



# FORT LEAVENWORTH

Unified School District 207

207 Education Way  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas 66027-1425  
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**DATE:** February 13, 2020

**To:** Mr. Chairman and Commerce Committee Members

**From:** Dr. Keith Mispagel, Superintendent, USD 207 Fort Leavenworth School District

**Re:** Proponent to House Bill # 2506

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, I am Dr. Keith Mispagel, Superintendent of Schools in the Fort Leavenworth School District (USD 207) submitting written testimony on behalf of the military dependent students and military families I serve. Please allow me to share some facts about my school district:

- The Fort Leavenworth School District, USD 207, is responsible for the education of approximately 1,900 military dependent children each year in grades Pre-Kindergarten through Ninth (per state statute).
- Approximately 50% of those children are family members of military officers attending the Army's Command and General Staff School (CGSS), a class of approximately 1,200 majors from all military branches, and some 100 international officers from around the world (from over 50 countries).
- USD 207 has an annual student turnover rate of approximately 50%. With 93% student turnover rate every three years, it is a rare event when a student can claim to have completed Pre-Kindergarten through 9th grade in our district.
- Because of frequent mobility, I'm fortunate to have an opportunity to hire military spouses of active duty for many positions in my district each year, to include classroom teachers. State to State reciprocity, with an expedited license processing, is of great necessity and benefit to my district and those in Leavenworth County who also fill a wide variety of teaching openings with military spouses. Many mobile military spouses work in professions that have easily portable licensure and certification from state to state, such as education, health fields, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech language pathologists, nursing, etc. An reciprocal and expedited process for these military spouses not only supports them in their multiple moves, but also helps communities around military installations in Kansas be able to fill competitive hard to find positions with experienced and professional candidates, that may otherwise not be available due to shortages in workforce staff.
- My district and students have benefitted from licensure reciprocity and hiring mobile military spouses with Kansas teaching licensure in an expedited way. 60% of my student enrollment arrives in June and July every summer. It is then when I have to determine the number of grade sections and staff to hire...which in many cases may be military spouses if their licensure can be expedited through processing prior to the first day of school.
- In a few occasions, because of backlog or potential state to state hurdles that may have been present, I have not been able to offer teaching positions to military spouses because



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they were not able to get a reciprocal teaching license in an expedited fashion. These candidates, who wanted to teach at Fort Leavenworth (but I was unable to hire), went directly across the river to Missouri and were immediately hired in neighboring Missouri school districts because Missouri has full reciprocity and an expedited process already in place. I would prefer to keep this highly professional staff coming to Kansas in our state supporting our students.

- Because of the examples provided in the previous bullets, I support a reciprocal and expedited process of licensure for military spouses of active duty specifically for the positions of teachers and education professionals.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my support of House Bill # 2506.

Kansas is widely seen across the country as a military friendly state. Kansas was also the first state to sign on to the Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission, which now has support of all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Further removing barriers for our active duty military, spouses, and veterans by way of reciprocity and an expedited process would continue to keep Kansas in high regard.

Thank you to the committee for the opportunity to submit my written testimony. I apologize I am not able to address this committee in person, but I have previous commitments that do not allow my presence.

Very Respectfully Submitted,

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