



# Military Impacted Schools Association

*... supporting the educational needs of military families*

(800) 291-MISA • [www.MilitaryImpactedSchoolsAssociation.org](http://www.MilitaryImpactedSchoolsAssociation.org)

November 2008

## FY'09 DoD Impact Aid Funding Increased

The House and Senate have agreed to \$40 million in the FY'09 DoD Impact Aid Funding for military children. In addition, \$4 million was approved for special education and nothing for Global Re-basing or BRAC.

Approximately 120 school districts receive the DoD Impact Aid Funding. This funding is for school districts that have 20% or more military children in their districts. These districts can now plan for a 25% increase over their FY'08 DoD Impact Aid funding. The funds will be distributed by DoD in June, 2009.

## CR Funds Impact Aid at FY'08 Levels Impact Aid Appropriations

	FY'08 Appropriations	FY'09 President's Budget	FY'09 Senate Markup	FY'09 House Markup	FY'09 MISA/NAFIS Goals
Section 8003(b) <i>--basic support</i>	\$1,105,535,000	\$1,105,535,000	\$1,105,535,000	1,155,535,000	\$1,225,000,000
Section 8003(d) <i>--special education</i>	48,602,000	48,602,000	48,602,000	48,602,000	55,000,000
Section 8002 <i>--federal property</i>	64,208,000	64,208,000	64,208,000	64,208,000	104,208,335
Section 8007 <i>--repair/renovation</i>	17,509,000	17,509,000	17,509,000	17,509,000	45,000,000
Section 8008 <i>--bldgs owned by DoEd</i>	4,864,000	4,864,000	4,864,000	4,864,000	8,000,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	1,240,718,000	1,240,718,000	\$1,240,718,000	1,290,718,000	1,437,208,335

Congress approved a continuing resolution that funds government programs at FY'08 levels until March 6, 2009. HR 2638, was signed by the President and also contains FY'09 appropriations for Defense, Homeland Security, and Military Construction/Veterans Affairs programs.

Our goals must continue to be full funding of the Impact Aid program.

- Impact Aid is currently funded at 60% of need, as defined in law.
- Impact Aid is the only education program not forward funded. Therefore, delays in funding decisions affect the current school year.
- If school districts need funding before January 1, 2009, they should contact DoEd.

## MISA Superintendent Elected Chairman of Interstate Compact Commission



Cheryl Walker, Superintendent of the Fountain Fort Carson School District 8 (CO), was elected Chairman of the Interstate Commission of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunities for Military Children.

The Compact, developed by the Council of State Governments, MISA, education and military family experts, and the Department of Defense, addresses common

problems that affect military students as a result of frequent moves and deployments. States that sign on to the Compact agree to work collectively with other compact states to create uniform standards of practice regarding the transfer of records, course placement, graduation requirements, redundant or missed testing, entrance-age variations and other transition issues.

The first meeting was held in Mesa, Arizona, where Commissioners representing the eleven states that have signed the Compact worked on setting up the organizational component. Two committees were formed: the Rules Committee and the Interim Operation Committee. The initial two goals of the Commission, according to Commissioner Walker, are to find out what schools are doing as it relates to the recommendations of the Compact

and then clarify the rules; and work with states to encourage them to join the Compact.

The eleven Commissioners include: Cheryl Walker (Chairman), Superintendent, Fountain Fort Carson School District 8 (CO); Joey Strickland (Assistant Chairman), Director of Arizona Department of Veterans Services; Brad Neuenswander (Treasurer), Director of School Finance, Kansas State Department of Education; Bert Schulte, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MO); Laura Anastasio, Staff Attorney, Connecticut State Department of Education; Thomas Bell, Higher Education Consultant, Michigan Department of Education; Spessard Boatright, Director, Office of Educational Facilities, Florida Department of Education; Susan Haberstroh, Education Associate, Delaware Department of Education; Sharon Lease, Assistant State Superintendent, Oklahoma Department of Education; Mark Needham, Special Assistant to the Governor (KY); and David Phillips, Board Attorney Cumberland County Schools (NC).

Dr. John Deegan, MISA Executive Director, said “Dr. Charles Patterson, MISA Director of Transition, has done a great job of representing MISA school districts and the children they serve in developing the Interstate Compact. I am extremely pleased that Cheryl has been elected Chairman of the Commission. She will do an outstanding job of representing the needs of military families.”

## SOAR Assists Military Children and Their Classmates [www.militarystudent.org](http://www.militarystudent.org)

Do you know military families that will be moving? Do you have children that could use tutorial help in math and language arts? SOAR (Student Online Achievement Resources) could be your answer.

SOAR is an outstanding online program for students, parents, and teachers. Log on to [www.militarystudent.org](http://www.militarystudent.org) and click on “SOAR.” Students can take a test on any of the state or DoD learning standards, receive immediate feedback, and



be directed to a tutorial that will improve their skills, where needed. Parents can monitor the progress of their children from anywhere in the world. In addition parents are provided with resource materials that will assist their children in areas where they may need help.

### **Do you have SOAR connected to your website?**

For more information or to request brochures, mouse pads or pencils call Carol at (800) 291-6472.

## **Free Suicide Prevention Program**

The SOS Signs of Suicide® Prevention Program is being offered to school districts with a military student population of 20% or more.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suicide is the third-leading cause of death for 15 to 24-year-olds in the United States. A recent study by The Research Institute at Nationwide Children's Hospital revealed an 18 percent increase in the suicide rates of youth 10 to 19, following a decade of steady decline.

The emotional crises that precede suicide are many times recognizable and treatable. Good prevention programs can teach youth how to recognize the symptoms of depression – in themselves or a friend.

To help those who may be struggling, Screening for Mental Health® is providing a school-based depression education and suicide prevention program at no cost to highly impacted school districts. The initiative is funded by DoD, Force Health Protection & Readiness.

The evidence-based SOS Signs of Suicide Prevention Program teaches adolescents how to identify symptoms of depression and suicide and to respond effectively by seeking help from a trusted adult. The program's primary objectives are to educate youth that depression is a treatable illness and to equip them to respond to a potential suicide in a friend or family member using the ACT® technique (Acknowledge, Care, Tell).

SOS has been used by thousands of high schools and middle schools across the country. The program is the only school-based program shown to reduce suicide attempts in a random, controlled study (American Journal of Public Health, March 2004).

To learn more about the SOS Suicide Prevention Program or to order kits call 781-239-0071.

## **DoDEA Superintendents to hold Exchange program with MISA Superintendents**

MISA Executive Director John Deegan has been working with Leslye Arsht, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policies, Dr. Shirley Miles, Director of DoDEA, and representatives of DoDEA on how to best serve our military children. "We recognize that there is only one military child," Deegan said. "Our role as educators is to ensure a quality education for all military children and their classmates. We can do that through partnerships."

MISA and DoDEA superintendents will meet during the AASA conference, February 18, 2009, to discuss programs, best practices, and provide a link between stateside and overseas schools. Both organizations are also examining exchange programs between the schools. The meeting, immediately followed by a reception, will be held from 1:00-6:30 p.m., in San Francisco.

### **Principals' Workshops**

MISA will present a regional workshop for principals and counselors to assist in dealing with deployment and transition issues. The workshop will be held in Las Vegas, February 3-4 (1-4 p.m. on February 3 and 8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m. on February 4). The workshop is free to MISA school districts. Topics include "Dealing with the Stress of Deployment," "MISA School Districts Transition Practices," "Connectedness for Military Children and their Classmates," "Tools to Help Build Resilience," and "Best Practices."

Participants will receive a "Resources for Supporting Military Children" notebook for educators. The workshop is part of the on-going training MISA provides school districts serving military families. MISA's school superintendents believe that by working together, school districts, parents, and military leaders, we can provide a smooth transition for military families and support our military families during deployments.

# Highlights of MISA Fall Meeting

## Leslye Arsht-- Champion for Children

Leslye Arsht, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policies, was recognized and thanked for her tremendous support of MISA. “Leslye understands the need to bring leaders together in support of all children,” said Dr. John Deegan, Executive Director of MISA. “She has been instrumental in forming a partnership between MISA and DoDEA. She has worked to bring about the Interstate Compact for military children, develop a memorandum of understanding between DoD and DoEd, and to bring about meetings and an exchange with MISA and DoD superintendents. Leslye is a Champion for all Children.”



Dr. John Deegan and Dr. Charles Patterson, MISA Director of Transition present Leslye Arsht with Champion for Children globe.

## DoDEA

Dr. Shirley Miles, Director of DoDEA, is an educator and a military brat. She spoke to MISA members about how she moved seven times in twelve years. Her father was a Sgt. Major in the Army. They had two wonderful tours in Hawaii and she graduated from Fountain Fort Carson 8 School District in Colorado. Dr. Miles and her seven brothers and sister all graduated from high school, all received a college education, and four have advanced degrees. “I am grateful to all of you and your school districts,” Dr. Miles said. “My family was successful because of wonderful parents, great schools and dedicated educators.”

Dr. Miles said “DoDEA and MISA superintendents have many things in common.” We serve the same military student. We believe that communication must be continuous. MISA school districts must meet the NCLB standards . . . DoDEA’s accountability piece is our benchmark that 78% of the students must meet standards by 2011. Our challenges are the same—transportation, fuel costs, safety and security. Many times we focus on things that are beyond our control. We need to step back and reflect.

Team DoDEA wants to work with you, Dr. Miles said. We don’t intend to impose anything or anyone on you. We want to share best practices and ask you to do the same. We were in Hawaii where the staff shared with us their Administrative Leadership Program. What a great program. We are going to use part of this in our DoDEA Academy. Our partnership is about sharing ideas. DoDEA, just like MISA, wants to continue to look for ways to help children. If children are not taken care of, parents cannot do their jobs, and in the case of the military many will leave the services. Our partnership is about doing what is right for children and helping with retention in an all-volunteer service.

DoDEA has \$20 million in grants that will be available the first of the year to enhance science, technology, English and math. These funds will be distributed through an application process. We want to work with you to get the word out about what is available and make sure that the funding gets to the schools to help enhance student learning.

## National Governors Association

Joan Wodiska, Director of Education, Early Childhood & Workforce Committee with the National Governors Association talked with MISA superintendents and board members about their recently published study on the impact of military mission growth on states and local education agencies. Joan said “The governors understand the challenges you are facing.” People are excited about the anticipated growth in your communities, but we need to address the very real economic and infrastructure concerns. We need better data from the military—and we are working on that.

Joan said that in 2003 there were 175 schools constructed and over 300 schools modernized in Afghanistan and Iraq—and that’s important. The federal government is in the business of constructing schools. Now we need to have them focus on the schools that serve our military children. Consider the number of military houses that are 50 years old that have been torn down or remodeled as a part of housing privatization. Many schools were built well before these housing areas that are in need of major renovations.

# National Military Family Association Youth Initiatives Summit

The National Military Family Association held a youth initiatives summit for military children in October. The summit brought together educators, parents, Congressional staff, representatives of the medical field, and representatives from all branches of the service. The focus of the summit was to share research and many of the resources that are available to address the needs of military families.

Dr. Charles Patterson, MISA's Director of Transitions, provided participants information on MISA, Impact Aid, SOAR, the Interstate Compact, Military Online Course, and workshops provided to address deployment, transition, connectedness and resilience.

A common theme among the services' child and youth services representatives was that the military has focused on family services inside the gate—now they need to look outside. Two areas that the services are working on are child care and education. There are several areas to address in child care—some areas are looking at 24/7 care, others are looking at 16 hour respite care following deployment. At Fort Riley, Kansas, the school district and city are building a

child care facility. Fort Riley will provide funding for the construction with a set number of spots open for military children.

Each year NMFA sponsors Operation Purple Camp, a free camp for military youth around the world. Military teens at the camp were asked "What 10 things do you want people to know." NMFA has put together a toolkit with the teens responses as well as tips and resources. Copies of the kit can be ordered through [www.nmfa.org](http://www.nmfa.org). The ten responses that teens what people to know include:

- We are proud of our parents;
- We think about war and we know what it means;
- We move a lot;
- We take on a lot of responsibility;
- We live in the community;
- We appreciate recognition of our family's service;
- We value diversity and new experiences;
- We miss our parents;
- In a lot of ways we're just like other teens; and
- We serve too.

## Upcoming Dates . . .

February 3-4, 2009.....	MISA Workshop Las Vegas
February 5-6, 2009.....	Region IV, V, VI Meeting Las Vegas
March 8-10, 2009.....	MISA/NAFIS Conference Washington DC
June 21-23, 2009.....	MISA Summer Meeting Newport, Rhode Island

*If you have questions, call (800) 291-6472 or check out our website at  
[www.militaryimpactedschoolsassociation.org](http://www.militaryimpactedschoolsassociation.org)*