



December 16, 2016

Betsy DeVos  
Nominee for Secretary of Education  
President-elect Trump Transition Office  
1800 F Street NW  
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Ms. DeVos,

We would like to congratulate you on your nomination to be the next Secretary of the Department of Education. As advocates for students — especially those connected to the military — we applaud your commitment to improving the education of all American children. And we look forward to helping you make good on the Department’s vital mission of promoting “student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.”

As you prepare for your confirmation and then to take the reins at the department, we wanted to urge you to remember the importance of high, consistent standards for the 1.1 million children of active duty military personnel, the overwhelming majority of whom are educated in public schools. As you know firsthand, they are particularly at risk of a poor education experience because of academic standards that are inconsistent as they move from place to place due to a parent’s commitment to serving the nation.

The impact of a military family’s mobility on a child’s education is far reaching:

- Moving six to nine times throughout their child’s K–12 career, military families are often faced with the consequences of inconsistent education standards — having to catch their students up to grade level in a new state, or watch them struggle to sit through material they’ve already learned.
- For military families, the inconsistency of standards for early education and K–12 means that the parents have to fill the education void, adding a large dose of stress along with a major parental time commitment.

Our common goal is to make certain that military kids don’t fall through the cracks and that they become prepared for successive grades and then higher education and careers. We do this through the promotion of high and consistent education standards across the country.

We would greatly appreciate working with you throughout your tenure on efforts to guarantee this essential ingredient for the success of all children, and we stand by ready to assist you. One possible way forward is for the Department to convene a working group dedicated to ensuring a quality education for the children of the men and women who serve the nation. We would gladly volunteer our expertise.

Military families make sacrifices every day; certainty about the quality of their children’s education should not be one of them. We owe it to our servicemembers and their loved ones to ensure that standards are rigorous and consistent, wherever the duty station.

Again, congratulations and thank you.

Signed,

Military Families for High Standards  
Air Force Association  
Association of the United States Army  
Collaborative for Student Success

Military Child Education Coalition  
Military Officers Association of  
America (MOAA)  
Mission: Readiness

National Math + Science Initiative  
(NMSI)  
National Military Family Association  
Navy League of the United States