



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE EDUCATION ACTIVITY

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## Maxwell hosts first DoDEA pilot program, opens application for off-base children

The Department of Defense Education Activity approved [Maxwell Elementary Middle School](#) as the first site for a four-year pilot program to open enrollment to children of full-time, active duty military living off base.

“This program expands public education options in the River Region,” said Lt. Gen. James Hecker, Air University commander and president. “We appreciate the great local community partners and DoDEA collaborations to increase public education options, and we’ll continue to work with them and the team at DoDEA on this important issue.”

The pilot program, authorized by the 2021 National Defense Authorization Act, allowed DoDEA to select four sites to gauge interest and expand options for military-affiliated children. To be eligible for the pilot program, students must be a dependent of a full-time, active duty service member with orders to Maxwell Air Force Base or Gunter Annex.

The strong partnerships between Maxwell Air Force Base, local school districts and other state and local partners, were recognized by the Military Child Education Coalition presenting the Pete Taylor Excellence Award for Outstanding Community Partnership. The pilot program at Maxwell Elementary Middle School is one in a list of recent accomplishments.

“We’re excited to select Maxwell as the first base for this pilot program, and to expand eligibility for children of our active duty military,” said Dr. Lisa Coleman, DoDEA Georgia/Alabama Community Superintendent. “We’ve worked closely with leadership at Maxwell to prioritize enrollment based on military readiness.”

School administrators will review applications this summer and then each quarter. Decisions will be made based on space available at the school for each grade level.

“Children residing on Maxwell Air Force Base and Gunter Annex receive top priority for enrollment at Maxwell Elementary Middle School,” said Coleman. “Once those enrollments are processed, we’ll then know how many slots are available and select students from the pilot program on a first come, first served basis.”

“When parents fill out the application, we need them to be as thorough as possible with all information, to include any individual education plans or other special programs for their children,” said Coleman. “That way we can make the best determination on availability and enrollment as we review applications.”

The application will remain open, and administrators will periodically review applications as school enrollment changes. Administrators will contact parents directly if their child was selected for the program.

“Providing quality education options for our military families removes barriers to service and secures Airmen, Guardians and families more Freedom to Serve. This pilot program addresses excess capacity in our on base school and is one of many initiatives worked with local, state, and federal partners to distinguish Maxwell Air Force Base and Gunter Annex as desired assignment location for service-members and their families,” said Col. Eries Mentzer, 42nd Air Base Wing commander. “It is still important for parents to enroll their children in local schools they’re eligible for, as this application does not guarantee a slot.”

Recent improvements to education options at Maxwell Air Force Base includes updated out-of-district enrollment policies for military connected children, athletic eligibility for children who reside on base but attend school in a different district and greater flexibility in applying to magnet school programs.

The Air University K-12 Public Education Working Group has also succeeded with offering professional development for educators on the challenges children of Airmen and Guardians face when relocating and improved communications between local schools and the military community. In addition to championing more quality education options, the working group also has worked to give back to the River Region by holding education resource fairs and grant-writing workshops.

The application for off-base, active duty military dependents opens June 9 at 6:30 a.m. CST and is available. It needs to be accessed via a personal computer or personal wireless device due to security limitations with Department of Defense computers. Learn more about [Maxwell Elementary Middle School](#) and the pilot program. For information on local school programs and how to contact the School Liaison Office, visit the [Maxwell Airforce Base School Liaison Program](#).