



**Department of Defense Education Activity
Educational Partnership Grant Program
2011-12 Annual Evaluation Report
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Submitted by:



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Overview of the Educational Partnership Grant Program

The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) supports research-based programs that aim to increase student achievement in military-connected local education agencies (LEAs) and ease the challenges and transitions that students face due to their parents' military service. These LEAs develop and implement grant projects designed to meet these goals:

- Promote student achievement in core curricular areas,
- Ease the challenges that military students face due to transitions and deployments,
- Support the social and emotional needs of military students,
- Promote advanced placement and virtual learning opportunities,
- Improve educator professional development,
- Enhance and integrate technology, and
- Encourage family involvement.

Since 2009, DoDEA has awarded 186 grants, totaling over \$220 million. These grants serve more than 750,000 students, including 260,000 military-connected students in more than 1,150 schools. In addition, DoDEA has expanded its efforts through four targeted initiatives.

Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM). Approximately 70 percent of DoDEA grants focus on STEM initiatives, designed to improve student achievement and provide innovative learning opportunities while using strategies to infuse STEM principles throughout the curriculum. Many DoDEA grantees experienced significant increases in students' assessment scores in math and science.

Advanced Placement and College Readiness. DoDEA partnered with the National Math and Science Initiative (NMSI) to expand AP course offerings in math, science and English to 50 military-connected public high schools in 15 states. The first cohort of 10 schools demonstrated a 51 percent increase in qualifying scores in AP math, science and English in the past school year — seven times the national average — and qualifying AP scores in math and science increased by 64 percent.

Virtual Learning. In 2011, DoDEA awarded six grants to develop and/or expand virtual learning (VL) programs that provide online curricular options to address the needs of transitioning and military dependent students. These VL programs prepare K-12 students for AP classes and college by supplementing existing curricula, providing continuity of instruction between grade levels, and promoting credit recovery for transitioning students.

Strategic Foreign Languages Expansion Program. In partnership with the Defense Language and National Security Education Office (DLNSEO), DoDEA supports grants to expand, strengthen and coordinate strategic foreign language programs for military dependent students. The goal of these programs is to improve access to foreign language education learning, such as biliteracy, dual language immersion, language enrichment, and secondary course offerings in strategic languages and their cultures. In 2012, the DoDEA/DLNSEO partnership awarded \$2.2 million to six grantees, reaching almost 25,000 students, approximately 8,000 of whom are military connected.

As shown in Figure 1 and Table 1, from 2009 to 2012, DoDEA awarded more than \$220 million through 186 grants across the United States through these four grant initiatives.

Figure 1. States (yellow) with Educational Partnership Grants, 2009-12

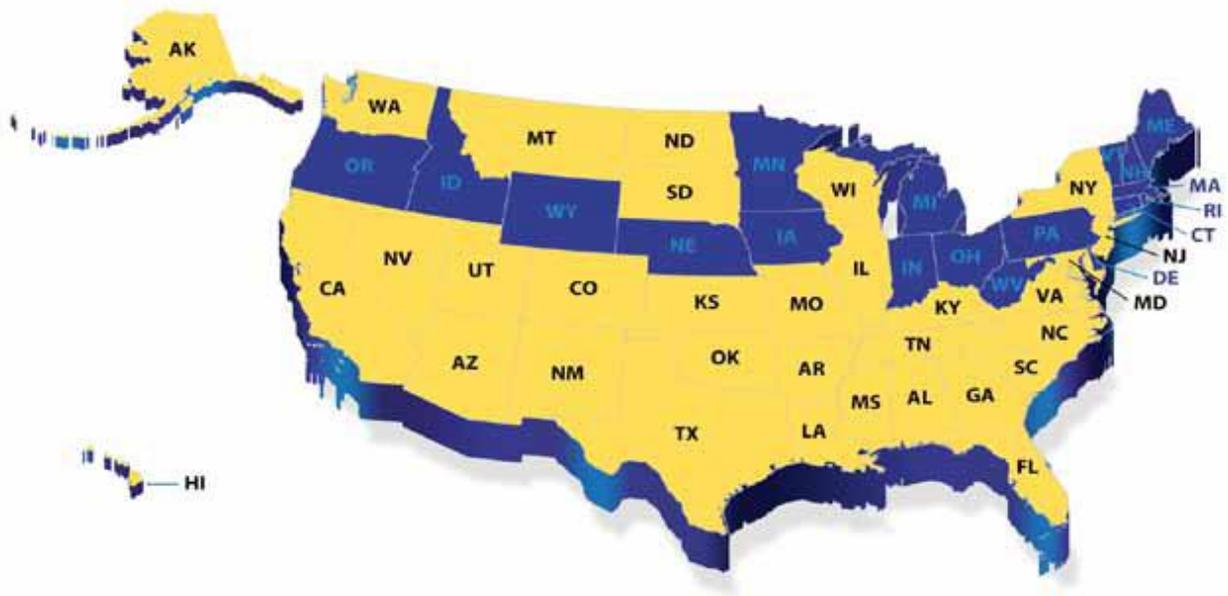


Table 1. DoDEA Educational Partnership Grant Program information

	Cohort 1 (2009)	Cohort 2 (2010)	Cohort 3 (2011)	Cohort 4 (2012)
Number of new grants awarded	45 ¹	32 ²	65 ^{3,4}	44 ⁵
First-time LEAs with grants	44	23	42	15
States with grant recipients each year	19	16	25	24
Total states with grant recipients	19	24	30	33

¹One LEA received two grants in 2009. For all subsequent analyses, totals out of 44 grantees will be reported for this cohort.

²Eastern Sierra Unified School District received a 1-year grant for online learning, and the district is not required to submit all quarterly reports. For all analyses, activities of 31 grantees will be reported for this cohort.

³Six grants were awarded under the Virtual Learning (VL) program. For all subsequent analysis, totals out of 59 grantees will be reported for this cohort as the VL grantees did not report to the Evaluation Technical Assistance Center.

⁴NMSI is counted here as one grantee, but its project operates in 50 schools in multiple districts, significantly increasing the total number of LEAs benefitting from grants.

⁵Six grants were awarded under the Strategic Foreign Languages (SFL) program. For all subsequent analysis, totals out of 38 grantees will be reported for this cohort as the SFL grantees did not report to the Evaluation Technical Assistance Center.

Contents

This report builds on the *2012 Educational Partnership Grant Program Semi-Annual Evaluation Report*, which provided information about all current Partnership Program grantees and the progress of their projects. To avoid duplication, this report highlights only the accomplishments of selected 2011 grantees as self-reported in the Annual Reports submitted to the Military K-12 Partner Evaluation Technical Assistance Center (ETAC). The activities and strategies reported occurred during the first year of the grant.

Schools and Students Impacted by Grant Activities

The 2011 Educational Partnership Grant Program projects are active across all levels of PreK-12 schools, including combination schools with elementary/middle school grades or with middle/high school grades. The 2011 cohort school districts reside in 24 states. Figure 2 shows that most (76 percent) of the 260 schools in the 2011 grant program are elementary schools. About 13 percent of the schools are middle schools, 7 percent are high schools and 4 percent are combination schools. Approximately 45 percent ($n = 118$) of the Cohort 3 schools participating in the grant program did not make their respective states' adequate yearly progress (AYP) requirements in school year 2011-12.

Figure 2. Percentages of 2011 DoDEA grant schools by type and AYP status

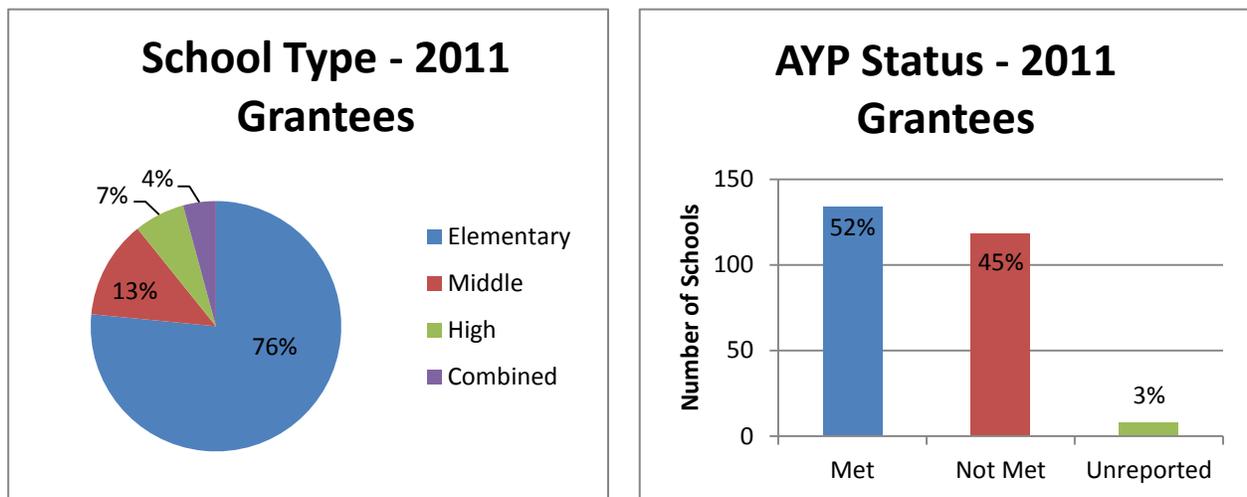


Table 2. Schools and students receiving 2011 grant services

School Type	<i>N</i>
Elementary	199
Middle	33
High	17
Combined	11
Total	260

Students	<i>N</i>
Military Connected	56,046 (33%)
Non-military Connected	112,183 (67%)
Total	168,229

Project Impacts

This document summarizes how selected 2011 grantees¹ used DoDEA funds to implement programs designed to achieve immediate and long-term outcomes in academic achievement and support services. During the first year of funding, grantees focused on building an infrastructure to implement the strategies outlined in their grant applications. The infrastructure included hiring staff, evaluating and purchasing technology, conducting professional development, and collecting baseline data. The summaries below discuss how districts and schools developed and implemented strategies to improve academic achievement; raise students' scores on state achievement tests; provide transition support services to families; and support instructional enhancements that benefit all students, especially those who are military connected, as they move forward in their education.

All projects incorporated professional development for school staff to help them (1) increase content knowledge and pedagogy, and (2) recognize and respond to the diverse needs of military students who attend their schools now and in the future. The focus of the professional development content reflects the goals of each project, which cluster into three areas:

1. Science and Mathematics Achievement
2. English Language Arts Achievement
3. Enhancements to Transition Support Services for Military Families

Science and Mathematics Achievement

Of the 2011 grantees, 64 percent had at least one goal focused on improving student achievement in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). Many grantees used grant funds to strengthen project-based science units, introduce new technology and increase teachers' knowledge and instructional skills in math and science. These interrelated endeavors resulted in a variety of successful STEM outcomes for the 2011-12 school year and will continue to help students pursue advanced math and science careers in the future. At the elementary level, project-based or "hands-on" science encourages students to understand and apply math concepts such as measurement. At upper grade levels, success in chemistry and physical sciences requires advanced math skills as well as skill with 21st century technology. Below are a few examples of the positive outcomes achieved by the Cohort 3 grantees in STEM.

Fort Leavenworth School District (KS) is enhancing STEM education activities through its CYBER-TEAMS project. The project integrates technology with art and social media to engage students in the development of higher-order thinking and 21st Century Skills. Using DoDEA funds, the CYBER-TEAMS project continues to upgrade technology and technology infrastructures and provide teachers with professional development on integrating technology and project-based learning into their curriculum and instruction. **The project received recognition from Apple² as one of 103 distinguished programs nationwide that provide a learning environment that centers on innovation, leadership and educational excellence.**

I cannot dream all the things I can do yet!

— Teacher
Fort Leavenworth School District (KS)

¹As reported, 17 grantees from Cohort 3 received DoDEA grants as part of Cohorts 1 and/or 2. This report focused only on the forty-two Cohort 3 districts receiving DoDEA funds for the first time.

² For more information about the program, see <http://www.apple.com/education>

Camden County Schools (GA) began to implement Project STARR: Strengthening Technology and Academic Rigor and Resources, to improve student achievement in science and math and to increase technology integration across the curriculum. The district is collaborating with area colleges, universities and local industries to provide STEM-based professional development and educational services. Teachers from eight elementary schools, two middle schools and one high school received intensive sustained professional development and the necessary tools to create supportive learning environments for high-risk students, particularly those from military families, with an emphasis on technology integration. In addition, DoDEA funds support vertical alignment in core course content in grades K-12 to ensure a continuity of educational experiences that build on one another as students move from elementary through high school. **Preliminary data show military dependent students exceeded the Year 1 goal for science achievement by 8 percent.**

Daleville School District (AL) established the Daleville 3M Project (Multimedia, Mastery-based and Mentoring) to improve student achievement in math for the elementary school. Using DoDEA funds, the school district distributed interactive whiteboards and laptop computers to teachers and conducted professional development to help teachers integrate the technology into lesson planning. Teachers also conduct monthly data meetings to review math achievement data. **Data from the 2011-12 school year showed 78 percent of the military-connected students in elementary school exceeded or met math and reading proficiency standards.**

Monroe County (FL). Sigsbee Charter School is a unique charter school with 80 percent military-connected students. The school features a differentiated curriculum based on national standards and an environmental program that connects students to the community. To increase student achievement in STEM, the school used DoDEA funds to upgrade electrical systems and purchase and install interactive whiteboards in science labs, middle school math classrooms and the library. The district also used DoDEA funds to purchase web-based online grade books and survey software to expand communication with students' families. Professional development largely focused on curriculum mapping and integrating the Common Core Standards. Professional learning communities worked to revise science and math frameworks. **Also, prior to receiving DoDEA funds, only 26 percent of teachers incorporated service learning projects into their lessons; now 85 percent of classrooms participate in service learning activities.**

Travis Unified School District (CA) is using DoDEA funds to improve its military-connected students' math skills and achievement through training for improved and sustained algebraic thinking. Key strategies included professional development in several key related areas: standards-based mathematics achievement for all students, cooperative learning, response to intervention, and coaching. **During Year 1 of the grant, three of the four schools met the Year 1 interim targets for improvements in math achievement as measured by the 2012 California Standards Tests in mathematics.**

The training emphasized making sense of math concepts for both teachers and students; using a variety of strategies to present related concepts, but choosing one overarching strategy when concepts are related; utilizing model drawing as a strategy for solving word problems; and following a presentation sequence that moves from the concrete to the written/picture form to the abstract concept.

— Teacher
Travis Unified School District (CA)

Fort Huachuca (AZ) is focusing on increasing math and science through the integration of technology into instruction. Using DoDEA funds, the district offered an array of professional development options to meet its instructional needs. Differentiated professional development sessions provided training in a

variety of math and science software and web-based programs, as well as a course on project-based approaches using technology. After the professional development sessions, all teachers submitted technology integration plans to implement in their classrooms. Teachers also selected personal growth goals related to technology integration and, in conjunction with a technology integration specialist, defined steps to achieve their goals. This approach to individualized teacher support yielded positive results in both classroom instruction and math and science achievement. **Fifty to 60 percent of science lessons incorporate inquiry-based approaches. Eighty-six percent of fourth graders and 83 percent of eighth graders attained the level of “Meets or Exceeds” on the state assessment test. Test scores were 15 percent above the state average. Several grades showed a 3-9 percent increase in math achievement scores. Schools use test and survey results to focus future professional development and teachers are completing personal growth plans for the next school year.**

English Language Arts Achievement

Forty-one percent of 2011 grantees had at least one goal focused on improving English Language Arts (ELA) achievement, which includes strategies that address early literacy and reading and writing skills. As students move to higher grade levels, these skills impact all areas of academic achievement, including math and science. One of the most difficult tasks for classroom teachers is accommodating individual students’ needs in the basic content subjects if there is a large-scale turnover in the student population. Students with various ability levels enroll in the schools; the lowest performing students may need ELA tutoring while mastering and completing grade-level material in other subjects. **Many grantees that experience challenges in meeting ELA achievement goals are using DoDEA funds to hire remedial specialists or purchase computer-based remedial programs to provide individualized assistance that supplement classroom instruction.** Below are examples of how Cohort 3 DoDEA grantees implement strategies to increase ELA achievement.

Oak Harbor School District (WA) is using DoDEA funds to help implement the Consortium on Reading Excellence to improve reading for all elementary students. To ensure that the youngest learners in the district are ready for higher level work, Oak Harbor opened the Hand-in-Hand Early Learning Center, a joint venture between the district and Head Start. Nearly 100 students, most from military-connected families, attend classes at the center. **For 2011-12, the percentage of students meeting benchmarks increased by 4 percent. For K-2, the district improvement in the percentage of students meeting benchmarks from the beginning of the year to the end was 20 percentage points.**

Now I have tools to work with more struggling kids. I feel like I can be more effective for a broader range of kids.

—Teacher
Oak Harbor School District (WA)

Minot (ND) is using a three-tiered response to intervention approach to increasing student achievement in reading. The district used DoDEA funds to provide professional development in guided reading instruction and to purchase leveled readers. The leveled readers expanded the library of content-rich, differentiated materials for teachers and students. Teachers used the leveled readers frequently and implemented guided reading in classes. **In 2011-12, Minot saw an increase in the number of students reading at or above grade level — over 20 percent for half of the grades. State assessment reading scores in grades 2-6 rose by 9 percent in 2012.**

Widefield School District Three (CO) is using DoDEA funds to support an early literacy improvement initiative. One goal included increasing the number of military-connected students attending preschool

and full-day kindergarten. Strategies to meet this goal included advertising in the Colorado Springs Military Newspaper Group's annual education guide, quarterly *Military Family* newspaper and the *Fort Carson Mountaineer*. The project also placed an ad on the website of the Colorado Springs Military Newspaper Group and purchased billboards near the military installation. The billboards featured pictures of uniformed military personnel with their children. **As a result, the military-connected enrollment in preschool increased 8.3 percent, bringing the number of military-connected students in preschool to the highest ever.**

General Brown School District (NY) is implementing Operation Reading Achievement Instructional Support Endeavor (RAISE) to increase the academic and social success of struggling students through hiring support personnel and creating extended learning programs. A curriculum coordinator, hired using DoDEA funds, coordinates and facilitates various professional development programs on best instructional practices and state-mandated Common Core Learning standards.

Last night it was hard to get him to go to bed because of his book. My son is reading because he WANTS TO! He reads on the weekends. My husband and I are so happy about this. From your collective encouragement, he is acquiring a positive outlook on reading. Thank You!!!

—Parent
General Brown School District (NY)

The project also hired an academic intervention teacher to provide small-group intervention services to students at or below borderline levels on district benchmarks. Through the DoDEA grant, the district implemented a summer literacy program, a junior high reading program, and an after-school intervention program. The after-school program (Operation Hero) was designed specifically to meet the social-emotional and academic needs of military-connected students. Attendance in the programs was high, and students reported a greater sense of ease and belonging after participating. **Because of increased academic support services, state assessment scores for students with disabilities and economically disadvantaged students rose 5 percent. Military-connected students had the largest gains in the ELA assessment — as high as 17 percent increases for some grade levels.**

Central Kitsap School District (WA) is using DoDEA funds to improve literacy achievement of K-12 students by providing professional development to district personnel. Central Kitsap School District collaborated with the Center for Effective Leadership to engage principals, district office leaders, and 50 percent of the teaching staff in a program called The 5 Dimensions of Teaching and Learning.³ Principals received training about how to implement Learning Walks to observe for purpose (standards, teaching points) in a nonjudgmental manner. **Seventy-two percent of the principals rated the trainings as excellent or above average. Standardized test scores for military-connected students in grades K, 3, and 9 increased.**

Enhancements to Transition Support Services for Military Families

Transition support services are integral to improving the academic achievement, overall graduation rates and school adjustment of military-connected students. As noted in the above sections, schools often integrate support services into projects focused on academic achievement. For projects supported by DoDEA funds, transition supports include improved school and family communications, engagement activities, direct counseling, facilitating credit recovery and student mentoring. Many grantee districts are using the Student 2 Student (S2S)⁴ or Junior S2S, initiatives of the Military Child Educational

³For more information about the program, see <http://www.k-12leadership.org/services/5-dimensions>.

⁴For more about the S2S program, see <http://www.militarychild.org/parents-and-students/programs/student-2-student>.

Coalition, to meet the needs of incoming military-connected students. For example, six 2009 and 2010 grantees created or expanded S2S teams using DoDEA funds. S2S meets the immediate needs of transitioning military-connected students by creating teams of advisors and students to assist incoming students. In addition, 2011 grantees seeking to ease transitions for military students include 13 that used DoDEA funds to create counselor positions to work specifically with transitioning military-connected students. Activities conducted by Cohort 3 include working individually with students, developing programs for military families, providing professional development to staff about student needs and facilitating mentoring programs.

Clay County (FL) designed Project Promoting Academic and Social Success (PASS) 24 to provide professional development for science teachers. The project also identified target students in need of tutoring and support. The district engaged in Military Child Appreciation Month activities, acknowledging all military-connected students and the contributions of military parents. Activities included creating a Hall of Heroes that displayed pictures of students and their parents, siblings or relatives who are active military members. A Proud to Be a Military Kid display showed students' drawings of themselves and their military relatives and different armed forces insignias. The schools developed and disseminated information packets about school and community resources for military-connected students and their parents. Clay County is also developing program-specific social media websites to provide resources for meeting the social and emotional needs of military children.

Flour Bluff (TX) focused on the relationships that military-connected students need for positive school development. A school counselor attends several activities hosted by the Naval Air Station Base and has developed a relationship with the educational liaison on the base. As new families move into the area and visit potential schools, the counselor discusses specific opportunities for the military-connected students and their parents. The school implemented S2S and Student Ambassador Group programs to assist new military-connected students adapt to the school. Teachers also developed a plan to identify military-connected students who are in need of extra support. **During 2011-12, approximately 75 military-connected students engaged in small-group activities arranged by the counselor. The targeted students completed a climate survey, attended lunch bunch groups, and became student ambassadors to assist with the transitioning needs of other military students. The counselor organized about 22 groups of students the first year.**

Newport News School District (VA) is using DoDEA funds to support services for its military-connected students and families. The district added a new form to its school registration packet so that transitioning military families can indicate their military-connected status. Using this data, the district hired and trained two Military Support Counselors (MSCs). MSCs specifically help both military-connected students and families to access community resources. **Data show that MSCs spend 81 percent of their time delivering preventative and responsive direct support services (individual and small-group counseling, and transition assistance) to military-connected students. In addition, counselors reported spending approximately 7 percent of their time providing consultation and family counseling to military-connected parents. Overall, 90 percent of parents of military-connected students reported being satisfied or extremely satisfied with their child's transition to their new school.**

Military kids are coming out of the woodwork to participate in our counseling groups. It is a place where they can connect. You do not sit there and always talk about feelings and crying. We play many games. I try to make school a happier environment. At least they know no one is judging them. I think it is really the biggest impact.

—Military Support Counselor
Newport News School District (VA)

Sonoran Science Academy (AZ) consists of 100 percent military-connected students. The academy established Project CARES (Counseling, Academics, Resources, Engagement, Support) to improve the social competence, parent engagement, and academic skills of seventh-grade students. Activities include implementing professional development sessions, a school counseling program, family events and supplementary academic activities. All seventh-grade students participated in the Second Step⁵ program. As a result, there was a 40 percent decrease in disciplinary actions. **Most notably, students improved their ability to negotiate social problems verbally. Staff members report that the decrease in disciplinary actions may be linked to an increase in the percentage of students attending the DoDEA supported after-school tutoring program. Attendance in the after-school program also proved to be successful in reducing the number of students in need of reading remediation.**

Christian County (KY) has strong ties to the local military installation, Fort Campbell, and a large military-connected student and family population. Christian County provided professional development to improve math and reading achievement and behavior management. The district also hired math tutors to provide specialized interventions. Because of the activities, **54 percent of targeted students achieved growth in Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) math assessment and schools exceeded reading growth targets by 6-12 percent. In addition, the district hired a counselor to work with military-connected students and their families. The counselor met with students and parents on a weekly basis through a range of activities including math and reading nights, parenting classes and special luncheons, and HOOAH days. All these activities contributed to approximately 73 percent of the military-connected students and families expressing a sense of connectedness.**

Midwest City – Del City (OK) experienced a declining quality of the school system’s interaction with military families and the poor performance of military-connected students, when compared with non-military-connected peers prior to 2011. Thus, Midwest City – Del City made military parent engagement a goal of its DoDEA grant. The plan is to involve military parents in school-sponsored family celebrations and student-centered events, provide technology training to parents on new software children will use in school, and increase parent engagement in their children’s learning at home. Early results show success far beyond expectations. **Military-connected parent attendance at parent-teacher conferences increased 29 percent. During state testing, Board of Education regulations require voluntary, unpaid, parent test monitors in every classroom throughout the duration of the testing (3-4 days) — a requirement most schools cannot meet. Since the project initiative, military-connected families not only supplied enough parents for every classroom, there were enough volunteers to provide hall monitors for the school as well. Fifty military parents also volunteered and organized a school cleanup over the summer. Parents attend the software trainings, and teachers report greater parent and child engagement in reading activities at home and growing student excitement about reading in schools.**

The parents really appreciated the first training and how they could keep track of their students’ progress. Most were unaware that the ability to do that was available. Flyers were sent home and an announcement was posted over the TV (i.e., new marquee) at the front of the building to advertise the Parent e-University classes.

— *Technology Integration Specialist*
Midwest City – Del City (OK)

⁵To learn more about the Second Step curriculum, see <http://www.cfchildren.org/second-step.aspx>.

Observations

From the examples above, several trends emerge that can be used to predict success of the 2011 Cohort. Similar trends emerged when analyzing first-year impacts of the 2010 Cohort. This may indicate that DoDEA funds continue to reach and affect a broader segment of military-connected students whose families live in communities near military bases in the United States.

1. Schools developed multiple and diverse strategies to improve student achievement and meet the specific transition needs of military-connected students. These included professional development to assist teachers in developing and presenting language and STEM curricula, data-driven assessments and interventions for at-risk students, and social-emotional supports for military-connected families.
2. Schools used formative assessments to modify individualized instruction through in-class, after-school, or specific interventions by counselors designed specifically for military-connected students who move in and out of school systems.
3. Teachers, guidance counselors, and other school personnel obtained professional development on understanding the unique needs of military-connected students and their families; this training led to positive changes in how these students experienced the school environment.

Moving Forward

As a part of the Educational Partnership Grant Program, DoDEA collects and disseminates information on resources that are available for military-connected LEAs and on outcomes of DoDEA-sponsored grants. This serves multiple goals: (1) helping grantees sustain funded activities and initiatives that contribute to positive student outcomes, (2) replicating strategies in schools in the United States and abroad serving military-connected students, and (3) leveraging the success of strategies developed through DoDEA funds to obtain additional resources for military-connected students. Many successful projects developed hands-on or project-based curricula to increase STEM achievement; multitier approaches to addressing specific student needs; and expanded outreach to military students and families through extracurricular programs, counseling services and raising teacher awareness of military student needs. As projects demonstrate improved academic performance for military students and positive outcomes for their families, DoDEA will broadly distribute the information.

Strategy Boosters,⁶ published in July 2012, includes project profiles of DoDEA-sponsored grantees in four areas: professional development, technology, formative assessment and transition support. The profiles provide superintendents, principals, teachers and other school personnel a snapshot that shows relevant details about how the districts developed and implemented activities. Each profile highlights projects that increased student achievement or improved transitions for military-connected students; *Strategy Boosters* also includes a series of reflective questions that can assist with professional development and/or implementation planning. These questions may help readers contextualize the *Strategy Boosters* to their own situations, finding similarities and differences, and identifying next steps to implement the activity.

⁶ *Strategy Boosters* can be found at http://www.militaryk12partners.dodea.edu/docs/2012_StrategyBoosters.pdf

As the grant projects progress, DoDEA will continue to highlight results and share lessons learned. Specifically, three upcoming resources are being developed:

- 2009 Grantees' Results — Comprehensive and integrated strategies developed by the 2009 grantees to increase achievement and support military-connected students and their families, as well as information on results and professional development opportunities.
- Advanced Placement and College Readiness — A review of the strategies and projects that increase access to and achievement in AP courses. The National Science and Math Initiative will be featured along with other grantees that have implemented successful strategies for college and career readiness.
- Resource Guide — Strategies implemented in public military-connected schools that align with the Common Core Curriculum. The targeted audience will be Department of Defense teachers and administrators.