



Schools Toolkit

Each year, 600,000 military families move to new communities. Many of these families have school-aged children and therefore schools become a primary way they connect with others and get integrated to their new community. Blue Star Welcome Week is a nationally recognized week of activation with the goal of ensuring these military families feel celebrated and welcomed into their new communities — and we'd love to have your school join us in these efforts!

Do Your Part

As part of Blue Star Welcome Week, Blue Star Families and Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) have teamed up to ensure schools get involved and have the resources and support to welcome military families. Following are some actionable ideas for your school to connect with military families during Blue Star Welcome Week — and beyond. Schools are also bases of innovation, so be creative!

Examples of Blue Star Welcome Week School Events, Activities, and Programs

- Post about Blue Star Welcome Week through your school/school district social media accounts, highlighting your warm welcome to military families who may have recently joined your community (see toolkit resource link below).
- Host a welcome breakfast for military kids and families to get connected with each other and school community leaders.
- Issue a proclamation declaring your district's observation of September 21st – 29th as Blue Star Welcome Week. (We can provide draft language for you to use!)
- **Ask** for an MCEC Student 2 Student[®] (S2S[™]) program at your school – a student program that brings military and civilian students together to welcome new students, create a positive environment, support academic excellence, and ease transitions.
- Share, and encourage parents to sign up for, SchoolQuest[™] to ensure current and upcoming transitions for military children are smooth and well planned, at schoolquest.militarychild.org.
- **Get your school** on the path to Purple Star School designation with MCEC's support. Purple Star Schools supports military children as they relocate to new schools due to a parent's change in duty station.
- Educators, take advantage of MCEC's [professional development offerings](#) so you can best serve military students.
- Acknowledge and honor military kids during daily school announcements or in weekly newsletters.
- Design and create a welcome poster for public display.
- Invite military parents/guardians to engage in school involvement programs and inform them of after-school programs and resources that their kids may join.
- Construct an after-school program that focuses on teaching inclusivity, a sense of belonging, and the sacrifices made by military families.
- Provide books in classrooms that give insight into the lives of military families and moving to new places.
- Create informative packets for military families to get from the school, which include important school resources, community events, parent/guardian school involvement programs, points of contact, and other information pertinent to the community incorporation and adaptation of military families.

Event Registration Form

Interested in hosting a Blue Star Welcome Week event? Tell us what you have planned on our [partner event registration page!](#)

Online Blue Star Welcome Week Toolkit

Find sample social media posts, graphics, and more [here](#).

Blue Star Welcome Week FAQs

What is Blue Star Welcome Week?

Blue Star Welcome Week was created to recognize the 600,000 military families who move to new communities each year, while raising awareness and building support for military families across the country. During Blue Star Welcome Week, the goal is to proactively improve military families' sense of belonging to their local communities by forging strong connections between military family members and their local neighbors.

When is Blue Star Welcome Week 2024?

It takes place from September 21st – 29th.

Why is this week so important?

According to the 2023 Military Family Lifestyle Survey, **only 41% of active-duty respondents feel a sense of belonging to their local civilian community.**

The average military family moves three times as often as their civilian peers. The majority of these permanent change of station (PCS) moves take place during the summer in June, July, and August. More than 70% of families live off of the military installation in their local civilian communities, and they do not feel a strong sense of belonging to those communities.

Why are Blue Star Welcome Week partners needed?

Blue Star Welcome Week is how Blue Star Families gets upstream of the lack-of-belonging problem and helps military families thrive. Blue Star Families knows that if you can create a moment of welcome when people move, everything else improves — financial challenges, mental and physical health, and so much more. Together, this initiative can spread to more communities across the country, empowering more military families to feel a greater sense of belonging.

Where can I find more information?

Visit bluestarwelcomeweek.org.