

Building a Military Student Brochure or Portfolio



“Sometimes, the most difficult part about moving for children is changing schools and letting go of the friends, teachers, activities, and other comforts they associate with school. Your children will need your help in order to effectively adjust to a new school ...” (Military Kids on The Move, par 1, 2012)





Helping Kids Adjust to a New School

- Focus on the positive—Although changing schools can lead to anxiety and worry, help your child focus on the positive side of the move. It's a chance to start over, meet new people, and learn new things.
- Learn as much as you can about your child's new school—Find out what the new school looks like, how many children are in each class, even what they are learning. In addition, see what the school offers that your child will be excited about, like a good art program or a certain sport. This may help alleviate some of your child's fears.
- Get Involved—The more familiar you can make the school, the easier it will be when your child begins attending.
- Plan Something Special—Even without a lot of money, come up with something special for your child's first days at school. A couple of new outfits or a new backpack can help your child get excited about the new school.

Why is it helpful to have a military student brochure or portfolio?

Whether this is the first move or the eighth, it truly doesn't get easier. As a parent, you have so much to take care of and so many things to worry about that it can take a tremendous toll on you. From planning to packing and unpacking to working through your child(ren)'s reactions and emotions, you have a lot to consider as you transition between bases.

Often, the most challenging aspects of moving for children are having to change schools; saying goodbye to friends, teachers, and activities; and losing the comforts and security they associate with school. Your child(ren) will look to you for assistance with getting through this move with as much structure as possible. By creating a student portfolio or brochure, you can help your child(ren) adjust and make the transition between schools a positive one.

Student brochures and portfolios are a great way to provide information about your child to school staff at the beginning of a new school year, upon a Permanent Change of Station (PCS), or at an Individual Education Plan (IEP) meeting. Brochures may be designed on a computer and include photos or clip art or may be printed by hand on paper. It is the personal touch that is important. Including your child in this project may also help them get excited about the move. Portfolios should be designed to show a “picture” of the whole student using a variety of evidence and documentation.

Suggested information to include in a student brochure:

- Date of Birth
- Family Dynamics
- Interests and Extracurricular Activities
- Strengths
- History (where have you lived, where are parents from, how long has Dad/Mom been in the military, etc...)
- Needs and the Supports that have previously been successful with PCS other moves
- Photos add a personal touch

Suggested information to include in a student portfolio:

- Title page listing the student’s name and the purpose of the portfolio
- List of Contents (limit to max of 5 items)
- Basic info on the student and his/her family
- Samples or list of typical activities of the student
- Scores, test results, evaluation data, medical data (in a brief format)
- Academic work samples
- Sensory information (if appropriate)
- Behavior descriptions (if appropriate)
- List of accommodations that have been successful (if appropriate)
- Samples of art work/hobbies
- As with the student brochure, photos are helpful

Some of the ways the SL can assist families:

- Information for inbound families about the local public school districts
- Information for outbound families on schools at the next assignment
- Information on home schooling, private schools, cyber/virtual schools, charter schools
- Educate school staff about the issues impacting military children
- Monitor federal and state legislation
- Assist in rectifying problems that cannot be resolved using the school channels
- Info on graduation requirements and post-secondary preparation



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