



ARIZONA PURPLE STAR SCHOOL (AZPSS) STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE 2026

BACKGROUND

A Purple Star School is a military-friendly institution committed to supporting military-connected students and their families by fostering educational continuity, academic achievement, and a welcoming school environment. Purple Star programs are established through state legislation; therefore, each state must enact authorizing legislation before implementing a Purple Star School designation. Arizona enacted the Purple Star School program in April 2024 and is administered by the Arizona Department of Education (the Department). Any K12 school in Arizona may apply for the globally recognized designation as an Arizona Purple Star School (AZPSS).

PURPOSE

The Arizona Purple Star School (AZPSS) program promotes the overall wellness and academic success of highly mobile, military-connected students and their families through school-based support systems, recognition, and resources. Designation as a Purple Star School signifies a school's commitment to supporting members of the United States Armed Forces and their families. By accepting the designation, a school agrees to implement all program requirements in accordance with A.R.S. § 15-249.01 and to follow all policies, procedures, and guidance established by the Arizona Department of Education (the Department).

REQUIRED CRITERIA

1. Staff Professional Development, at least 70%
2. Primary Point of Contact (POC)
3. Execution of POC Duties
4. Student-led Peer2Peer Program
5. Annual Military Recognition Event
6. AZPSS Webpage Compliance
7. Homepage Logo Placement
8. Annual Report Submission

APPLICATION AND DESIGNATION

Applications for initial Arizona Purple Star School (AZPSS) designation will be accepted annually from **September 1 through May 1**. Schools seeking to renew their AZPSS designation must submit a renewal application **no later than 30 days and no earlier than 60 days** before the designation expiration date.

The application is available online through the Department's [AZPSS School Information](#) webpage and must be completed by each school seeking designation or renewal. The site administrator, principal, or superintendent's designee shall digitally sign the application; where available, certifying that at least seventy percent (70%) of the school's staff have completed the Department's AZPSS site-based

training in person and attesting that all other program requirements have been met or will be met as prescribed.

All required application materials shall be submitted to the Department's K-12 Military Community Program Office. Applicants will receive written notification of approval or denial within **30 days** of submission. Denial notifications shall identify any deficiencies or discrepancies with program requirements.

Schools that receive AZPSS designation, including those awarded **Exemplary** status, must remain in compliance with all applicable program requirements throughout the designation period.

ARIZONA PURPLE STAR SCHOOL DESIGNATION PERIOD

A school designated as an Arizona Purple Star School (AZPSS) shall retain such designation for a period not to exceed two years, provided the school remains in compliance with all applicable program requirements. The designation may be renewed upon application and verification of continued compliance.

COMPLIANCE AND REPORTING

The Department shall verify, at least once during each academic year, that designated schools remain in compliance with all Arizona Purple Star School (AZPSS) requirements. Schools receiving an initial AZPSS designation may expect a formal compliance review within the first 90 school days following designation.

Designated schools must submit the Department's annual reporting form on or before June 30 of each school year. Failure to comply with AZPSS program requirements or to submit the required annual report by the established deadline may result in revocation of the school's AZPSS designation.

Schools shall retain all records demonstrating compliance with AZPSS requirements throughout the designation period and for an additional six months following the expiration of the designation. Required records shall include, at a minimum:

- Training records
- Purple Star Point of Contact (POC) certificates
- Student Peer-to-Peer program rosters
- Documentation of military recognition activities and events
- School webpage screenshots demonstrating program compliance
- Relevant communications and outreach materials
- Annual reports submitted to the Department

These records must be made available to the Department upon request for the purpose of verifying continued compliance with AZPSS requirements.

ARIZONA PURPLE STAR SCHOOL LOGO

The Department's official **Arizona Purple Star School (AZPSS) logo** shall be used to promote and identify a school's designation. The logo must be displayed prominently on the school's main webpage. A corresponding hyperlink should direct visitors to required information or a webpage containing the required information, resources, supports, and services available to highly mobile, military-connected students and their families.

The AZPSS logo may not be modified or altered in any manner without the express approval of the **K-12 Military Community Liaison**. Upon designation the official logo will be provided.

At this time, no funding has been allocated to support expenses associated with promoting the designation, including, but not limited to, banners, flags, signage, posters, or other promotional materials. Schools are responsible for any costs incurred related to the display or use of the AZPSS designation and logo. Private organization have offered to help with these items.

PRIMARY POINT OF CONTACT

Each school shall designate a trained **Primary Point of Contact (POC)**, also referred to as a **school-based liaison**, to serve as the lead coordinator for supporting military-connected students and their families. The Primary POC is responsible for overseeing and coordinating the school's Arizona Purple Star School (AZPSS) initiatives, including:

- Supporting military-connected students and their families;
- Coordinating and providing oversight of the **Student Peer2Peer Program**;
- Maintaining and updating the school's AZPSS webpage and required online resources;
- Planning and facilitating military-themed recognition events and activities;
- Completing and submitting all required annual reporting; and
- Serving as the primary point of communication with the Department regarding AZPSS requirements and activities.

Schools must notify the Department's **K-12 Military Community Office** as soon as possible whenever there is a change in the designated Primary POC or school-based liaison to ensure continuity of support and communication.

All required training opportunities and resources for Primary POCs and school-based liaisons are available on the Department's [Arizona Purple Star School Information webpage](#).

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/TRAINING, MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

At a minimum, schools must provide **in-person professional development training totaling at least 50 minutes** for school personnel. Additional training time, sessions, or professional learning

opportunities are strongly encouraged to further enhance staff awareness and support for military-connected students and their families.

When available, the **nearest military installation, School Liaison Program Manager (SLPM)**, or the Department's **K–12 Military Community Program Office** may assist schools with professional development training, resources, and other support services.

Professional development must cover the following topics:

- Activity – Understanding what highly mobile, military-connected students may experience;
- The purpose and benefits of AZPSS designation
- Military Culture and its impact on students and families;
- The **Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission (MIC3)** and its role in supporting educational transitions;
- Identifying highly mobile, military-connected students
- Strategies for supporting military-connected students during school transitions or deployments;
- An overview of Arizona's Military Community; and
- Arizona Purple Star School (AZPSS) requirements and expectations

Schools should periodically review and update their Arizona Purple Star School (AZPSS) professional development content to ensure information remains current, accurate, and responsive to the unique needs of their school community. As appropriate, schools may incorporate additional topics, resources, or training opportunities based on local circumstances, emerging issues, or global events that may impact military-connected students and their families. Regular updates to professional development content help ensure school personnel remain informed and prepared to effectively support highly mobile, military-connected students.

The Department strongly recommends supplemental professional development opportunities that provide more in-depth instruction and practical strategies to support the academic achievement, well-being, and successful transitions of highly mobile, military-connected students.

Additional on-demand training resources for educators, parents, and students are available through the Military Child Education Coalition (www.militarychild.org). These resources offer a variety of professional learning opportunities and tools designed to enhance understanding of military culture and strengthen support for military-connected students and their families.

EXEMPLARY ARIZONA PURPLE STAR SCHOOL RECOGNITION - *OPTIONAL*

Schools may pursue **Exemplary Arizona Purple Star School** recognition by demonstrating performance and practices that exceed the minimum requirements for Arizona Purple Star School (AZPSS) designation. Exemplary recognition is intended to acknowledge schools that have established comprehensive, sustainable, and innovative supports for military-connected students and families.

To be considered for Exemplary recognition, schools must satisfy all AZPSS designation requirements and earn the minimum qualifying score established in the **AZPSS Scoring Rubric, effective May 2026**, or any subsequent version adopted by the Department.

Schools seeking Exemplary recognition shall maintain documentation demonstrating compliance with all applicable rubric criteria and submit such documentation to the Department in the manner and timeframe prescribed by the Department. Supporting evidence may include, but is not limited to, program descriptions, participation records, training documentation, partnership agreements, communications, event materials, data summaries, and other artifacts identified in the scoring rubric.

The Department may review submitted documentation, conduct interviews, request additional evidence, or perform on-site or virtual verification activities as necessary to validate eligibility for Exemplary recognition.

Award of Exemplary recognition is at the sole discretion of the Department and shall remain valid for the duration of the school's AZPSS designation period unless otherwise revoked by the Department for failure to maintain compliance with applicable requirements.

Exemplary recognition is voluntary and is not required for initial or continued Arizona Purple Star School designation.

Direct contact: Training, Questions, or Comments

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