

6A-1.0999 Purple Star School of Distinction Designation

(1) Purpose. The purpose of this rule is to establish the criteria and application process for Florida's Purple Star School of Distinction Designation, which is awarded to schools that demonstrate a commitment to or provide critical transition supports for military-connected families, as provided in Section 1003.051, F.S.

(2) Definitions.

(a) "Military Student" means a student as defined in Section 1003.051(1), F.S.

(b) "Purple Star School of Distinction" means a school approved by the Department that meets the criteria established in Section 1003.051, F.S., and this rule.

(c) "School" means a public school, as defined in Section 1003.01(2), F.S., a charter school, as defined in Section 1002.33, F.S., or a private school participating a state scholarship program under Chapter 1002, F.S.

(3) Schools must meet the following criteria in order to earn the designation as a Purple Star School of Distinction:

(a) Military Point of Contact (MPOC). Each school must designate a school counselor, teacher, principal, or assistant principal as the MPOC. MPOCs are responsible for serving as the central point of contact for military families to assist with student enrollment, records transfer, accessing services for students with disabilities, and accessing school- and community-based resources that are available for military students and their families.

(b) Webpage. Each school must establish and maintain a separate page on its website that is linked on the school's homepage and includes, at a minimum, the following information for military students and families:

1. Transition planning for military families;

2. Academic planning for military families;

3. Resources and educational opportunities for military students;

4. Information on the school's student-led transition program;

5. Information on exceptional student education services;

6. Information on upcoming military recognition events;

7. Information on mental health challenges facing military students, including ways to access school-based

mental health services; and

8. Contact information for MPOC.

(c) Transition Program. Each school must establish a student-led transition program that assists military students in transitioning into the school. The transition program must include:

1. At least one student designated to serve as student transition team coordinator;

2. A military peer-support system that links incoming military students with other military students at the school within the first two weeks of enrollment;

3. A process for familiarizing new students with the school, such as introducing military students to student leaders or ambassadors, informing military students about newcomer social events, and providing guided tours of the campus.

(d) Professional Development. Each school must offer annual professional development concerning how to identify and respond to the unique needs of military students and their families. Schools may partner with school districts to procure or provide professional development through virtual or face-to-face courses.

(e) Each school must reserve at least five (5) percent of controlled open enrollment seats, as defined in Section 1002.31, F.S., for military students.

(f) Each school must complete at least three of the following activities to support military families:

1. The school hosts at least one of the following annual military recognition events: Month of the Military Child, Month of the Military Family, Purple-Up! For Military Kids!, Veteran's Day, Memorial Day;

2. The district school board where the school is located, or governing board in the case of a charter or private school, issues a resolution publicizing support for military students and families;

3. The school partners with one or more military school liaison officer(s) to provide opportunities for active-duty parents to volunteer at the school;

4. The school maintains a public display recognizing service members, veterans, or military students and families;

5. The school participates in a service project that connects the school with the military community, such as adopt-a-school, sending letters or care packages to deployed troops, or Yellow Ribbon events; and

6. The school offers the Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) program.

(4) Application and renewal.

(a) Beginning with the 2022-23 school year, a school that meets the criteria for the Purple Star School of Distinction Designation must report the information listed in subsection (3) of this rule to the Department of Education by completing the Purple Star School of Distinction Application form, PSDA-1, (insert link) (effective May 2022) and submitting the completed form to PurpleStarSchools@fldoe.org by September 30 of each school year. This form is incorporated by reference and may be obtained from the Florida Department of Education, 325 West Gaines Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399.

(b) Schools must maintain records demonstrating completion of the required items in subsection (3) of this rule and must provide those records to the Department of Education staff upon request.

(c) Once awarded, schools will maintain their designation as a Purple Star School of Distinction for three (3) school years. After three years, schools must reapply to maintain the Florida's Purple Star School of Distinction Designation.

Rulemaking Authority 1001.02(2)(n), 1003.051(4) FS. Law Implemented 1003.051 FS. History–New