



**Military
Impacted
Schools
Association**

1-800-291-6472

Bethany Little



Dr. John F. Deegan

Chief Executive Officer

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Military Impacted Schools Association

2009 Franklin Street • Bellevue, NE 68005

(800) 291-MISA • FAX (402) 291-7982

www.esu3.org/web/misa.html



NATIONAL

Military Impacted Schools Association

"Serving the educational needs of military families"

2009 Franklin Street • Bellevue, Nebraska 68005-5062
Telephone: (800) 291-6472 • Fax: (402) 291-7982
www.esu3.k12.ne.us/districts/bellevue/misa/misahome.html

January 7, 2000

TO: Bethany Little

FROM: Dr. John Deegan

I've enclosed some materials I thought you might like to have. Since our meeting, I've updated some of the data and made the information easier to read.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call me.
(800) 291-6472 or (402) 293-4005.

Again, thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to see us.



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January 5, 2000

The Honorable Alphonso Maldon
Assistant Secretary of Defense
(Force, Management, & Policy)
4000 Defense
Washington, DC 20301-4000

Dear Mr. Maldon:

Thank you for giving Charles Patterson and I time to visit with you regarding the education of children of military personnel. As you know, military life can bring great benefits, but can also cause many sacrifices. The last thing our military men and women who are risking their lives for this country should have to worry about is the quality of education their children are receiving.

The Impact Aid Program in the Department of Education is an in-lieu-of tax program that really needs to be supported by Congress and the administration. The DoD Assistance Funding is essential for DoD and the military to support as one of the most important quality of life issues facing military families today. If DoD hopes to have a force that is ready and capable to do the job, then DoD must take a leadership role in supporting the quality of life initiatives for a quality education for all military children.

Attached are the updated graphs and charts I presented to you at our meeting. There was a question about which appropriations changed in certain years and the one chart on the History of Appropriations should help answer that question. You also asked about outcomes – I have enclosed books that highlight accomplishments of schools receiving Impact Aid. The booklets include Indian and military schools. You will be able to see many schools serving military students receive recognition for accomplishments. Schools that receive DoD Assistance Funding would be proud to describe their success stories and how the funds benefit military children. I've also attached a list of how some of the DoD Assistance Funding has been used for military children.

Our meetings with Ray Tolleson and Victor Vasquez were great. We can all work together to form a partnership for all military children and form an education coalition that will benefit all military children -- no matter if they attend a DoD or public school serving a military installation. If DoD is serious about the military connecting with America, what better way than a partnership between military installations and local schools serving military students.

Attached is a "Partnership" chart that will be helpful in meetings on military children.

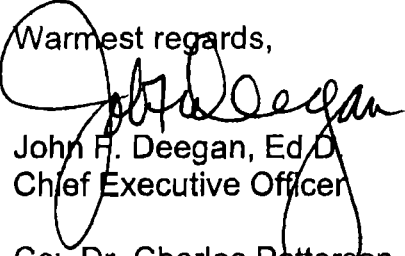
Your request for help in better clarifying what DoD is authorized to do is one I have already been working on. I'll forward the ideas as they are developed in writing.

All these issues are critical to building our future military -- the children of today's military personnel are our future military leaders. However, how we support these military children will help build the quality of our future force.

Again, MISA would be very pleased to have you speak at the "Supporting the Military Child Conference" which will be held in San Diego on July 19-21, 2000.

Please let me know if you need further details. I hope that you, Ray, Victor and I can meet from time to time.

Warmest regards,



John F. Deegan, Ed.D.
Chief Executive Officer

Cc: Dr. Charles Patterson
Mr. Ray Tolleson
Mr. Victor Vasquez

ENCLOSURES



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January 5, 2000

Mr. Victor Vasquez
Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense
For Personnel, Support, Families & Education
OASD (FMP/PSF&E)
4000 Defense
Washington, DC 20301-4000

Dear Mr. Vasquez:

Thank you for taking the time to meet with Charles Patterson and myself. You are truly committed to making a difference in the education of military children. Best of all you see "one military child" and not just children in DoD schools.

Your ideas have given us approximately three months worth of work. We look forward to doing what you suggested.

Thank you for setting up our meeting with Ray Tolleson. Mr. Tolleson, his staff, and your staff were very receptive. I believe they have the best interest of all military children at heart. We need to build a coalition of key leaders to turn our dreams into reality -- "a secure continuum of learning for all military children which is carefully guided and supported by DoD and Congress." Please note the enclosed chart I made to exemplify a partnership for the military child.

The Impact Aid Program in the Department of Education is an in-lieu-of tax program that really needs to be supported by Congress and the administration. It is essential for DoD and the military to support the DoD Assistance Funding as one of the most important quality of life issues facing military families today. If DoD hopes to have a force that is ready and capable to do the job, then DoD must take a leadership role in supporting the quality of life initiatives for a quality education for all military children.

Ray Tolleson and his staff suggested a national strategy plan and a national meeting to focus on a continuum of education for all military children. The Military Impacted Schools Association (MISA) and the Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) would be very happy to work with those involved in the national strategy plan and meeting. We also suggest working closely with the National Military Family Association (NMFA) as one of our partners for the military children.

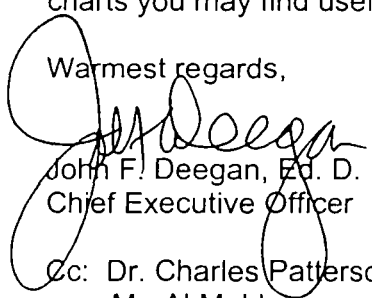
We've invited Al Maldon to attend our "Supporting the Military Child Conference" which is being held July 19-21, 2000, in San Diego. I hope you, too, can keep this conference in your plans.

I also wanted you to know how much the MISA school districts appreciate the hard work and support Otto Thomas and Gail McGinn have given over the last few years. Both Otto and Gail truly have been helpful and have attended many important meetings held by MISA and others. Also, Otto and Gail have received our MISA organization award -- "Champion for Children" for all their hard work for military children.

Please keep communicating our concerns up the chain of command and we will make a difference. I'll contact you soon with the information necessary on distribution of the DoD Assistance Funding for capital improvements and should also have a plan on how to build a broader base of support for coterminous schools and a few heavily impacted schools.

Attached are copies of letters I sent to Al Maldon and Ray Tolleson. I've also attached charts you may find useful in meetings on the topics we discussed.

Warmest regards,



John F. Deegan, Ed. D.
Chief Executive Officer

Cc: Dr. Charles Patterson
Mr. Al Maldon
Mr. Ray Tolleson

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January 4, 2000

Mr. Ray Tolleson
Interim Director of DoDEA
4040 North Fairfax Road
Arlington, VA 22203-1635

Dear Mr. Tolleson:

Thank you for taking the time to meet with Dr. Charles Patterson and myself. We really felt like you and your staff are committed to do what's best for military children. It's just a matter of finding ways to build that support in the right places and lets work together to accomplish our common goal.

The Department of Defense has done a wonderful job for children in DoD schools. Through your excellent leadership you can help all military children as they make the transition from one military installation to another. If DoD is seeking to reconnect the military with America what better way then with partnerships between military installations and all schools that serve military dependents.

It's obvious from the attached Wall Street Journal news article that DoD schools are doing very well. I have attached an article from our Omaha World Herald which picks up on a very important point you can make to Al Maldon, Rudy de Leon, John Hambre and Secretary Cohen -- if DoD supports the education of military children in any fashion, even if it's only through DoD Assistance Funding, under a defense-wide quality of life initiative it builds a case for recruitment, readiness, retention and best of all it's our future military force -- the children of today's military personnel are our future military leaders. Funding invested in their children is an investment in our future military.

I know your department is completing the DoD Study that we have all been waiting for -- I hope it's out soon.

Charles Patterson, the National Military Family Association (NMFA) would like to join you in any national meeting or strategy plan to support the education of military dependents. I believe it would be in everyone's best interest if DoD staff could visit some of our schools. We all need to continue to meet on what we need to do to build the continuum of quality education for all military dependents. I have developed a chart that will help explain our partnership.

The Impact Aid Program in the Department of Education is an in-lieu-of tax program that really needs to be supported by Congress and the administration. The DoD Assistance Funding is essential for DoD and the military to support as one of the most important quality of life issues facing military families today. If DoD hopes to have a force that is ready and capable to do the job, then DoD must take a leadership role in supporting the quality of life initiatives for a quality education for all military children.

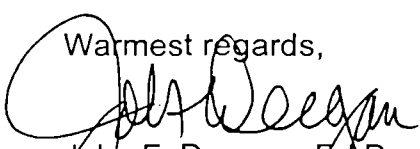
In closing, I want to tell you that Charles and I really felt good about your sensitivity on the issues that superintendents deal with every day in trying to provide a quality education program.

For your calendar – the Supporting the Military Child Conference is planned for July 19-21, 2000, in San Diego. The conference is being co-hosted by the Military Impacted Schools Association (MISA), the Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) and the California Impact Aid Schools Association (CAFIS). The National Military Family Association (NMFA) is also a partner in our efforts. Please see if your calendar will permit you to attend. If you can attend the conference, we will arrange for you to address the conference as your time permits.

Attached are various charts on appropriations you may find useful in meetings on the topics we discussed.

Please let me know if Charles and I can help you further. Don't hesitate to contact me for information or assistance.

Warmest regards,



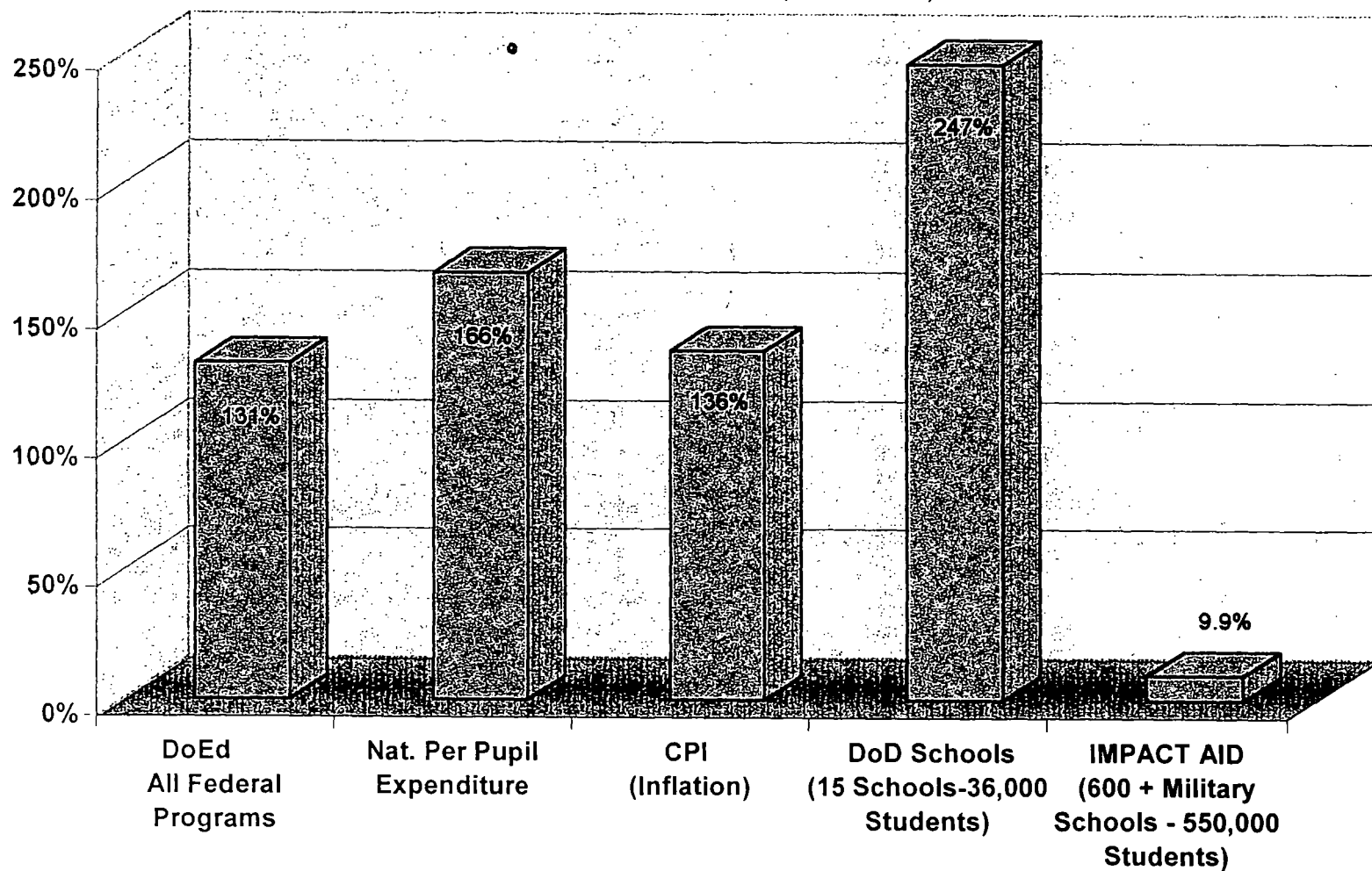
John F. Deegan, Ed.D.
Chief Executive Officer

Cc: Dr. Charles Patterson
Mr. Al Maldon
Mr. Victor Vasquez

ENCLOSURES

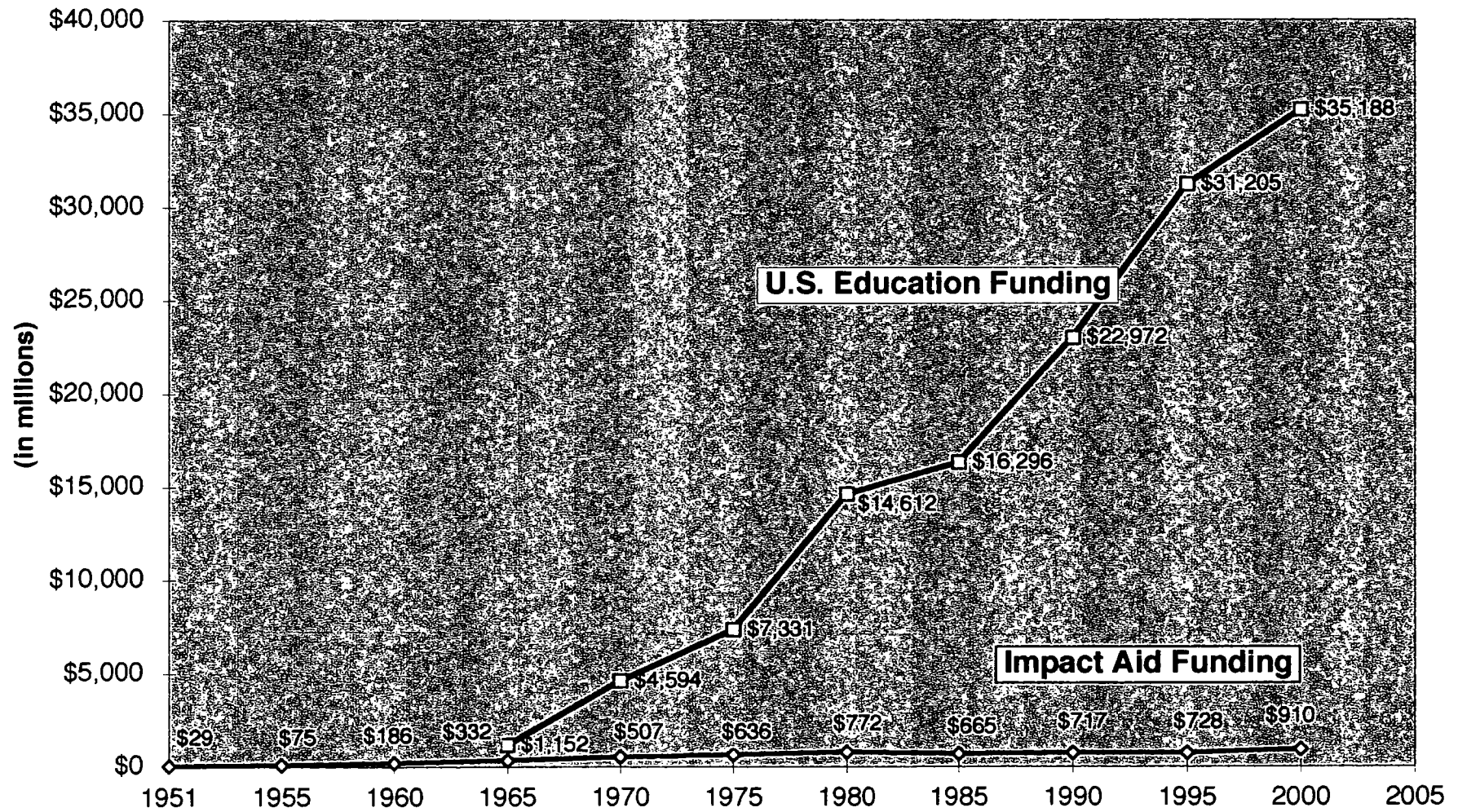
Education Funding

Percentage Increase Comparisons
Over The Past 20 Years (1979-1999)

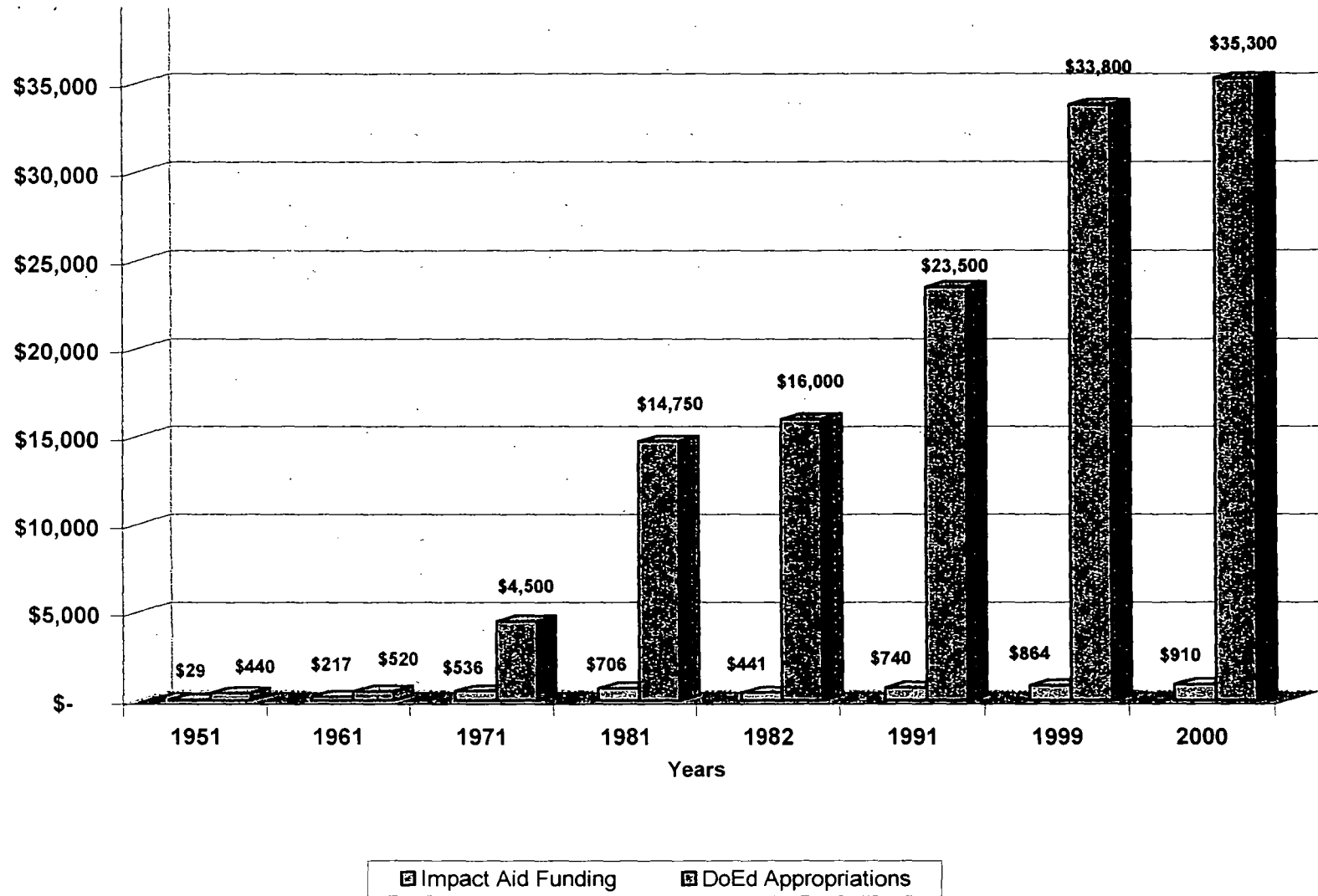


source: MISA (Military Impacted Schools Association)
800-291-MISA

Appropriations U.S. Education Funding vs Impact Aid



source: MISA (Military Impacted Schools Association)
800-291-MISA

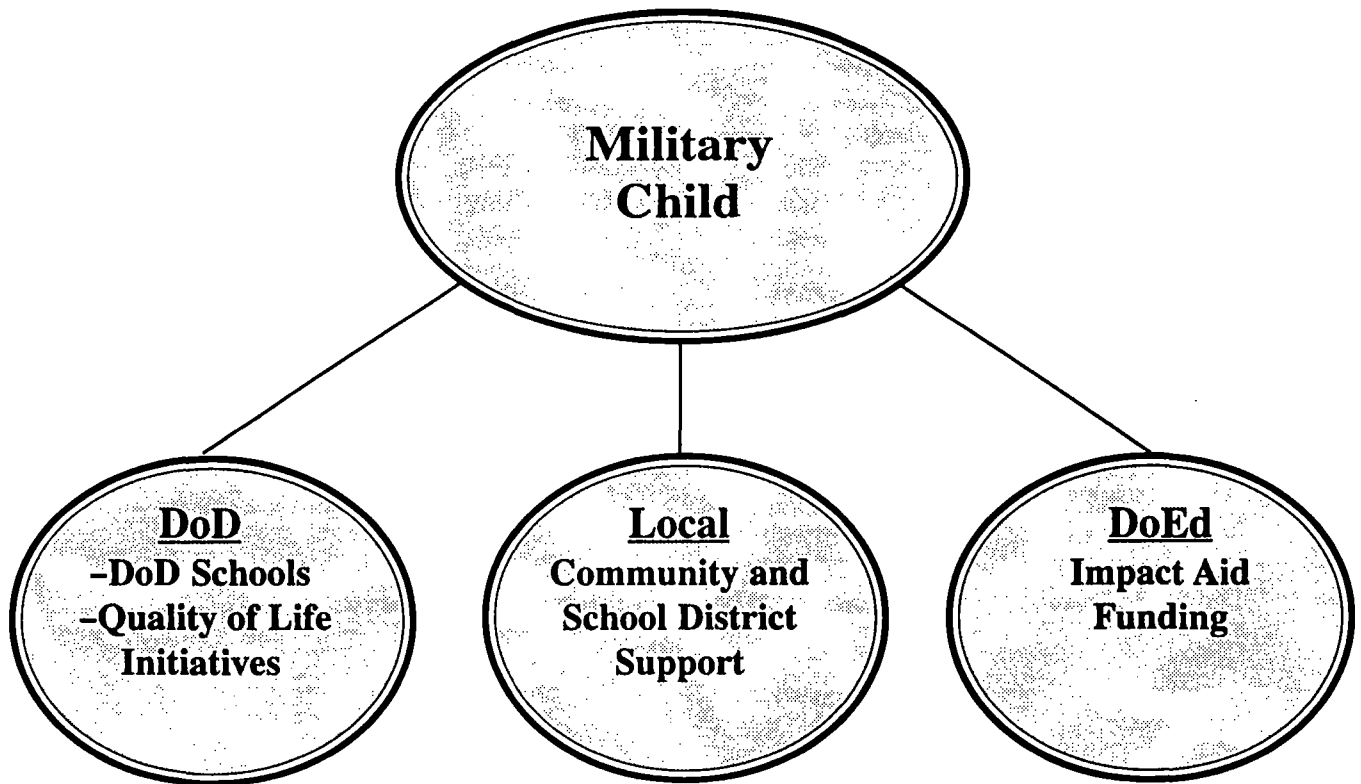


source: MISA (Military Impacted Schools Association)
800-291-MISA

History of Impact Aid Appropriations

FY'51	program began for military children	\$29,080,788	all sections of Impact Aid fully funded
FY'52		\$51,570,000	
FY'53	civil service added to program	\$60,500,000	
FY'54		\$72,350,000	
FY'55		\$75,000,000	
FY'56		\$90,000,000	
FY'57		\$113,050,000	
FY'58	Native Americans added to program	\$127,000,000	
FY'59		\$157,362,000	
FY'60		\$186,300,000	
FY'61		\$217,300,000	
FY'62		\$247,000,000	
FY'63		\$283,322,000	
FY'64		\$320,000,000	
FY'65	ESEA "war on poverty"	\$332,000,000	
FY'66		\$388,000,000	
FY'67		\$416,200,000	
FY'68		\$406,355,000	
FY'69		\$505,900,000	
FY'70	Impact Aid reauthorized	\$507,700,000	
FY'71		\$536,068,000	MISA formed
FY'72		\$592,580,000	
FY'73		\$535,495,000	
FY'74	three-tier payment system	\$574,416,000	
FY'75		\$636,016,000	
FY'76	low rent housing added to program; DoEd formed	\$730,000,000	
FY'77		\$776,000,000	
FY'78		\$775,000,000	
FY'79		\$786,100,000	
FY'80		\$772,000,000	
FY'81	Pres. Reagan's block grants	\$706,750,000	Desert Storm
FY'82	payments for "B" students reduced one-third	\$441,776,532	
FY'83	payments for "B" students reduced additional third	\$467,020,879	
FY'84	Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Deficit Reduction Act	\$555,000,000	
FY'85	payments for military children prorated at 64%	\$665,000,000	
FY'86	payments for military children prorated at 59%	\$634,405,000	
FY'87		\$685,000,000	
FY'88	BRAC	\$685,498,000	
FY'89	military "B" cut from .50 to .25 of military "A" rate	\$709,396,000	
FY'90	payment prorated at 40%	\$717,354,000	
FY'91	BRAC	\$740,708,000	IA Reauthorized
FY'92		\$743,708,000	
FY'93	BRAC	\$738,250,000	
FY'94	civilian "B" eliminated; military "B" cut from .25 to .10 of military "A" rate	\$786,300,000	
FY'95	Cong. Kasich proposes elimination of Impact Aid; CRs all year	\$728,000,000	
FY'96		\$693,000,000	
FY'97		\$730,000,000	
FY'98		\$808,000,000	
FY'99		\$864,000,000	
FY'00	Impact Aid scheduled to be reauthorized	\$910,500,000	

A partnership which guarantees a continuum of quality education for the Military Child



Making the Grade

Pentagon-Run Schools Excel in Academics, Defying Demographics

Of Course, It Doesn't Hurt That Parents Can Be Ordered to Get Involved

Sneaking Kids Back on Base

By DANIEL GOLDEN

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
FORT KNOX, Ky. — If the schools on this U.S. Army base were lagging in standardized-test scores, they would have plenty of excuses. Their students are poorer and more racially diverse than the national average, and only 60% finish the school year where they started it.

Instead of struggling, however, the schools the Pentagon runs at Fort Knox and other U.S. military bases are defying demographics by acing the National Assessment of Educational Progress, a federal exam regarded as the best gauge of precollege academic performance.

In the 1998 NAEP eighth-grade writing exam, for example, military bases in the U.S. ranked No. 2, second only to Connecticut, among 39 states and jurisdictions. In reading, their eighth-graders tied for fourth out of 43. Of the 13 NAEP tests the schools have taken at home and abroad in various grade levels and subjects since 1994, only once have they failed to top the national mean.

Bound for College

But tests aren't the only measure of the system's success. The Defense Department says that its schools are sending more than 80% of their graduates to college, well ahead of the overall national rate of 67%. And parent satisfaction is so high that the department has had to crack down on those trying to sneak their children back into the system after leaving the military or moving off base.

Most astonishing to those who have studied the NAEP results is the Pentagon's record with low-income and minority children. At least half the 34,000 students at its 71 domestic base schools qualify for free or reduced-price lunches under the federal school-lunch program because their parents are on the low end of the military pay scale. Forty percent of the system's students are black or Hispanic—10 percentage points above the public-school average.

But 35% of the students in the base schools' lunch program demonstrated writing proficiency last year, almost as high a rate as the 40% among their other students. Nationally, only 10% of such low-income students achieved proficiency. And 26% of black students and 32% of Hispanic students scored at or above proficiency, far exceeding national averages of 7% for blacks and 10% for Hispanics.

"This debunks the notion that demography is destiny," says Roy Truby, executive director of the National Assessment Governing Board, which oversees NAEP. "It's one of the most encouraging things I've ever seen."

Ray Tolleson, interim director of the Pentagon schools, says they are so effective because they spend extra time and effort training teachers and trying to involve parents in school life. Military authorities grant service members release time—typically, an hour a week or a half-day a month—to volunteer in the schools. At Fort Knox, every school also is adopted by an Army unit, which may do anything from mentoring to proctoring.

"We've found a blueprint for success," says Gen. Patrick K. Gamble, commander of the U.S. Air Force in the Pacific and an adviser to the schools, which require 24 credits for graduation, two or three more than most states demand.

Hard to Replicate

Of course, some aspects of the military formula would be hard to replicate in civilian life. The domestic base schools, which are funded from the Pentagon budget, spend \$7,279 per pupil. That's about 23% more than the national average and 26% more than Fort Knox's neighboring Hardin County school district, which depends on local taxes and state and federal aid. The Pentagon says it uses the extra funds for such things as staff training, art and music classes and technology. While class sizes are about the same as the national average, a higher proportion of teachers at the Pentagon schools hold master's degrees. And the schools have about twice as many computers per student as the national norm.

But "you can replicate the drive for parent involvement and the intensive staff training," says Mr. Tolleson, a former Northern California school superintendent. "Our teachers are really apprised of the latest techniques for working with kids," he adds.

The higher levels of minority achievement at the base schools echo their roots. After World War II, the military established schools overseas for children of occupying forces in Europe and the Pacific. At the same time, it formalized a school system in the U.S., primarily in the then-segregated South, to provide integrated schools for children of the newly desegregated armed services. In most other parts of the U.S., local school districts run base schools or dependents go to school off base.

Fort Knox's schools, which have 3,200 students, don't look much like military academies. They are relaxed places where students wear jeans and can participate in a full slate of extracurricular activities. Through close cooperation with the military authorities, the schools strive to maintain a creative learning environment, effective discipline and sensitivity to the upheavals in children's lives.

At the Fort Knox schools, many of the parent volunteers also serve as role models, including Sgt. Ricky Price, who helps fifth-grade teacher Amelia Blossom Pegram at MacDonald Intermediate School. Sgt. Price tutors students who struggle with spelling or math, hands out rewards for good test scores and "has made a difference to some of the boys who have less parent support or come from single-parent families," Ms. Pegram says.

Detail Makes the Difference

When Ms. Pegram tries to elicit some holiday essays from her students, she first describes a menu—corn, coleslaw, and meat—in tones as flat as those she might use in giving her weekly spelling test. Then her voice ripens to savor a feast: "End-of-season corn, fresh coleslaw, smoked-meat barbecue."

"The difference? The detail?" ventures Danielle Stephenson, a braided 11-year-old. "What it looked like and tasted like?"

"All right," says Ms. Pegram, who has taught at Fort Knox for 26 years. "We're using the language, taking it up a bit." The students begin writing. Sgt. Price hunches over one of them, dispensing advice.

'I'll Go In'

Serita Samuel, a nurse, frequently volunteers at the Pierce Elementary School, which her son and daughter attend. But her husband, Bernard, an Army sergeant, plans to retire in March to study nursing at the University of Louisville. In that case, they would have to leave the base and forfeit eligibility for the Fort Knox schools. The prospect so distresses Ms. Samuel that she is thinking of joining the Army herself rather than sending her children to local public schools.

"They care about learning here," she says one morning as she grades a spelling test. "I told my husband, if he goes out, I'll go in."

Her daughter, Jasmine, a third-grader, is composing a cherry-pie recipe on a computer. "I don't want to go to another school," she says. "I want to stay here."

Fort Knox schools are trying experimental techniques, from peer mediation for student disputes to a form of exile from regular classes, called in-school suspension, for misbehaviors. These gentle approaches work particularly well here because they are backed up by a threat. If a soldier can't keep his children in line, or ignores repeated requests for a conference, the school can call his commanding officer. At the least, the soldier will get a dressing-down; at most, he or his family may be expelled from base housing.

In one recent instance, an elementary school sought help from Fort Knox authorities after a mother—a soldier's wife—insulted a cafeteria worker. The garrison command reminded the soldier that, under Army rules, he was responsible for his family's conduct. Similarly, after being contacted by Fort Knox High School, military authorities chewed out a soldier whose son had joined a gang. And when the 16-year-old's behavior didn't improve, they evicted the boy from base.

"At Fort Knox, the command is going to support you, so parents know they better show up for conferences," says Lois Gray, a former Fort Knox principal who is now superintendent of the Hardin County schools. "If I have a parent who works at Dow Corning, I don't usually call the Dow Corning chief executive."

Systemwide, about 35% of the base schools' students come or go each year, a turnover rate higher than that of many troubled urban schools. Such high mobility disrupts learning and often creates social turmoil. At many regular schools, the problem gets no special treatment; kids are just expected to assimilate.

By contrast, the base schools—where many of the teachers are military wives or were "Army brats" themselves—confront the problem directly or even try to turn it into an advantage. Since 1994, the domestic base schools and the Pentagon's 153 overseas schools have shared the same curriculum. That helps students adjust when their families are transferred from one base to another.

Travels of 'Flat Stanley'

Eight of Betty Yundt's 25 fifth-graders at Fort Knox's Walker Intermediate School have joined the class since the start of the year; four others have left. But the students stay in touch with ex-classmates by sending them a "Flat Stanley," a cardboard cutout named for the two-dimensional hero of a 1964 book who was mailed to faraway places. The pen pals carry Flat Stanley with them and send back postcards to describe the places he has visited. Students learn geography by pinning the postcards to classroom maps, and gain a little math by measuring Flat Stanley's journey.

Fort Knox High teacher Laurie Walker, who is married to a sergeant, assigns personal narratives on topics such as "My Worst Move." Ninth-grader Jessica Wood, who came to Fort Knox from Georgia in July, just before her stepfather was sent to Korea, took the opportunity to reflect on her family's upheavals.

"I slowly got out of bed wondering what the day was to hold even though, deep down in my heart, I already knew," she wrote. "I walked downstairs to find my mother helping my dad pack his bags. I can remember wanting to go back upstairs and locking myself in my room. I guess I thought that if I did that then it would be like the day was not happening, like he would not really have to leave."

As with other Pentagon schools, much of Fort Knox's approach is based on the idea of doing it over again to get it right. Writing is taught in three phases: brainstorming, first draft and revision. Each year, the Pentagon administers its own systemwide writing test over three days—one for each step in the process.

Fort Knox school superintendent Frank Calvano credits staff training for inculcating effective techniques. The schools have rearranged class schedules so that teachers can attend a mandatory session each Wednesday to bone up. One of the ideas taught in these sessions is "mastery learning," which is based on the concept that all students can learn—just at different speeds. Those scoring less than 80% on a subject are taught the material again and retested, while the rest of the class deepens its study of the subject.

A Legal Maneuver

Periodically, Congress hears proposals to transfer the Defense Department's schools to local districts. But many Fort Knox parents are so loyal to the Pentagon-run system that, when they lose family eligibility by moving off base or retiring, they keep their children in the schools through a legal maneuver. They go to court to have friends or former neighbors on base appointed guardians.

Children with guardians are supposed to spend at least half of their nights on base, but enforcement has been spotty. In 1995, before a recent crackdown on abuses, 132 of the children in Fort Knox schools were ostensibly living with guardians. Today, about 40 have guardians, says garrison manager Malcolm Fogleman.

When Sgt. Nancy Hewlett had to move off post this year for medical reasons, she didn't want to uproot her daughter Tasha, who was entering her senior year at Fort Knox High. So, Ms. Hewlett and her civilian husband had friends on base named as guardians, giving them legal and financial responsibility for Tasha.

"It's a big decision," says Ms. Hewlett. "She's my flesh and blood. But Fort Knox has a lot more to offer Tasha than the Hardin County schools."

Wall Street Journal
December 22, 1999

Recruiting Plus: Military Base Schools

The Department of Defense, struggling with recruiting difficulties, has a potential incentive that it might not be making the most of: its schools.

The schools on military bases have every excuse for being mediocre. The Wall Street Journal reported recently that their students come from lower-income and more racially diverse families than students generally. Because of the mobility of military personnel, only 60 percent of the students in military families finish any school year where they began it.

The schools aren't at all average, however. Parents like the schools so much some have tried to sneak their kids back in after leaving the military or moving off-base. Other parents have named on-base friends as guardians so their children can still attend the base schools.

Students in the schools fly high in the National Assessment of Educational Progress, a federal exam considered a reliable measurement of academic performance. In 1998, eighth-graders on military bases in the United

States ranked second only to students in Connecticut on the NEAP writing exam. The statistics represented 39 states and jurisdictions. In reading, the military eighth-graders tied for fourth out of 43 states and jurisdictions.

The schools' record with low-income and minority children can only be called exceptional. Half of the 34,000 students at 71 domestic base schools qualify for free or reduced-price lunches because their parents are on the bottom of the military pay scale. But 35 percent of those students demonstrated writing proficiency last year, almost as high as the 40-percent rate among regular students. Across the nation, only 10 percent of low-income students reach proficiency.

All of this comes at a price. Domestic base schools spend almost \$7,300 per pupil, about 23 percent more than the national average.

Recruiters stress many things as they persuade men and women to join the military. Perhaps, for some people, the excellence of the school system could be a decisive factor.