

Expanded Education for Kids
By CSM John Fourhman

A new Army policy has recently been released aimed at continued support for Family members of fallen Soldiers.

It strengthens the Army's commitment to ensuring the best possible support for one of our most important assets ... our Army Families.

The new policy, which is effective immediately, will allow students currently enrolled in Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools who are dependents of fallen Soldiers to continue in DDESS schools without limitation, regardless of their physical residence or upcoming school transition points.

Prior to the new policy, DDESS students who were enrolled in school were allowed to continue in their DDESS schools until the end of the school year without any special permission. The students were allowed to stay at that school until they would normally transfer to the next school level; i.e. from elementary school to middle school, or middle school to high school.

Family members and commanders have been making recommendations to the Department of Defense Education Activity to change the old policy to reflect the increasing sacrifices that Families are making every day, as Soldiers continue to rotate through numerous rotations in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The DoDEA listened to the recommendations and made changes to give more support to our Family members.

Under the new policy, continued enrollment now only requires a one-time parental request to the respective DDESS. Students will still need to register yearly and meet all the standard requirements for that DDESS. In addition, the Family will now have to assume responsibility for that student's transportation to and from school.

This shift in policy is a direct reflection that the Army recognizes the strength of its Soldiers comes directly from the strength and support of their Families.

In addition, this new policy is another great example of the significance and importance of our Army Warrior Ethos.

"I will never leave a fallen comrade."

This promise does not exist only on the battle field, nor while taking care of our battle buddies in the barracks, it shows that we are doing everything we can to support the Family members of our fellow brothers and sisters, now and forever.

The Army is continuing to find new ways to support our Family members and will continue to provide the best school support and expanding educational opportunities for Families of Soldiers.

By continuing to address the issues and creating solutions to enhance the quality of life for Family members and Soldiers, we will be doing one of the most important missions we can undertake ... taking care of Soldiers and our Army Family.

We cannot ever forget those who make the ultimate sacrifice in the name of freedom, and this new policy demonstrates that important commitment in providing Soldiers and their Family members a quality of life appropriate with their service and sacrifice.

Patton's Own!