

# Military Families, Welcome to North Carolina!

## General Education Information:

- ✓ Our State Education Agency is the [NC Department of Public Instruction](#)
- ✓ Most Local Education Agencies (LEAs) are county districts
  - (100 counties) There are also 15 city districts.
- ✓ Charter schools function like a school district, with the same responsibilities to students with disabilities.
- ✓ NC Public Schools receive annual [Report Cards](#).
- ✓ There are [K-12 State Standards](#) that apply statewide.

## Special Education Information

- ✓ In North Carolina, students in special education are referred to as "exceptional children" and the special education departments are referred to as "Exceptional Children's Departments".
- ✓ The handbook of parent rights is referred to as the [Procedural Safeguards Manual](#)
- ✓ Policies governing special education in North Carolina can be found [here](#).



ECAC is **North Carolina's Parent Center**, serving families with children birth to 26 with disabilities or special health care needs. ECAC helps families navigate special education, know their rights, connect with community resources and to find and use their voice.

### Have questions?

Contact Nicole Bougie  
ECAC's Military Outreach  
Email: [nbougie@ecacmail.org](mailto:nbougie@ecacmail.org)  
Phone: 252-455-1774

## Some questions you can ask ECAC...

- How can I be sure my child is receiving "comparable services" when we get to North Carolina?
- What should I do if I think my child might have a need for special education services? How does the process work here? (or: What can I expect to happen?)
- What are my rights if I hear my child is receiving interventions through MTSS, and I want an evaluation by the school?
- How does reevaluation work when we move from another state?
- What do I need to know about the roles and responsibilities at the state and local level?
- Who should I talk to if I'm not satisfied with my child's IEP or his/her progress in academic or functional areas?
- How can I make sure that my high school child stays on track for graduation even though some NC requirements are different?
- I've heard, "we don't do that in North Carolina." Is this true?



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## North Carolina may differ from other states in these areas:

- **Birth to 3 "Infant-Toddler" program:** This is administered by Children's Developmental Services Agency (CDSA). Many other states call this an Early Intervention program, or may use other names.
- **Preschool:** NC does not provide universal Pre-K. Contact local school district's Preschool Coordinator once your child turn 2.5 to explore options
- **Initial Evaluation** timeline for an IEP is 90 days, starting on the day of your written request for an evaluation. By the 90<sup>th</sup> calendar day, the school must hold an IEP meeting and develop an IEP if the child is eligible.
- There is **no definite time limit** for conducting reevaluations, but they are supposed to be completed in a "timely manner."
- There are **14 Eligibility categories:** 13 found in federal law plus developmental delay (DD). DD can be used until a child's 8<sup>th</sup> birthday. IDEA allow use of DD through age 9, but NC chose an earlier cutoff age.
- **Facilitated IEP meetings** are an [informal dispute resolution](#) option.
- **Principals have sole authority** over grade assignment, promotion and retention decisions.
- **IEP forms** can be found [here](#).
- **Eligibility Worksheets** can be found [here](#).
- NC has unique policy around identifying **specific learning disabilities** (SLD).
  - Policy [Here](#).
  - [Dyslexia Video](#).
  - [Dyslexia Topic Brief](#)
- North Carolina follows **Read to Achieve**, which is a law around 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading.
- There are [specific accommodations](#) allowed for *state required tests*.

## Other Resources:

Department of Defense Education Activity <https://www.dodea.edu/Americas/midAtlantic/index.cfm>

Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission <https://www.mic3.net/>



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