



FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

☎ (907) 452-2000

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✉ superintendent@k12northstar.org

📍 520 Fifth Ave, Fairbanks, AK 99701

February 6, 2026

Re: Letter of Support for House Bill 256 – Military-Connected Students

Dear Members of the Alaska State Legislature:

On behalf of the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District (FNSBSD), I am writing to express our strong support for House Bill 256, an act relating to public school students connected to the military.

Fairbanks is home to one of the largest military populations in Alaska, and the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District is proud to serve a significant number of military-connected children. In fact, more than 25% of our students are military connected, making this legislation especially relevant to our district and community.

FNSBSD has a long-standing commitment to supporting military families and promoting stable, welcoming school environments for students who frequently experience relocations, family separations, and transitions between school systems. This commitment is demonstrated through our participation in the Purple Star School program. Currently, 19 of our 28 schools have earned Purple Star designation, reflecting the district's proactive efforts to ensure military-connected students and families feel supported and equipped for success.

House Bill 256 would strengthen and expand these efforts statewide by:

- Establishing the Purple Star School Program in statute, creating a formal and consistent process for recognizing schools that demonstrate a strong commitment to meeting the needs of military-connected students and their families.
- Creating a Purple Star Funding Factor, amending Alaska's education funding formula to provide additional support for districts where 75% or more of schools achieve Purple Star designation, applying a factor of 1.75. This funding incentive is a meaningful way to encourage districts to expand their support systems while strengthening educational resources overall.
- Improving transitions for military students, requiring districts to provide comparable educational accommodations, including IEP and 504 supports, on the student's first day of attendance. This ensures continuity of services and reduces disruption for students during already stressful transitions.



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- Strengthening statewide coordination and support, enhancing the role of the State Council on Educational Opportunity for Military Children and establishing a state-level coordinator to ensure districts have a clear point of contact and effective guidance for implementation.

HB 256 reflects Alaska's commitment to military families and provides a thoughtful approach to improving student outcomes through stability, consistency, and recognition of best practices. The Fairbanks North Star Borough School District believes this bill will benefit students, families, schools, and communities across Alaska.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge your support of House Bill 256.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued dedication to Alaska's public education system.

Sincerely,

Dr. Luke Meinert, Superintendent