative barriers to implementation and access have been identified by families and school staff.

Additionally, according to recent research (Karre, 2023) examining the effectiveness of policies such as Advance Enrollment states have enacted to support military-connected students, the following challenges were identified:

i) *Implementation*: The study found wide disparities in how states and local districts implemented these policies, creating confusion and frustration for families moving between states;

ii) *Awareness*: A significant finding was the lack of awareness of Advance Enrollment policies among both military families and school personnel. This information gap is a major obstacle to the use of the policy; and,

iii) *Information Accessibility*: Even when policies existed, information about them was often difficult to find on state and school district websites, placing an additional burden on families during a move.

b) *Military-connected students in California.* California is home to the largest number of active-duty military personnel in the country, with over 156,000 active-duty personnel, (2023, Statista). According to the Defense Manpower Data Center, as of August 2024 there were 53,607 military connected students of active-duty parents in California. These students are affiliated with 30 different military installations throughout the state, with the largest concentration in San Diego County.

c) *Academic achievement of military-connected students in California is slightly higher than the average.* Until recently there has been little published data regarding academic outcomes of students from military families. One area of inquiry has been the effect of long parental deployments on students' academic performance, and one study (Richardson, 2011) found that students whose parents have been deployed 19 months or longer have modestly lower scores across all subjects and irrespective of the rank, component, seniority, or gender of the parent. Another study (Engel, 2010) of students in Department of Defense (DoD) schools found that long deployments and deployments during the month of testing had the most adverse effects, and that evidence suggests that these effects may persist for several years. A 2011 policy brief from the University of Southern California School of Social Work notes that "Living with fear that a parent – or another relative – serving in the military is in danger can traumatize a child to the point where it significantly affects their ability to function in the school environment."

Other research has focused on risk factors that are associated with poor academic outcomes. One study (Sullivan, 2015), using data from the 2013 administration of the California Healthy Kids Survey, found that students from military families had greater odds of experiencing substance use, physical violence, and nonphysical harassment than their peers. Another study (Gilreath, 2016) using the same data set found that California

military-connected youth are at a higher risk for suicidal ideation, plans, attempts, and attempts requiring medical care because of suicidal behaviors.

The federal Every Student Succeeds Act, enacted in 2015, requires states to identify military students with a unique military identifier, in order to allow military student data to be analyzed as a separate subgroup. The identifier is intended to help assess military student performance, as well as to shed light on the relationship between military life and dependent child development.

Since the 2018-19 school year, California summative assessment data in English language arts and mathematics has been disaggregated for students from military families as a separate subgroup. These data show that, for the 2024-25 school year, 52% of military-connected students met or exceeded standards in English language arts, compared to a statewide average of 49%. In mathematics, 40% of military students met or exceeded standard, compared to a statewide average of 37%.

d) *Effect of high mobility on academic success.* According to the DoD, children from military families move an average of six to nine times during a school career, and 33% of these children are in transition annually. A 2012 report by the Military Child Education Coalition for the U.S. Army found that "graduation requirements, tiered diplomas, prerequisite courses, grading variations, and state high stakes testing are all challenges to the student in transition."

Numerous studies indicate that student mobility is associated with poor educational outcomes. One meta-analysis (Mehana, 2004) on the effects of school mobility on reading and math achievement in the elementary grades found the equivalent of a three-to-four-month performance disadvantage. Another study (Reynolds, 2009) found that frequent mobility was associated with significantly lower reading and math achievement by up to a third of a standard deviation, and that students who moved three or more times had rates of school dropout that was nearly one-third of a standard deviation higher than those who were school stable. One longitudinal study (Temple, 1999) found that half of the one-year difference between mobile and non-mobile students could be attributed to mobility, and that it is "frequent, rather than occasional, mobility that significantly increases the risk of underachievement." Another longitudinal study (Herbers, 2014) found that students who experience more school changes between kindergarten and twelfth grade are less likely to complete high school on time, complete fewer years of schooling, and attain lower levels of occupational prestige, even when controlling for poverty. Results of this study indicated more negative outcomes associated with moves later in the grade school career, particularly between fourth and eighth grade.

e) *Compact.* The DoD, in collaboration with the National Center for Interstate Compacts and the Council of State Governments, developed the Compact to address educational transition issues for children of military families.

The goal of the Compact is to ensure that the children of military families are afforded the same opportunities for educational success as other children and are not penalized or delayed in achieving their educational goals. States participating in the Compact work to coordinate graduation requirements, transfer of records, course placement, and other administrative policies. According to the DoD, all 50 States and the District of Columbia

participate in the Compact. California adopted the Compact in the state's Education Code in 2009. The Compact addresses several topics, including:

i) Timely enrollment;
ii) Transfer of school records;
iii) School placement;
iv) Eligibility for enrollment and participation in school programs, athletics, and extracurricular activities; and,
v) On-time graduation.

A 2014 California Department of Education (CDE) review of the Compact's implementation found variations across districts. The report suggested that California undertake a more comprehensive effort to ensure that school district personnel and military families are maximally familiar with the provisions of the Compact so that its provisions are applied consistently. The report also found that California's membership in the Compact has substantially aided both school districts and military families by alleviating many of the educational difficulties military children encounter due to frequent moves from one school in one state to another.

f) *The CDE recognizes military-friendly schools.* The Purple Star Program, established in 2022 and codified in 2024, identifies schools which are the most committed and best equipped to meet the unique needs of military-connected students and their families. The Program was designed to help mitigate the challenges of high mobility by setting standards and publicly designating military-friendly schools. According to the CDE, the Purple Star Program's true value derives from its potential to:

i) Centralize and make knowledge accessible;
ii) Develop stakeholder networks; and,
iii) Support schools in cultivating and communicating cultural competency in supporting military-connected families.

In 2026, 75 schools across California were designated Purple Star schools.

3) **SUPPORT**. The DoD writes, "With approximately 47,000 active-duty military school-age children attending school in this state, California is in a unique position to have a highly impactful positive effect on the educational experiences of military children and families.

Military-connected students embody resilience, adaptability and a global perspective -- qualities that enrich every classroom they enter. As states continue to enact policies that support these students, there is a tremendous opportunity to build on existing momentum by strengthening implementation, increasing awareness and ensuring equitable access to information. By embracing enhancements across key areas of education policy, states can create more inclusive, responsive and effective education systems. These efforts not only benefit military families but also elevate the overall quality and equity of education for all students.

California led the nation by enacting the first Advance Enrollment law in 2016, which allows military families to enroll their children prior to entering the state. While it has been effective in easing a major challenge for families, after a decade in practice, some administrative

barriers to implementation and access have been identified by families and school staff.

AB 2467 will address implementation challenges by making minor, but important technical changes to existing law. Enactment of this bill will reinforce California's commitment to being a welcoming state for military families and will continue to facilitate a stable educational environment for their children."

3) **DOUBLE REFERRAL**. This bill is double referred, it passed the Assembly Committee on Education by a vote of 9-0 on April 8, 2026.

4) **PREVIOUS LEGISLATION**.

   a) AB 1412 (Jeff Gonzalez), Chapter 453, Statutes of 2025, makes changes to special education requirements pertaining to enrollment, records transfer, and comparable services for military-connected students.

   b) SB 920 (Seyarto), Chapter 923, Statutes of 2024, codifies the existing Purple Star School Designation Program, which was established by the CDE in 2022.

   c) ACR 53 (Ward), Chapter 53, Statutes of 2021, requests the CDE to establish and manage a program designating schools that support military-connected students as Purple Star Schools and use the Military Child Education Coalition for resources and information regarding the Purple Star School Program.

   d) AB 2949 (Gloria), Chapter 327, Statutes of 2018, requires that a student who is the child of a military family be allowed to remain in his or her school of origin and to matriculate with his or her peers in accordance with the established feeder patterns of school districts.

   e) AB 365 (Muratsuchi), Chapter 739, Statutes of 2017, extends to students from military families certain rights regarding exemptions from local graduation requirements and acceptance of partial credit, which are currently afforded to other groups of highly mobile students.

   f) SB 455 (Newman), Chapter 239, Statutes of 2017, establishes that a student whose parent is transferred or is pending transfer to a military installation within the state while on active military duty pursuant to an official military order has complied with the residency requirements for school attendance in any school district.

   g) AB 306 (Hadley), Chapter 771, Statutes of 2016, prohibits a school district of residence from prohibiting the transfer of a student who is a child of an active military duty parent to a school in any school district if the school district to which the parents of the student applies approves the application for transfer.

   h) AB 2341 (Quirk-Silva) of the 2013-14 Session would have added an indicator to the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System to identify students of military families and would have required LEAs to report enrollment of students of military families. AB 2341 was held in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

   i) AB 2202 (Block), Chapter 402, Statutes of 2012, extends the sunset from January 1, 2013, to January 1, 2014, for provisions related to the Superintendent of Public

Instruction (SPI) reconvening a task force to review the impact of the Compact on school districts and students, and issue a final report to the Legislature by December 1, 2013.

j) AB 343 (Saldana), Chapter 237, Statutes of 2009, enacts the Compact, which addresses issues experienced by children of military families who frequently transfer between schools.

k) AB 2049 (Saldana), Chapter 589, Statutes of 2008, requires the SPI to convene and support a task force to review and make recommendations regarding the Compact.

l) AB 2102 (Saldana), Chapter 608, Statutes of 2006, establishes procedures, including requiring the CDE to establish a formal liaison with the DoD and school districts that enroll military dependents, to facilitate and smooth the transfer of school-age military dependents and their school records.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Military Services in California
San Bernardino County District Advocates for Better Schools
U.S. Department of Defense

Opposition

None on file.

Analysis Prepared by: Patty Patten / M. & V.A. / (916) 319-3550