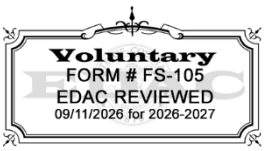
REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Applications Due: Wednesday, December 16, 2026, by 4:00 pm
Award Informational Webinar: Thursday, October 8, at 10 am

2027 Purple Star Schools Award



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Additional information is available online at the Purple Star Schools webpage

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2027 Purple Star Schools Award Information

Applications Due: Wednesday, December 16, 2026, by 4:00 pm

Background

Created in 2024 by House Bill 24-1076, the Purple Star Schools Award designates public schools that provide exceptional services and supports to military-connected students and their families to mitigate the academic and social-emotional challenges related to frequent moves, new schools, parental deployments, and different social circles and experiences.

The Purple Star designation recognizes a school's significant commitment to supporting military families and students of servicemen and women. For more information, please download our flyer.

During the first week of April each year, the Governor or his designee shall recognize each Purple Star School that has applied for the program and met the requirements with a certificate.

A Purple Star designation is valid for three years.

Eligible Applicants

Schools of a school district, district charter schools, institute charter schools, or boards of cooperative services (public schools) that provide services and supports to military-connected students and their families are eligible to apply for this designation.

Program Guidelines

Designated schools must meet specific requirements, targeted training, and implemented programs and resources designed to support the unique situations facing military students and families, including:

- Designating a dedicated staff member as the school's military liaison, who performs the following duties:
    - Identifies military connected students enrolled at the public school;
    - Serves as the point of contact between the public school campus and military-connected students and their families;
    - Determines appropriate school services available to military-connected students and
    - Determines whether military-connected students have access to the appropriate counseling services, mentorship services, volunteer opportunities and student support services.
- Creating and maintaining on the public school's website an accessible webpage that includes resources for military-connected students and their families, including the following information:
    - How to relocate to, enroll in, register for, and transfer records to the public school;
    - Academic planning, course sequences, and advanced courses available at the public school;
    - Eligibility, application, and referral services offered specifically to military-connected families for counseling and other resources within the community or off the military installation, including the name and contact information for the installation liaison.
    - The name of the designated military liaison for the public school and the military liaison's duties.
- Establishing and maintaining a student-led transition program that assists military-connected students who are relocating to the public school;
- Offering professional development for all educators and staff on issues related to military-connected students; and
- Offering at least one of the following initiatives:
    - A public school resolution published on the public school's website showing support for military-connected students and their families;

- Celebrations in April and November to recognize military children and military families with associated events hosted by the public school;
- A partnership with a local military installation that facilitates opportunities for military members to volunteer on the public school's campus, speak at a public school assembly, or host a field trip; or
- Student driven clubs and groups that show community-family engagement for military connected students and their families.

- Offering at least one of the following initiatives that demonstrates commitment to supporting military-connected families, including:
  - Hosting an annual military recognition event;
  - Partnering with a school liaison program manager from a military installation;
  - Supporting projects that connect the public school to the military community; or
  - Providing additional outreach to military-connected students and their families not included above.

Selection Process

The following timeline details each phase of the state's selection process. Applications are due December 16, 2026, and the 2027 Purple Star Schools will be announced in April 2027.

Applications will be reviewed by CDE staff to ensure all required components are included in applications. Any application that receives a "no" score in any section may be asked for additional information before a final decision is made.

Award Timeline

October 5, 2026: Application Opens
December 16, 2026: Application Closes
January-February 2027: Applications are reviewed
March 2027: Award Notifications are released
First Week of April 2027: Purple Star Schools Awards Ceremony

Application Submission and Format

Applications Due: Wednesday, December 16, 2026, by 4:00 pm

Submit your application at:
https://colorado.egrantsmanagement.com

Note: The following version of the application is intended as a reference document for instructions and grant application planning purposes.

Applicants **must** complete the intent to apply in order to be setup in GAINS.

Applications for Purple Star Schools must be submitted in GAINS.

Submission of application materials either in hard copy or via e-mail will not be accepted.

The application window will open in GAINS on Monday, October 5th, 2026, and close on Wednesday, December 16th, 2026, at 4 pm.

More information about GAINS is available on CDE's website.

Accessing GAINS

Applicants are required to complete the intent to apply. This will capture the necessary information for CDE to setup users within the GAINS platform. Please complete the intent to apply as soon as possible.

2027 Purple Star Schools Application

Applications Due: Wednesday, December 16, 2026, by 4:00 pm

****Below is the application information you will be asked to complete in your online application. You may find it helpful to use this document to plan and compile your responses.**

Section 1: Introduction (Not Scored)

To qualify to earn the Purple Star School Designation, schools must submit the following application demonstrating they have met the criteria to provide resources and supports for their military-connected student population.

Applications for the 2026-2027 school year are being accepted from October 5, 2026, through December 16, 2026. Notifications of award outcomes will be announced by the Colorado Department of Education during the month of March 2027, and the award ceremony will be held in the first week of April 2027.

Please answer each of the following questions and provide as much information as possible such as narratives, illustrations, or any other applicable attachments to support that the criteria for the Purple Star School Designation have been met.

Section 2: School Information (Not Scored)

1. LEA from the list below: Click here to enter text.
2. Primary Award Contact Name: Click here to enter text.
3. Primary Award Contact Phone: Click here to enter text.
4. Primary Award Contact Email: Click here to enter text.
5. Primary Award Contact Mailing Address: Click here to enter text.

Section 3: Campus-based Designee

1. ☐ To qualify as a Purple Star School, a school must designate a campus-based **staff member** as a military liaison who supports military-connected students and their families. Please check the box if the school has a designated military liaison.

   Provide the information below for the campus-based military liaison point of contact:
   - First Name: Click here to enter text.
   - Last Name: Click here to enter text.
   - Position: Click here to enter text.
   - Phone Number: Click here to enter text.
   - Email: Click here to enter text.

2. Does the campus military liaison identify military-connected students enrolled at the public school?

☐ Yes

☐No

If yes, please describe how the military liaison identifies military-connected students who are enrolled at the public school. Examples may include using the identifier on the school's enrollment or registration materials, asking additional military-related questions during enrollment, working with the school's registrar, discussing military-related content at back-to-school night or other activities.

Click here to enter text.

3. Does the campus military liaison serve as the point of contact between the school and military-connected students and their families?

☐Yes

☐ No

If yes, describe how the military liaison serves as the point of contact between the public school campus and military-connected students and their families. Examples may include reaching out to military families at the beginning of the year, ongoing meetings between the liaison and military families during the school year, sending information out to military families about military-related events, providing specific opportunities for military resources during school events, connecting regularly with the military base liaison, and providing training and support to military families for student supports.

Click here to enter text.

4. Describe the services that are available at the school to specifically support military-connected students. Services may include counseling or nutrition services, youth mentorship services, clubs, transition or sponsorship programs, volunteer opportunities, and services for special education, gifted and talented, and other needs related to military-connected students' needs.

Click here to enter text.

5. How does the liaison determine if military-connected students have access to the appropriate additional services? How does the liaison establish the services and ensure ongoing support is provided and effectively meets the student's needs?

Click here to enter text.

Please check the box if you have additional files to upload as supporting evidence for the descriptions above. Clearly name each file and provide a description related to each uploaded photo. (Files should be uploaded as PDF files only.)

☐ Yes

****Upload the Additional Files in the Online Application****

Section 4: School Website

1. Does the school have an easily accessible webpage that includes resources for military-connected students and their families, including the required information?

☐Yes

☐ No

Please provide the web address from the school's website that serves as a resource for military-connected students and their families. If the school's main military-connected students webpage includes links to a district-maintained page, the primary link must be clearly present and easily accessible on the school's website. (Note: If no website is included, your application will not receive consideration for the Purple Star School designation.)
Click here to enter text.

2. The school's webpage must include all of the required information below:

☐ How to relocate to, enroll in, register for, and transfer records to the public school;

☐ Academic planning, course sequences, and advanced courses available at the public school;

☐ Eligibility, application, and referral services offered specifically to military-connected families for counseling and other resources within the community or off the military installation, including the name and contact information for the installation liaison.

☐ The name of the designated military liaison for the public school and the military liaison's duties.

Section 5: Student-Led Transition Program

The school must establish and maintain a student-led transition program that assists military-connected students who are relocating to the public school.

1. Please check the box if the school has a student-led transition program that supports military-connected students.

☐ Yes

☐ No

Provide the following information for the school-based staff member who supports the school's transition program. Note: This may or may not be the same campus-based staff member that is designated as the campus-based military liaison.

a. First Name: Click here to enter text.
b. Last Name: Click here to enter text.
c. Position: Click here to enter text.
d. Phone Number: Click here to enter text.
e. Email: Click here to enter text.

2. A student-led transition program may include a student ambassador program such as Anchored4Life, Youth Sponsorship, Student 2 Student, or a school designed program. Program activities may include introductions to the school environment and processes, organizing and hosting social events, facilitating guided tours of the school, and/or accompanying new students to lunch the first week of school.

Provide a detailed description of the school's student-led transition program.

Click here to enter text.

3. Provide evidence of the student-led transition program's activities that occurred throughout the school year. You may submit photos, videos, screenshots, social media posts, flyers, newspaper articles, presentations, staff/student training materials, and/or additional LEA program materials.

Please include all documents in PDF format. Clearly name each file and provide a description related to each uploaded photo. Videos should be hyperlinked from a video-hosting service (e.g., YouTube, Vimeo, Google Drive, Sharepoint, etc.)

****Upload Evidence in the Online Application****

Please provide a short description of your evidence.
Click here to enter text.

Section 6: Professional Development and Training

1. Does the school offer annual professional development or training for all educators and staff on topics specific to military-connected families?

☐Yes

☐ No

Please complete the table below with the training(s) offered and include the required details. To qualify for this award cycle, the PD must be completed within the past 12 months. Future trainings will not qualify and should **not** be included in the table.

Name of PD	Date Offered	Facilitator	# Staff Served	Description of Impact

Section 7: Military-connected Student Initiatives

A school must offer at least **one** of the following initiatives listed below.

1. Please indicate which of the following military-connected student initiative(s) your campus participated in. Select all that apply.

☐ Public school resolution published on the school's website showing support for military-connected students and their families.
Please provide a link to the resolution and include a description of how your school fulfills the commitments made in this document.

Click here to enter text.

☐ Celebrations in April **and** November to recognize military children and families with associated events hosted by the school. *Note: To qualify, celebrations must be held in **both** months.*

If yes, please provide a detailed description of the celebrations your campus participated in during April and November to recognize military children and families and explain their impact on military-connected students.

Click here to enter text.

☐ A partnership with a military installation that facilitates opportunities for military members to volunteer on the school's campus, speak at assemblies or host a field trip. This partnership may include involvement with any military installation or military- affiliated organization in Colorado like local veteran's organizations, guard units, and/or guard reserves.

If yes, provide a detailed description of your partnership with the local military installation, how your campus engaged with active-duty members and/or the installation with volunteer opportunities, and the impact of these activities on military-connected students.

Click here to enter text.

☐ Student-driven clubs/groups that show community-family engagement that include military-connected students and their families. *Note: The school's student-driven transition program should be separate from the activities included in this criterion.*

If yes, provide a detailed description of your student-driven clubs/groups that show community-family engagement that include military-connected students and their families, and the impact of these groups on military-connected students.

Click here to enter text.

Please upload evidence of the initiative(s) below:

Upload Evidence in the Online Application*

Please provide a short description of your evidence.

Click here to enter text.

Section 8: Additional Criteria

A school must offer one additional military-connected student initiative from the list below. The events below must be different from the events selected in section 7 to qualify for this additional criterion.

1. Please indicate which of the following military-connected student initiative(s) your campus participated in. Select all that apply and were not included in Section 7.

☐ The school hosts an annual military recognition event, in addition to events described in Section 7 for Military-Connected Student Initiatives. Some examples may include an enlistment ceremony for students entering the military, service projects recognizing military service members, or other annual events that honor military service members and their families.

Please provide a detailed description of this initiative.

Click here to enter text.

☐ The school partners with a school liaison program manager from a military installation.

Please provide a detailed description of this initiative.

Click here to enter text.

☐ The school supports additional projects that connect the school to the military community not included above.

Please provide a detailed description of this initiative.

Click here to enter text.

☐ The school provides additional outreach to military-connected students and their families not included above. Please provide a detailed description of this initiative.

Click here to enter text.

Please upload evidence of the initiative(s) below:

Upload Evidence in the Online Application*

Please provide a short description of your evidence.

Click here to enter text.

2027 Purple Star Schools Evaluation Rubric

Use this rubric only as a reference.
The following will be used by selection committee to evaluate applications.
Please note, Section 1 and Section 2 are not scored.

Section 3: Campus-based Designee

A school must designate a campus-based staff member as a military liaison who supports military-connected students and their families.

Review Criteria	Does the applicant meet the criteria?
1) Identifies a campus-based military liaison at the public school.	☐ Yes ☐ No
2) The liaison identifies military-connected students enrolled at the public school.	☐ Yes ☐ No
3) Describes how the military liaison serves as the point of contact and works collaboratively between the school and military-connected students and their families.	☐ Yes ☐ No
4) Describes the services available at the school to specifically support military-connected students.	☐ Yes ☐ No
5) Explains how the liaison determines if students have access to the appropriate services	☐ Yes ☐ No

Reviewer Comments:

Section 4: School Website

The school must create and maintain on the public school's website an accessible webpage that includes resources for military-connected students and their families, including the following information:

Review Criteria	Does the applicant meet the criteria?
1) A dedicated webpage for military-connected students and their families is linked to the application.	☐ Yes ☐ No
2) The webpage is on the school's website and is easily accessible.	☐ Yes ☐ No
3) The webpage includes information on how to relocate to, enroll in, register for, and transfer records to the public school.	☐ Yes ☐ No
4) The webpage includes the following information: ▪ Academic Planning processes and supports ▪ Curriculum details and/or course sequences ▪ Eligibility, application, and referral services offered specifically to military-connected families for counseling and other resources within the community or off the military installation, including the name and contact information for the installation liaison.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ No
5) The webpage includes the school-based military liaison's contact name, information and duties	☐ Yes ☐ No

Reviewer Comments:

Section 5: Student Led School Transition Program

The school must establish and maintain a student-led transition program that assists military-connected students who are relocating to the public school.

Review Criteria	Does the applicant meet the criteria?
1) Identifies the school-based staff member who supports the campus transition program and includes their contact information.	☐ Yes ☐ No
2) Provides a detailed description of the school's student-led transition program and activities held throughout the school year reflecting student-led events and activities.	☐ Yes ☐ No
3) Provides documentation and evidence that **provides a clear picture** of the school's student-led transition program and the activities that occurred in school.	☐ Yes ☐ No

Reviewer Comments:

Section 6: Professional Development and Training

The school must offer professional development for all educators and staff on issues to specific to military-connected students. To qualify for this award cycle, the PD must be completed within the past 12 months.

Review Criteria	Does the applicant meet the criteria?
1) Provides a detailed description of annual professional development or training for all educators and staff on issues specific to military-connected families.	☐ Yes ☐ No
2) Completes the table and required information reflecting the professional development and training events held throughout the year for all staff.	☐ Yes ☐ No

Reviewer Comments:

Section 7: Military-connected Student Initiatives

A school must offer at least one of the military-connected student initiatives listed below.

Review Criteria	Does the applicant meet the criteria?
1) Provides a public school resolution published on the school's website showing support for military-connected students and their families and a description of how the school fulfills the commitments made in the resolution.	☐ Yes ☐ No
2) Provides a detailed description of the celebrations the campus participated in during April AND November to recognize military children and families with events hosted by the school and explains their impact on military-connected students.	☐ Yes ☐ No

Review Criteria	Does the applicant meet the criteria?
3) Provides a detailed description of the partnership with the local military installation, how the campus engaged with active-duty members and/or the installation, and the impact of these activities on military-connected students.	☐ Yes ☐ No
4) Provides a detailed description of the student-driven clubs/groups that show community-family engagement for military-connected students and their families, and the impact of these activities on military-connected students.	☐ Yes ☐ No

Reviewer Comments:

Section 8: Additional Criteria

A school may provide additional information that demonstrates commitment to supporting military-connected families.

Review Criteria	Does the applicant meet the criteria?
1) Indicates at least one additional military-connected student initiative(s). ☐ Hosting an annual military recognition event, in addition to events described in Section 7 for Military-Connected Student Initiatives. ☐ Partnering with a school liaison program manager from a military installation. ☐ Supporting additional projects that connect the school to the military community not included above. ☐ Providing outreach to military-connected students and their families not included above.	☐ Yes ☐ No
2) Provides documentation and a short description that provides a clear picture of the additional initiatives.	☐ Yes ☐ No

Reviewer Comments: