



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT COMMAND, ATLANTIC REGION  
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY GARRISON, FT CAMPBELL  
39 NORMANDY BOULEVARD  
FORT CAMPBELL, KENTUCKY 42223-5617

November 7, 2012

Office of the Garrison Commander

Dear Military Families,

I am writing to make you aware of an important issue regarding the education of our military children. Research has proven that there is a high correlation between school attendance and academic performance and success, while absence from school is often the greatest single cause of poor performance and achievement. School attendance has been identified as a serious issue for children throughout the United States and military children are no exception. Specific attendance concerns include increased chronic absenteeism and tardiness as well as excessive early dismissals. In addition, many military Families also pull their children out of school prior to deployments, upon return from deployments and on mid-tour breaks for extended periods of time to reconnect. While not technically an attendance issue, but rather a "time in school" issue, children are also often out of school for extended periods during Permanent Changes of Station. I am urging all personnel to make school attendance for your children a priority.

The Department of Defense respects and understands the need for Families to take time off together around deployments to reintegrate and bond. Multiple and extended deployments cause stress and hardships for Families, and the additional time together is important to our Families.

While it is appropriate for Families to reintegrate and for students to be out of school for a time, it is also critical to balance this time off with the educational needs of our students. Extended periods of time away from school can set students back significantly and cause delays in ascension to the next grade and even graduation. The United States Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, recently released a letter to public school superintendents urging them to be mindful of the needs of military Families, while also stressing the importance of the need for children to be in school as much as possible. I fully support this message and appreciate his efforts on behalf of military Families.

Students of military Families need to be in school, but in the situations when they are not, they should have a plan to catch up on educational material missed. We must be mindful of this, and work with school officials to ensure our students are prepared to be successful in their careers, leading contributors in their communities and productive citizens in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Sincerely,

  
DAVID L. DELLINGER  
COL, SF  
Commanding