

**Franklin Public Schools  
Franklin, Massachusetts 02038**

**Action Required**

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**Subject:** Policy – 2<sup>nd</sup> reading

**Date:** October 23, 2018

**Dept:** School Committee

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**Reason:** Required Vote

**Enclosure:** yes

**Recommendation:**

Policy – Second Readings

I recommend adoption of the following policies:

- i. JFABE – Education Opportunities for Military Children
- ii. JFABF – Education Opportunities for Children in Foster Care
- iii. BCA – School Committee Member Ethics

**Action Requested of the School Committee:**

Majority vote of the School Committee is required.

<u><b>Vote Tabulator</b></u>	
A. Bergen:    Y / N	D. Schultz:   Y / N
C. Douglas:   Y / N	MJ Scofield:   Y / N
D. Feeley:    Y / N	G. Zub:        Y / N
M. Linden:    Y / N	Action: _____

## **EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR MILITARY CHILDREN**

In an effort to facilitate the placement, enrollment, graduation, data collection and provision of special services for students transferring into or out of the District because of their parents/guardians being on active duty in the U.S. Armed Services, the District supports and will implement its responsibilities as outlined in the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children. The Franklin School Committee believes it is appropriate to remove barriers to educational success imposed on children of military families because of their parents'/guardians' frequent moves and deployment.

### **Definitions**

**Children of military families** means school aged children, enrolled in kindergarten through 12th grade, in the household of an active duty member of the uniformed service of the United States, including members of the National Guard and Reserve serving on active duty.

**Deployment** means the period one month before the service members' departure from their home station on military orders through six months after return to their home station.

**Education(al) records** means official records, files, and data directly related to a student and maintained by the school including, but not limited to, records encompassing all the material kept in the student's cumulative folder.

The requirements, applicable to eligible students, which must be fulfilled, are listed below. Eligible students are those who are children of active duty personnel, active duty personnel or veterans who have been severely injured and medically discharged, and active duty personnel who die on active duty within one year of service. Students are not eligible for the provisions of the Compact if they are children of inactive Guard or Reserves, retired personnel, veterans not included above or U.S. Department of Defense personnel and other federal civil service employees and contract employees.

The District's responsibilities to eligible children include the following:

- Sending schools must send either official or unofficial records with the moving students and District receiving schools must use those records for immediate enrollment and educational placement.
- Simultaneously, the receiving school must request official records and the sending schools shall respond within 10 days with the records.
- Immunization requirements of the District may be met within 30 days from the date of enrollment (or be in progress).

- Receiving schools must initially honor placement of students in all courses from the sending school. These include, but are not limited to, Honors, International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement, vocational-technical, and career pathway courses if those courses are offered in the receiving school and space is available. The receiving schools must also initially honor placement of like programs to those of the student in the sending state, including, but not limited to, and English as a Second Language programs. Receiving schools are not precluded from performing subsequent evaluation to ensure the appropriate placement and continued enrollment of the student in courses and programs.
- In compliance with federal law, special education students must be placed by the existing IEP with reasonable accommodations in the receiving school.
- The District will exercise, as deemed appropriate, the right to waive prerequisites for all courses and programs, while also maintaining its right to re-evaluate the student to ensure continued enrollment, as deemed appropriate.
- Students of active duty personnel shall have additional excused absences at the discretion of the District for visitations relative to leave or deployment.
- An eligible student living with a noncustodial parent or other person standing in loco parentis shall be permitted to attend the school in which he or she was enrolled while living without the custodial parent/guardian without any tuition fee imposed.
- The District high school will accept exit or end-of-year exams required from the sending state, national norm-referenced tests, or alternate testing instead of testing requirements for graduation in the District (receiving state.) If this is not possible, the alternative provision of the Interstate Compact shall be followed in order to facilitate the on-time graduation of the student in accordance with Compact provisions.

LEGAL REFS: M.G. L. [15E](#);

Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

Draft for 1<sup>st</sup> Reading 9/25/18

Draft for 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading 10/23/18

## **EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the educational stability of students in foster care and their equal access to the same free and appropriate public education through high school graduation as provided to other students as required by law. Educational stability has a lasting impact on students' academic achievement and wellbeing, and the Franklin School Committee is committed to supporting district and community efforts to ensure that students in foster care have access to high quality, stable educational experiences.

The law requires that foster care students continue to attend their school of origin, unless after a collaborative decision-making process it is determined to be in the student's best interest to enroll in and attend school in the district in which a foster care provider or facility is located (if different). The law also requires that when it is not in the student's best interest to remain in the school of origin, the student is immediately enrolled and attending in a new school district, even if records normally required for enrollment cannot be quickly produced. Additionally, this requires the Department of Children and Families (DCF), The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), and the school district to designate points of contact; and also that the district collaborate with DCF to ensure that students will receive transportation to the school of origin if needed.

### **Best Interest Determination**

Decisions about whether a student in foster care should continue to attend the school of origin should be made collaboratively by DCF, the student (as appropriate), the student's family and/or foster family (and if different, the person authorized to make educational decisions on behalf of the student), the school and district of origin, and (when different) the local district where the student is placed. Best interest determinations should focus on the needs of each individual student and take into account a variety of factors. Every effort should be made to reach agreement regarding the appropriate school placement of a student in foster care. However, if there is disagreement regarding school placement for a student in foster care, DCF will finalize the best interest determination.

The district can seek review of DCF's decision by utilizing a Foster Care School Selection Dispute Resolution Process established by DESE and DCF. Decisions made through this process are not subject to review. Under the law, to promote educational stability, students should continue to attend their schools of origin while best interest determinations are being made.

### **Transportation**

The district of origin must collaborate with DCF on how transportation will be provided and arranged to ensure that students in foster care who need transportation to remain in their school

of origin will receive such transportation while they are in foster care.

Transportation options may include using Title I funds, establishing regional collaborations among districts, coordinating with existing routes for transportation, seeking help from foster parent(s), etc. Absent other agreements between the district and DCF, the district of origin is responsible for providing transportation to and from the school of origin.

### **Immediate Enrollment**

If it is in the best interest of a student in foster care to leave the school of origin, the student must be enrolled in school in the local school district immediately. To minimize disruption of the student's education, the law requires the district to enroll the student in a new school right away, without waiting to receive the typical student enrollment documentation (other than emergency contact information). The enrolling school must immediately contact the child's school and district of origin to obtain the relevant records and documentation, and the school and district of origin should immediately transfer those records.

To facilitate enrollment, DCF representatives will present the district with a form that indicates that the student is in foster care, along with their state-agency identification badge, when enrolling students.

LEGAL REFS:        Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA);  
                             Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008  
                             (Fostering Connections Act)

Draft for 1<sup>st</sup> Reading 9/25/18

Draft for 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading 10/23/18

## **SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ETHICS**

### Preamble

The acceptance of a code of ethics implies the understanding of the basic organization of School Committees under the Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The oath of office of a School Committee member binds the individual member to adherence to those state laws which apply to School Committees, since School Committees are agencies of the state.

This code of ethics delineates three areas of responsibility of the Franklin School Committee:

### Community Responsibility to:

1. Realize that his/her primary responsibility is to the students
2. Recognize that his/her basic function is to be policy making and not administrative
3. Remember that he/she is one of a team and must abide by, and carry out, all Committee decisions once they are made
4. Be well informed concerning the duties of a committee member on both a local and state level
5. Remember that he/she represents the entire community at all times
6. Accept the office as a committee member as means of unselfish service with no intent to "play politics," in any sense of the word, or to benefit personally from his/her Committee activities

### Responsibility to School Administration:

1. Endeavor to establish sound, clearly-defined policies which will direct and support the administration
2. Recognize and support the administrative chain of command and refuse to act on complaints as an individual outside the administration
3. Give the Superintendent full responsibility for discharging his/her professional duties and hold him/her responsible for acceptable results

### Responsibility to fellow Committee members:

1. Recognize that action at official meetings is binding and that he/she alone cannot bind the Committee outside of such meetings
2. Realize that he/she should not make statements or promises of how he/she will vote on matters that will come before the Committee
3. Uphold the intent of executive sessions and respect the privileged communications that exists in executive sessions
4. Not withhold pertinent information on school matters or personnel problems, either from members of his/her own Committee or from members of other committees who may be seeking help or information on school problems
5. Make decisions only after all facts on a question have been presented and discussed.

LEGAL REF:            Massachusetts Association of School Committees Code of Ethics

Reviewed; no revisions 5/27/2008;

Reviewed; revised 5/3/2014

Draft for 1<sup>st</sup> Reading 9/25/18

Draft for 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading 10/23/18