

COMMUNICATION PRINCIPLES for PRINCIPALS

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ABOUT

PRinciples for Principals offers key information and messages for principals to consider in communicating the basics and getting parents involved. It is written and published by the DoDEA Communications Office.

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MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD AND PURPLE UP! APRIL 2015

This issue of PR for Principals is designed to focus on the Month of the Military Child and Purple Up! April is the Month of the Military Child and is designed to recognize and support children and youth who are part of military families, regardless of branch or type of service. Military-connected students face challenges that are unique to their situation, such as deployments, separation and frequent moves. We at DoDEA are encouraging our schools to celebrate the Month of the Military Child throughout the month of April. One specific way we would like to encourage participation is through the Operation Military Kid's (OMK) initiative, Purple Up! that will be celebrated on April 15. In global solidarity as a sign of support and appreciation for our military-connected children, all DoDEA schools that are in session should encourage students, faculty and staff to wear purple as a visual representation of support for military children.

Each year, the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) helps promote the Month of the Military Child. Throughout the month, DoDEA encourages schools to plan special events to honor military children and have administrators and principals incorporate the themes of this month into their everyday duties and responsibilities. These efforts and special events will stress the importance of providing children with quality services and support to help them succeed.

**APRIL IS
DESIGNATED AS
THE MONTH OF
THE MILITARY
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PLAY IN THE
ARMED FORCES
COMMUNITY.**

To assist schools with planning, DoDEA has compiled the attached package containing event/activity ideas, talking points, and promotion ideas.

School leaders can use this package to stimulate discussion in schools and communities on ways to commemorate this important month. Be sure to bring events to the attention of local military community public affairs officers (PAOs) and your district and area PAOs, as well.

BACKGROUND

April is designated as the Month of the Military Child, underscoring the important role military children play in the Armed Forces community. Sponsored by the Department of Defense Military Community and Family Policy, the Month of the Military Child is a time to applaud military families and their children for the daily sacrifices they make and the challenges they overcome.

The Month of the Military Child is part of the legacy left by former Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger. He established the Defense Department commemoration in 1986.

Throughout the month, numerous military commands will plan special events to honor military children. These events will stress the importance of providing children with quality services and support to help them succeed in the mobile military lifestyle. These special activities include arts and crafts shows, picnics, carnivals, fairs, parades,

block parties and other special activities, focusing on military children that highlight the unique contributions they make.

DoDEA joins the Department of Defense and the military community in celebrating April as the Month of the Military Child. At DoDEA, we know that military children face many challenges unique to their situation, such as having a parent deployed for extended periods of time and moving frequently. Deployments and family separations can be stressful times for children. DoDEA schools are part of the wide community support network available to families. Teachers, counselors, and psychologists guide honest and open discussions with students. Schools link deployed parents and students by email and other technologies. Our most important contribution is to remain focused on the educational mission and provide a stable environment for the children in our schools especially during these times of stress.

Throughout the month, DoDEA will encourage schools to plan special events to honor military children and have administrators and principals incorporate the themes of this month into their everyday duties and responsibilities. These efforts and special events will stress the importance of providing children with quality services and support to help them succeed in the mobile military lifestyle.

THEME

“Patches of Honor contest” -students create and submit a drawing on a patch template that represents what they feel is most important in their life, family, school, and/or military community and submit to the artist spotlight email address- artistspotlight@hq.dodea.edu

“Month of the Military Child”-Recognize military connected students in activities and conversations throughout the month.

“Purple Up!” Allow students and sports teams, teachers and staff to wear purple on April 15th to support our military-connected students.

EVENT/ACTIVITY IDEAS

Consider using some of the event and activity ideas listed below in planning your school’s Month of the Military Child Celebration:

PURPLE UP! – WEDNESDAY APRIL 15, ENCOURAGE EVERYONE TO WEAR PURPLE. Operation Military Kids (OMK) an organization dedicated to military families, is asking people around the nation to join them for an event they call, “Purple Up! For Military Kids.” They are encouraging everyone across the U.S. to choose a day in April to wear purple, as a visible way to show support and thank military children for their strength and sacrifices. We at DoDEA have designated April 15 to Purple Up! This is OMK’s fifth year of celebrating Purple Up! Purple symbolizes all branches of the military and as a tribute to our brave military men and women, we would like commitment from schools, offices, and communities to wear purple on April 15 to show support for our military persons and their families.

PATCHES OF HONOR

April is the Month of the Military Child, a time when we celebrate the important role children play in the Armed Forces community through their commitment, courage and unconditional support of their parents. Graciela Tiscareno-Sato’s book, “Good Night Captain Mama,” gives military children an insight to the service of their military parent and provides a vehicle for children to make connections in their lives by designing and decorating their own patches, just like those on Captain Mama’s uniform. Therefore, in recognition of the contributions and sacrifices of military children, we are inviting students to submit their own design of a Patch of Honor. The patch can represent what students feel is most important in their lives, families, schools, and/or military communities. They may create their own patch shape or click the link below for a patch template.

<http://www.dodea.edu/students/artistSpotlight/index.cfm>

TAKE PICTURES—Have picture taken of the display of purple unity on the April 15 as well as activities throughout the month. Send them to natalia.thaniel@hq.dodea.edu to represent your school and our school system for a global picture slideshow on the DoDEA website, or as postings on the DoDEA Facebook and or Flickr pages.

SALUTE TO MILITARY CHILDREN AT SPORTING EVENTS – Have the announcer make a special announcement before, during or after sporting events, recognizing all military children. Have them raise the flag, sing the National Anthem or recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

WEB SITE FEATURE – Schools can promote the Month of the Military Child on their web sites. Provide links to sites that offer resources for military families.

PUBLICIZE INSTALLATION/COMMUNITY EVENTS – Use the school newsletter to publicize Month of the Military Child events and activities hosted by the installation/community. Look for ways schools can contribute to these celebrations (setting up an information or activity booth, having teachers volunteer at events and activities, etc.).

HOST AN ASSEMBLY FOR MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD – Hold a school assembly honoring military children. Include a performance by the band. Have students write a poem about what it means to be a military child and select several student volunteers to read their poems.

SPONSOR A POSTER PROJECT FOR MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD– Have each class work on a class poster depicting their interpretation of what it's like to be a military child and what it means to be a military child. Have each class display their poster in a common area such as the lobby, gymnasium, cafeteria or hallways. Allow students to vote for their favorite poster and then feature the top posters on the school web page and around the school.

TEACHERS SALUTE MILITARY CHILDREN – Have teachers at your school make a special project with their classes such as a picture frame, bookmark, journal, etc., that ties into the Month of the Military Child.

RESOURCES

Many organizations will host activities, events and tributes to military children during the month of April. Here are just a few websites to show some of the events and ideas being shared by other organizations:

www.monthofthemilitarychild.com

www.ourmilitarykids.org/

www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil

FIND BOOKS ABOUT MILITARY CHILDREN

<http://www.booksformilitarychildren.info/>

<http://www.militaryfamilybooks.com/productcart/pc/viewCategories.asp?idCategory=3>

[http://www.extension.org/pages/64821/childrens-books-for-young-children-in-military-families#.](http://www.extension.org/pages/64821/childrens-books-for-young-children-in-military-families#.VRGO57HD-vM)

[VRGO57HD-vM](http://www.extension.org/pages/64821/childrens-books-for-young-children-in-military-families#.VRGO57HD-vM)

SAMPLE MORNING or AFTERNOON ANNOUNCEMENTS

April is month of the military child and we want to make sure you know how glad we are to have you in our school.

Being in a military family can be challenging. We want you to know that we are very proud of you for the sacrifices you make and the obstacles you overcome.

Military kids rock! Thanks for everything you do for your military family. Our nation needs you.

Military kids see the world, meet new people and have all kinds of interesting experiences. You are ambassadors for the U.S. and we are proud of you.

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD MESSAGE POINTS

The Month of the Military Child is a time to recognize military families and their children for the sacrifices they make, the resilience they display and the challenges they overcome. Join DoDEA in celebrating these youngest members of our military family as we celebrate the month of the military child.

DoDEA will Purple Up! on April 15 to show global solidarity in appreciation of our military children.

This celebration provides a great opportunity for our school leaders and teachers to underscore the importance of our mission and the commitment we have to military families.

Our children make many sacrifices growing up in a military family. From frequent moves to knowing their parent is serving in a dangerous place, military children must develop resiliency at a young age. This strength is something they carry with them throughout life and it is a testament to the strength and resolve of our nation's military members who serve as role models every day for their children.

DoDEA educators, constantly strive to ensure highest student achievement. Our schools welcome students, teach them and work hard to prepare them for the future. The children of our service members have much to contribute to their schools, their communities and the nation.

DoDEA strives to provide support to students and their families in all areas of development – academic, athletic and social and emotional. DoDEA is proud and fortunate to serve military families and is especially honored to be able to educate military-children.

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