



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION GUIDANCE ON MILITARY-CONNECTED STUDENTS FOR COMPLIANCE WITH *ESSA*



May 2017

GUIDANCE FOR COMPLIANCE WITH ESSA REGARDING REPORTING OF MILITARY-CONNECTED STUDENTS

May 2017

This technical guidance document provides New Jersey-specific procedures regarding the reporting of students who are Active Military Connected (i.e., dependents of full-time active duties members of the Armed Forces). This guidance should be distributed to district data-collection administrators and/or school business administrators, as appropriate.

Starting in the 2017-18 school year, under the federal *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)*, as amended by the *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)*, local education agencies (LEAs) must identify students who are dependents of full-time active duty members of the Armed Forces. The purpose of collecting this information is to evaluate the specific educational needs and the effectiveness of the programs serving these students.

The New Jersey Department of Education's (NJDOE) NJ SMART data-collection system will accept the following values for School Year 2017-18 collections opening in August 2017:

1 = Not Active Military Connected – Student is not a dependent of a full-time, active duty member of the Armed Forces (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, National Guard)

2 = Active Military Connected – Student is a dependent of a full-time active duty member of the Armed Forces (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, National Guard)

The term 'Active Duty' is federally defined as full-time duty in the active military service of the United States (Section 200.30(f)(1)(iv) of *ESSA*). Active military service includes but is not limited to full-time training duty, annual training duty, and attendance, while in the active military service, at a school designated as a service school by law or by the secretary of the military department in which the member serves.

The term "full-time National Guard duty" means training or other duty, other than inactive duty – performed by a member of the Army National Guard of the United States or the Air National Guard of the United States in the member's status as a member of the National Guard of a state or territory, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or the District of Columbia under section [316](#), [502](#), [503](#), [504](#), or [505](#) of title [32](#) – for which the member is entitled to pay from the United States or for which the member has waived pay from the United States.

The NJDOE understands the concern parents and guardians may have with disclosing personal information. The field is required for LEA reporting, and any answers left blank by parents and guardians should be defaulted to 1 = Not Active Military Connected.

SUGGESTED PARENT GUIDANCE LETTER

School districts that want to alert parents and guardians about the changes in reporting of military-connected students may want to utilize the following template letter:

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Under the *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)*, which was enacted in December 2015, schools and districts must identify students who are dependents of full-time active duty members of the Armed Forces. The purpose of collecting this information is to evaluate the specific educational needs and the effectiveness of the schools and programs serving these students.

For the purposes of this collection, 'Armed Forces' will include:

- Army
- Navy
- Air Force
- Marine Corps
- Coast Guard
- National Guard

The United States Department of Education and the New Jersey Department of Education recognize the importance of service in the Reserve components of the military services and part-time National Guard. However, the federal statute focuses on full-time and active duty service in the military. For the purposes of *ESSA* data collection, the United States Department of Education does not require schools and districts to report members of the Reserve components of the military services and part-time National Guard.

CONTACT US

Questions regarding compliance with the federal school-level reporting mandate can be emailed to essa@doe.state.nj.us.