2019 SURVEYING THE MILITARY

What America's Active-Duty Servicemembers and Spouses Think About Military Life and K–12 Education

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EdChoice

Charter Member AAPOR Transparency Initiative
American Association for Public Opinion Research

ABOUT EDCHOICE

EdChoice is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to advancing full and unencumbered educational choice as the best pathway to successful lives and a stronger society. EdChoice believes that families, not bureaucrats, are best equipped to make K–12 schooling decisions for their children. The organization works at the state level to educate diverse audiences, train advocates and engage policymakers on the benefits of high-quality school choice programs. EdChoice is the intellectual legacy of Milton and Rose D. Friedman, who founded the organization in 1996 as the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice.

The contents of this publication are intended to provide empirical information and should not be construed as lobbying for any position related to any legislation.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We share the findings and emergent themes from a 2019 online survey of 1,295 active-duty military servicemembers and their spouses. Our research partners at Braun Research, Inc., obtained completed surveys from 907 servicemembers, 291 spouses/partners of a servicemember, and 97 respondents who were both a servicemember and the spouse/partner of a servicemember.

The objective of our project is twofold: 1) to get a better understanding of the experiences and views of military families in America toward K-12 education; and 2) to expand on the first military survey we conducted in 2017.[i] We felt it was important to once again survey military families in 2019 as new proposals to advance educational opportunities and choice gain ground in Congress.

In addition to our 2017 survey, we believe this study is now the second of its kind to survey active-duty servicemembers and their spouses on a wide range of education-related issues, and to gauge their attitudes toward education choice policies, such as education savings accounts (also known as "ESAs").

Research Themes and Report Organization

We strive to provide information that is useful to military stakeholders, and as such, our survey focuses on three basic questions:

1. What are active-duty servicemembers and their spouses' military life experiences, as well as views and attitudes on the military profession and household priorities?

2. How do military families view their experiences in K-12 education and local district schooling?

3. What are the levels, margins, and intensities of support and opposition for different types of K–12 educational choice policies, including ESAs, school vouchers, and public charter schools?

Key Survey Findings and Themes

- Military servicemembers and spouses/partners are promoters of the profession. Nearly half of those surveyed gave military service high ratings and indicated they are likely to recommend such a vocation to friends or colleagues.

- However, many different stressors confront military households. Certainly, this is not surprising to those who serve, but the wide range and sum of stressors should alarm policymakers and lay readers. For each of 10 given issues or situations, approximately 30 percent of respondents said it was an "extremely" or "largely" significant source of household stress.

- Military families have a wide set of schooling experiences. Parents of school-aged children have tried—for at least one year—different learning environments that include district schools, charter schools, private schools, DoDEA schools, online schools, and homeschooling. The vast majority have experience with local school districts and neighborhood schools. Surprisingly, though, substantial proportions (all exceeding 25 percent) have also enrolled children in other types of public or private school settings.

- Majorities of military parents give positive ratings to their local public school districts regarding 10 services and activities. Generally, districts appear to excel at communicating with

[i] Paul DiPerna, Lindsey M. Burke, and Anne Ryland (2017), *Surveying the Military: What America's Servicemembers, Veterans, and Their Spouses Think About K–12 Education and the Profession*, retrieved from EdChoice website: https://www.edchoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Surveying-The-Military-by-Paul-DiPerna-Lindsey-M-Burke-and-Anne-Ryland-1.pdf

parents, providing counseling and transitional supports. However, roughly 25 percent of respondents gave "fair" or "poor" ratings to districts on any of the 10 activities.

- Parents of school-aged children like different schooling options. They are about twice as likely to say they are satisfied than dissatisfied with any given type of school environment.

- Military parents go above and beyond when it comes to supporting the education of their children. And in certain ways, this is especially true when compared to the national average. Active-duty military parents are much more likely to say they have taken out a new loan or moved closer to school to support their child's education, compared to current school parents in our *2018 Schooling in America* survey. Military parents also are more likely to say they have paid for tutoring, before/after care services, or school transportation. Military families are making big sacrifices and going to great lengths to give their kids a quality education. These activities point to real challenges for families in terms of time and resources, and federal reform could amplify those positive supports even further.

- A safe schooling environment is a high priority for military families. That finding arose out of two different lines of questioning. First, we see that roughly 40 percent of military parents ranked a safe learning environment in their top three factors for actual schooling decisions they have made in the past. Later in the questionnaire, we asked respondents for their preferred school type based on a provided list. We then followed up asking about the main reason they selected a given school type. Once again safety showed up among the top five reasons for five of the six listed school types, and it was a top reason for those who prefer to homeschool.

- Active-duty military households overwhelmingly support choice-driven education policies and programs. Servicemembers and spouses/partners are much more likely to support than oppose ESAs and other educational choice mechanisms. The margins of support for ESAs, school vouchers, and charter schools are very large, exceeding +30 points for any policy type. Seven out of 10 current school parents favor these policies.

Learning from military servicemembers and spouses/partners is vital to the national interest. The men and women in our armed forces—as well as their families and loved ones—disproportionately make sacrifices for the country. For those of us engaged in K–12 education debates and reform discussions, it is imperative for us to ask timely and relevant questions that are of practical importance to them and informative to federal and state policymakers.

There have been many discussions about including choice-based reforms in federal policies that serve military-connected students and families. Since the 1940s, the United States federal government has enacted laws to ensure that military families can access at least a basic public school education either directly on base or in a nearby public school district. Military household challenges are persistent. New education funding mechanisms like ESAs could make a big difference for families, tapping into their proactive inclinations regarding schooling matters, and possibly affording more flexibility so they can devote time and resources to other aspects of military life.

Policymakers and school choice proponents need to better understand the educational circumstances of military families so they can meet their evolving needs and priorities, potentially using recent decentralizing K–12 policies and emerging choice-based funding mechanisms. Military families continue to make tremendous sacrifices for the country—as reported in this survey and other surveys. They are highly engaged and supportive toward advancing the education and well-being of their children. Our survey's findings suggest policymakers and advocates have a major window of opportunity to address military families' needs and preferences with an expanded range of opportunities in K–12 education.

INTRODUCTION

In this report, we present findings from a 2019 online survey of 1,295 active-duty military servicemembers and their spouses. We obtained completed surveys from 907 servicemembers, 291 spouses or partners of a servicemember, and 97 respondents who were both a servicemember and the spouse or partner of a servicemember.

The objective of our project is twofold: 1) to expand on the first military survey we conducted in 2017 and; 2) to get a better understanding of the experiences and views of military families in America toward K–12 education.[1] We felt it was important to once again survey military families in 2019 as new proposals to advance educational opportunities and choice gain ground in Congress.

Although this survey represents a snapshot in time and is almost completely a new sample of active-duty families, it provides additional data points that complement previous survey findings, painting a picture of the schooling experiences of servicemembers and their families. Moving forward, there should be implications and takeaways for policymakers and reformers alike. The findings presented in this report are meant to be descriptive in nature and, as such, cannot be used to make causal claims.

Why Survey Military Families?

Military families' lives can differ considerably from their civilian counterparts. Their lives can be punctuated by frequent moves resulting from assignments to new duty stations, regular job changes resulting from those moves, high levels of stress associated with servicemember deployment, and long periods of separation from spouse and child. Surveying these families provides the military and the civilian population with new insights into military life and the profession—and how the unique circumstances dictating daily decision-making extend to household decisions about education.

The stress associated with servicemember deployment abroad can be amplified by concerns about their children's education at home—a factor that can affect performance on the job and armed forces retention efforts. Indeed, changes to Department of Defense policy in 2016 allowing servicemembers to remain at particular duty stations for an extended period were a direct response to "complaints by military parents who are loathe to move if the next duty station has poorly performing schools."[2]

In our 2017 survey, we learned that a majority of military parents (56%) said that they had "significantly changed their routine" for the sake of their children's education, a rate 18 percentage points higher than the national average.[3] It is valuable, therefore, to assess how military families are engaging in the school selection process and what policies and options they prioritize. This latest survey has the added value of examining some opinion changes over the past two years regarding military households' schooling experiences.

How Can a Survey of Military Households Be Useful?

This survey provides data and information that should prove useful to military leaders and stakeholders, federal and state policymakers, and K–12 education researchers and analysts for a host of reasons.

More than 1.3 million Americans comprise the active-duty armed forces of the United States.[4] The typical enlisted servicemember is 27 years old, meaning many have school-aged children or younger. Indeed, there are approximately one million school-aged children of active-duty military families worldwide today.

Despite the large number of military-dependent school-aged children, limited research has been conducted on families' attitudes toward and experiences with the K–12 education system

in the United States. This gap in the research—along with a finding that approximately one-third of respondents to a *Military Times* survey had considered leaving military service altogether out of dissatisfaction with the school their child would have to attend at their next duty station—catalyzed our initial research into this important area.[5]

That initial survey provided insights into the education experiences of military families. We found, for example, that although just 34 percent of military families would prefer to send their child to a traditional public school, about 80 percent of military children attend a district public school. The stark contrast between the preferences of military families and their actual enrollments suggests significant changes are needed to update policy to reflect the needs of our armed forces.

We believe that this study is now just the second of its kind to survey active-duty servicemembers and their spouses on a wide range of education-related issues, and to gauge their attitudes toward educational choice policies, such as education savings accounts (also known as "ESAs"). It is the first to examine servicemembers' opinions on ESAs over time.

Why Is a Survey of Military Families Timely?

Last year, the Pentagon had hoped to increase the overall number of Army enlistments by 24,000. For its part, the U.S. Air Force faces a 1,200-pilot shortage. A host of factors, such as obesity, criminal records, and inadequate scores on the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT) have made it difficult for the U.S. military to hit recruitment targets.[6] Compounded by the fact that retention efforts are likely hindered by concerns over the schools their children will have to attend, surveying the overall life experiences of military families—with a particular emphasis on their views toward K–12 education—comes at a critical time.

Issues of military recruitment and retention have raised the profile of the daily life experiences of military families. At the same time, education choice policies—including options such as vouchers, tax credit scholarships, and education savings accounts—have become increasingly available in states across the country. As of May 2019, 65 private school choice programs were in operation in 29 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.[7]

At the federal level, several policymakers have introduced Congressional proposals to provide greater educational freedom to military families. U.S. Rep. Jim Banks (R-IN), along with U.S. Sens. Ben Sasse (R-NE), Tom Cotton (R-AR), and Tim Scott (R-SC) introduced proposals in 2018 and 2019 to provide education savings accounts to children of active-duty military families. U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos has signaled her support of the broader idea of empowering military families with school choice.[8]

Although school choice is growing in the states, the federal government, which has a mandate and responsibility to oversee the national defense, is the only entity that can enact an educational choice proposal that would be portable for military families across state lines. EdChoice has not taken a formal position on such legislation, but as Congress considers such an option, these survey findings provide timely and important information for federal policymakers and other stakeholders.

Understanding Military Families' Needs and Priorities

Our survey includes questions about military families' views of the military profession generally (using a Net Promoter Score method), relocation frequency, household stressors—such as social isolation from family and friends, financial circumstances, and education-related challenges—their views on the direction of K–12 education in the United States, what they look for in schools,

and their satisfaction with their child's school, among numerous other questions. What is unique about EdChoice's survey of the military? We ask respondents about their views about various education policies and reforms, such as education savings accounts, school vouchers, and charter schools.

Survey findings are intended to provide information for federal policymakers as they consider policies to create more schooling options for America's military families. It is a federal responsibility to reform the education available to military-connected families because national defense is a responsibility of the federal government per Article 1, Section 9 of the U.S. Constitution. Additionally, Article 4, Section 4 mandates that the federal government is to provide for the national defense, and Article 1, Section 10, places responsibility for national security among the functions of the federal government.

As a result of this responsibility, the federal government has supported the education of military-connected children through billions in federal funding annually, as well as through a system of Department of Defense (DoD) schools on bases primarily located on the East Coast, known as "DoDEA schools." This survey will provide information about the needs and priorities of military families as policymakers work to modernize the education options available to the children of America's servicemembers.

Research Themes and Report Organization

We strive to provide information that is useful to the military stakeholders mentioned, and as such, our survey focuses on three key questions:

1. What are active-duty servicemembers and their spouses' military life experiences, as well as views and attitudes on the military profession and household priorities?
2. How do military families view their experiences in K–12 education and local district schooling?
3. What are the levels, margins, and intensities of support and opposition for different types of K–12 educational choice policies, including education savings accounts, school vouchers, and public charter schools?

In the first section of this report, we provide some background on the history of the education of military children and on the current policies that support their education. We also discuss the lack of access to educational options available to military families. The second section briefly reviews recent surveys of the military. Our third and fourth sections walk through the survey methods and key data findings. The fifth and concluding section discusses key takeaways and potential implications for different audiences reading this report.

BACKGROUND

For decades, the U.S. military has worked to modernize many aspects of military life in order to better meet the needs of servicemembers and their families. Although these changes reflect that military life itself has changed dramatically over the past century, relatively little has changed in terms of the education options available to the children of servicemembers.

Children from military families are still assigned to the district public school that is closest to the base to which their parent(s) is assigned, regardless of whether or not that school is the right fit for the child. This outdated approach to the education of military-connected children is inconsistent with broader U.S. military efforts to personalize the military experience for servicemembers, and is out of step with policy changes underway across the country to provide more education choice for more families.

The Changing Nature of Military Life

Military life has changed considerably since President George Washington established the United States' first military base at West Point in 1775. As we document in our previous EdChoice survey of military families, for several hundred years U.S. military bases acted as both home for the servicemember and as a community hub, providing families with access to food at the commissary, access to medical doctors, and all the requisite necessities for daily life. Most of what a military family needed was provided for on base, and many of those bases were located in remote, rural locations far removed from the general civilian population. In the 19th century, military officers formalized the effort to establish K–12 schools on base, to serve the needs of the children of servicemembers.[9]

Although Congress formally authorized the creation and operation of dependent schools on base in 1821, the system became strained as the number of armed services personnel swelled—an issue that was greatly exacerbated when soldiers returned to domestic military installations post-World War II. Nearby public schools assumed much of the increase in military students around that time, and Congress began providing federal funding to support these students through programs like Impact Aid (which today also includes funding for Native American students living on tribal lands). The introduction of federal funding to support children from military families also led to the U.S. Department of Education (not yet a cabinet-level agency in the mid-twentieth century) becoming involved in the education of military-connected students.[10]

Contemporary Military Education Arrangements

As an ever-increasing number of children from military families began enrolling in schools near, but not on, bases, the number of Department of Defense schools operating on base dwindled. Although the Department of Education currently manages $1 billion in federal funding annually for military-connected students, management of schools that operate on base remains under the purview of DoD. Today, just 4 percent of children from military families attend DoD schools on base; 96 percent attend schools off-base, and 80 percent attend a district public school.[11] Unlike during the early years of the U.S. military, when military families accessed everything from food to medical care on base, military families today, even those who live on base, are deeply integrated with their civilian counterparts where they live.

One thing that military families have in common with their civilian counterparts is that their children are assigned to the district public school closest to where they live—in this case, the military base at which they are stationed. This presents an even greater challenge for military families (although education opportunity for military and civilian children alike is impaired by a lack of school choice) who move frequently. Typical active-duty military families can expect to enroll their child in three to four new schools as they move from duty station to duty station to fulfill new assignments. This inconsistency can cause great strain on the child of the military family, and the lack of choice in where their child attends school can increase stress for the servicemember and his family. The dissatisfaction associated with their child being assigned to whatever district school is closest to base—regardless of whether or not it is the right fit for their child, can "reduce a family's satisfaction with a military career."[12] This dissatisfaction might also explain higher rates of homeschooling among military families, who homeschool at a rate roughly double that of the civilian population.[13]

Military-Connected Children in the United States

There are approximately 1.1 million active-duty servicemembers in the military today.[14] States like California (184,540 active-duty servicemembers),

Texas (164,234 servicemembers), Virginia (115,280 servicemembers), and North Carolina (112,951 servicemembers) are each home to more than 100,000 active-duty servicemembers.[15] According to the Department of Defense, there are more than one million children of active-duty military families, including 239,553 children of Navy servicemembers, 102,421 children of Marine Corps parents, 257,919 children of servicemembers in the Air Force, and 476,910 children of Army personnel.[16] More than half (577,281) of those children are ages 6-18; 452,119 are ages 0-5, and 47,403 are ages 19-22.[17]

Approximately 13 percent of military-connected children attend Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) schools in domestic locations and across the globe through a system referred to as DoDEA Americas. Four percent of those students attend schools on base. Approximately 7 percent of military-connected students are homeschooled (compared to approximately 3.4 percent of the civilian population), and about 80 percent of military-connected children attend district public schools nearby where their parents are stationed.[18]

Lack of Educational Choice

Since the military moved to an all-volunteer force during the mid-1970s, recruitment and retention has been a challenge for the Armed Services. The Army, which currently faces some of the most difficult recruiting challenges, is working to combat recruitment and retention challenges by better matching the military experience to the interests of servicemembers. For example, the Army is giving servicemembers a greater voice in where they are assigned, while the Air Force and Navy are working to provide servicemembers with more time off with their families. Allowing choice in the education of their children is a policy consistent with the U.S. military's broader goal of adopting market-based solutions that recognize the individual talents and interests of servicemembers.[19]

Yet fewer than half of military families live in states with any school choice options at all. See Table 1. This staggering statistic may explain why, according to a poll of readers of *Military Times,* more than one-third of respondents had considered leaving the military altogether because of the school their child would have to attend at their next duty station. Specifically, 35 percent of respondents said that dissatisfaction with their child's education was a "significant factor" in their decision to remain in or leave military service.[20] The quality of education options available to servicemembers can affect recruitment and retention rates and is therefore an issue that extends beyond the world of education policy: It can affect the national security of the United States.

For this study we focus on three educational choice mechanisms: school vouchers, education savings accounts, and public charter schools.

Education Savings Account (ESA)—Establishes for parents a government-authorized savings account with restricted, but multiple, uses for educational purposes. Parents can use these funds to pay for: school tuition, tutoring, online education programs, therapies for students with special needs, textbooks or other instructional materials, or future college expenses.

School Voucher—Allows parents the option of sending their child to the school of their choice, whether that school is public or private, including both religious and non-religious schools. Vouchers allow parents to allocate tax dollars currently allocated to a school district to pay partial or full tuition for the child's private school.

Public Charter School—Public schools that have more control over their own budget, staff, and curriculum, and are exempt from many existing public school regulations.

TABLE 1A

Military Presence in States with Private School Choice Programs

State	Number of Military Bases	Number of Active-Duty Military Personnel
Alabama	4	8,785
Arizona	6	19,662
Arkansas	4	3,627
Florida	16	65,805
Georgia	11	65,415
Illinois	4	19,106
Indiana	4	993
Iowa	2	253
Kansas	4	21,743
Louisiana	4	15,611
Maine	5	821
Maryland	9	29,189
Mississippi	7	12,623
Montana	2	3,279
Nevada	3	11,357
New Hampshire	1	1410
North Carolina	9	101,733
Ohio	4	6,943
Oklahoma	6	20,309
Pennsylvania	5	2,552
Puerto Rico	5	161
Rhode Island	4	3,516
South Carolina	7	33,836
South Dakota	1	3,436
Tennessee	4	2,260
Utah	4	4,424
Vermont	1	157
Virginia	19	129,399
Disrict of Columbia	5	9,726
Wisconsin	2	1007
School Choice State TOTAL	**162**	**599,138**

TABLE 1B

Military Presence in States without Private School Choice Programs

State	Number of Military Bases	Number of Active-Duty Military Personnel
Alaska	5	19,301
California	30	159,894
Colorado	5	35,646
Connecticut	2	6,107
Delaware	2	3,558
Hawaii	7	43,330
Idaho	4	3,531
Kentucky	3	31,517
Massachusetts	6	3,781
Michigan	3	2,097
Minnesota	1	615
Missouri	3	15,860
Nebraska	2	6,206
New Jersey	4	7,781
New Mexico	5	12,574
New York	5	20,613
North Dakota	3	7,344
Oregon	1	1,641
Texas	20	122,455
Washington	8	60,294
West Virginia	2	208
Wyoming	2	3,172
Non-School Choice State TOTAL	**123**	**567,525**

Notes: States, as well as Washington, D.C. and Puerto Rico, are counted as having private school choice if they operate either a school voucher program, education savings account program, or tax-credit scholarship program. For this analysis we exclude personal-use tax credits and deductions.

Source: Defense Manpower Data Center (2019), Number of Military and DoD Appropriated Fund (APF) Civilian Personnel Permanently Assigned: By Duty Location and Service/Component [Data file], retrieved from *https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/dwp/rest/download?fileName=DMDC_Website_Location_Report_1903.xlsx&groupName=milRegionCountry*; base numbers compilated from Wikipedia, *https://en.wikipedia.org/wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_United_States_military_bases*

Reviewing Surveys of Military Households

In order to modernize the way in which military families access education for their children, policymakers and national security stakeholders need information on the challenges faced by our servicemembers. A limited but growing number of surveys have sought to better understand how military families navigate the education options available to them, how they perceive the quality of the schools their children attend, and their perceptions of proposals to establish school choice options. Several notable surveys conducted by the *Military Times* in conjunction with the Collaborative for Student Success, and several conducted by Blue Star Families, have highlighted the experiences of military families and probed their children's educational experiences.

In 2017, EdChoice built off this limited survey work and conducted a robust survey of active-duty families, veterans, and their spouses. It was the first survey of military families to survey families' views of their children's education and to gauge their opinions on school choice. The EdChoice survey findings complement the surveys conducted by organizations such as Blue Star Families and military media outlets like *Military Times*.

Military Times*/Collaborative for Student Success Survey*

A 2017 survey conducted by the Collaborative for Student Success in conjunction with *Military Times* found that the education available to the children of military families had significant implications for how they viewed their service and armed services career path. Seven out of 10 respondents reported that moving between states created major challenges for their children's education. Forty percent of respondents said they had declined or would decline a "career advancing job at a different installation" and stay at their current duty station if it meant their child could remain in a "high-performing" school. Most notably, 35 percent of respondents said that "dissatisfaction with a child's education was or is 'a significant factor' in deciding whether or not to continue military service."[21]

Blue Star Families Surveys

Since 2009, Blue Star Families has conducted the Military Family Lifestyle Survey, which surveys active-duty servicemembers, their families, and veterans on a wide range of issues. As of this writing, the most recent survey conducted and published by Blue Star Families was the 2018 edition. Consistent with previous surveys, the 2018 survey queried respondents about their views pertaining to the education of their children, and the impact that has on their lifestyle as a military family.

The 2018 Blue Star survey included 10,192 respondents. Forty-two percent of military spouses listed "dependent children's education" as one of their top five issues, as did 34 percent of servicemembers themselves. Thirty-seven percent of female servicemembers listed "dependent children's education" in their top five issues of concern, coming in third after "time away from family" and "military family quality of life." Among male service members, 31 percent listed "dependent children's education" in their top five concerns, following "time away from family," "military pay and benefits," "impact of deployment on children," and "military spouse employment." Perhaps most notably, a full 28 percent of servicemembers reported living apart from their spouse due to their children's education during deployment.[22]

2017 EdChoice Survey

In 2017, EdChoice surveyed military families in order to add to the limited available information on the perceptions and experiences of military households when it comes to schooling experiences and education reforms. Our prior survey was a multi-mode survey of 1,200 active-duty military servicemembers, veterans, and their spouses. It gave us a much better understanding of the views of military households and families toward K–12 education.

Among the key findings were the sacrifices military families make for their children:

- More than twice the number of military parents (44%) reported taking an additional job compared to the one out of five parents (21%) in the general public. Military parents (37%) were also much more likely to change jobs than parents generally (17%).[23]

- Military families (37%) were twice as likely as civilian families (17%) to say they have moved to be closer to their children's schools.

- Approximately one-third of military parents (32%) said they have taken out a new loan, which was, again, a substantially higher level of activity than what we previously have observed among American parents (11%).

Other key findings included the strong support found among military families for various school choice policies and options:

- Military respondents were almost five times more likely to support ESAs than they were to oppose them (72% favor vs. 15% oppose) when given a description of the choice-based education policy.

- Nearly two out of three military households (64%) said they support school vouchers, compared with 27 percent who opposed when given a description of the education reform.

- Military respondents clearly supported the concept of a tax-credit scholarship program. A substantial majority (63%) said they support such a policy, whereas 23 percent said they oppose tax-credit scholarships.

In the next sections, we look at EdChoice's 2019 survey of active-duty military households and consider the findings and their implications for different readers. We set out to place this new information in the context of current federal efforts to better meet the needs and persistent challenges that servicemembers and their families face today.

METHODS AND DATA

Several organizations are responsible for the "Surveying the Military Project." EdChoice developed the questionnaire and overall research agenda and design. The Challenge Foundation financially supported the survey research. Braun Research, Inc., administered the online survey and carried out the fieldwork.

This research agenda primarily focused on asking questions to active-duty military servicemembers and their respective spouses/partners. We also administered surveys to veterans and reservists, and those results and findings will be reported at a later date.

The overall active-duty household sample includes 1,295 interviews that were completed using a non-probability-online method from March 8 to April 14, 2019. Braun Research asked all respondents a series of screener questions to ensure relevance and qualification (see Questionnaire and Topline Results document at edchoice.org/2019MilitarySurvey). The survey data and results presented here are unweighted.

The margin of sampling error for the overall active-duty sample of interviews (N = 1,295) is ± 2.7 percentage points with a 95 percent confidence interval.[24] We have not made adjustments for potential design effects. In addition to sampling error, it should be noted that question wording, ordering, and other design or logistical challenges when conducting surveys may introduce error or bias into the findings of public opinion research.

For more information about our methods and survey specifications, see Appendices 1, 2, 3, and 4.

SURVEY RESULTS

We report response levels, margins, and intensities for active-duty military households. Roughly three-fourths of our sample included U.S military servicemembers who self-identified as active-duty. The remaining part of our sample—about one-fifth—are spouses or partners of active-duty servicemembers.[25] Table 2 displays the summary statistics for the overall active-duty sample. Also see also Appendix 5.

We have some brief ground rules on our reporting protocol before describing the survey results.[26] Generally, we note for each survey topic the raw response levels for the overall active-duty sample on a given question. We focus on composite response levels and differences based on the averaging of responses for questions with multiple versions. We then examine the response differences (i.e. margins) within a given sample or population. If noteworthy, we also discuss the "strongly" held positive or negative response levels on a question. Sometimes we refer to the difference between strong positive and strong negative responses as the "net intensity" or just intensity.

We briefly report demographic group comparisons only if findings are statistically significant. Reported differences are statistically significant with 95 percent confidence. We tend to orient any listing of groups' differences as "more/most likely" or "less/least likely" to respond one way or the other, typically emphasizing a propensity to be more or less likely to give a positive response. Mentions of groups with respect to margins and intensities are suggestive for further exploration beyond this project. We do not infer nor mean to imply causality with any observations in this report.

TABLE 2 Survey Summary Statistics

Percentage of Respondents and Selected Demographic Groups

	2019 Active-Duty Households (N = 1,295)
SERVING/SPOUSE	
Servicemember	70.0
Spouse	22.5
Both	7.5
BRANCH	
Army	37.3
Navy	19.5
Air Force	21.8
Marines	13.3
Coast Guard	8.0
LENGTH OF SERVICE	
≤ 4 Years	43.0
5 to 10 Years	35.8
11 to 20 Years	17.0
≥ 20 Years	4.0
GENDER	
Male	53.7
Female	46.3
RACE/ETHNICITY	
White	59.2
Hispanic [or Latino]	24.7
Black [or African American]	18.6
Native American [or American Indian]	3.6
Asian [or Pacific Islander]	4.5
Mixed Race	11.9
Other	1.9
CENSUS REGION	
Northeast	12.0
Midwest	14.8
South	48.4
West	24.8
COMMUNITY TYPE	
Urban	31.4
Suburban	44.2
Small Town/Rural	23.8
PARENT OF CHILD ≤ 18 in HH?	
Yes	56.6
No	43.4
AGE	
18 to 34	68.6
35 to 54	27.9
≥ 55	3.0
POLITICAL PARTY ID	
Democrat	31.6
Republican	37.1
Independent	29.5
Other	0.8
No Answer	0.9
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	
Less than High School	0.7
High School Graduate, GED	23.6
Some College/Tech	36.5
≥ College Graduate	38.8
HOUSEHOLD INCOME	
< $40,000	26.2
$40,000 to $79,999	45.9
≥ $80,000	27.5

PART I

Outlook on Military Life, the Profession, and Priorities

Outlook on the Profession

In the first part of the survey interview, we wanted to learn about respondents' views on military service as a career based on their own individual experiences. In recent years, we have adapted the Net Promoter Score (NPS) as a way to measure loyalty and commitment to professions.[27] See Table 3 on page 17.

To generate an NPS, a survey asks a single question to a person to determine to what degree she or he would "recommend" something, such as a product, organization, or even a profession. The respondent is prompted to give a rating on a scale of zero to 10.[28]

- A "Promoter" is someone who gives a nine or 10. This person shows a high degree of loyalty, commitment, and enthusiasm.
- A "Passive" is someone who answers with a seven or eight. This profile can be described as being satisfied and content, but not someone who would go out of her/his way to boost a brand, product, or organization.
- "Detractors" are those people who responded in the range of zero to six. This group is unhappy and ready to move away from a brand, product, or organization.

The NPS score is the difference when subtracting the proportion of Detractors from the proportion of Promoters. It is essentially an index that ranges from -100 to 100 that organizations often use to measure the willingness of their stakeholders to recommend a product, service, organization, or person to others. NPS can be used as a proxy for gauging a population's overall satisfaction, loyalty, or commitment.

We adapted the standard NPS question for our survey and used the following wording: "On a scale from zero to 10, how likely is it that you would recommend serving in the United States military to a friend or colleague?"

A majority of active-duty respondents promoted service in the U.S. military. Our survey found 45 percent Promoters, 27 percent Passives, and 25 percent Detractors. Compared to our 2017 survey we see a decline in Promoters by 11 percentage points and an increase in Detractors by nine points.[29] In 2017, there were 675 Promoters (56%), 311 Passives (26%), and 188 Detractors (16%). This year our survey generated an NPS of 20 among the active-duty military, which, although positive, is half of the NPS we observed in 2017 (NPS = 41). NPS varies within a number of demographic categories. See Table 3.

On the Move

Assignments, relocations and deployments are the realities in military life. Figure 1 shows how military families are often on the move. Fifty-four percent of respondents relocated their family three or more times to meet service requirements. About one-third have deployed to another country three or more times. Twenty percent have relocated their family five or more times. Nearly one out of six respondents have deployed to another country five or more times. Those numbers are even more striking considering that our respondents are relatively younger than the general population: *median age is 29*. For more in-depth results for demographic groups, see Appendices 6, 7, 8, and 9.

Stressors and Thoughts on Leaving

Many servicemembers or spouses are considering life outside the military and cite a wide range of active stressors in their lives. About half of the active-duty respondents (51%) in our survey have thought about leaving the military in the past year. See Figure 2. Respondents in dual servicemember households were most likely to have thought about leaving the military in the last year. Parents of school-age children also were more likely to have considered leaving the military, compared to

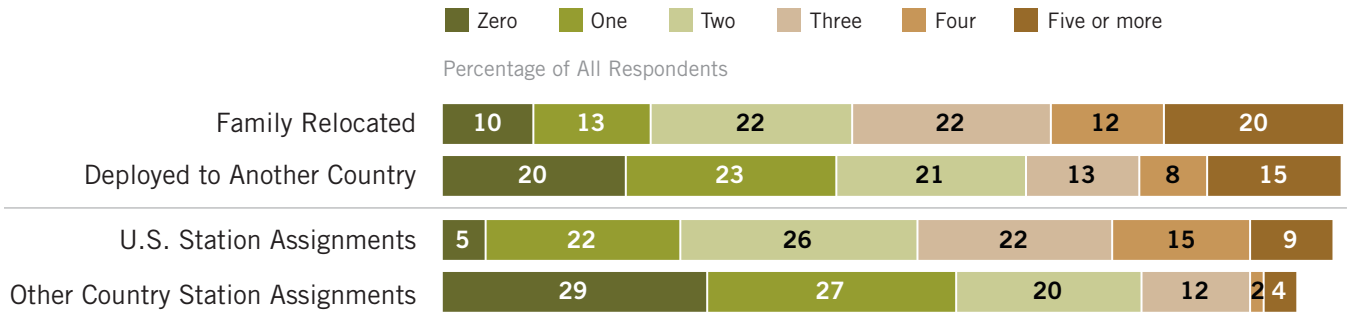
those respondents without children (55% vs. 46%, respectively). There is a clear plurality (30%) who say the main reason for leaving would be to spend time with family or to start a family. See Appendices 10 and 11.

External stressors are pervasive for military families. At least three out of 10 respondents signaled that any given stressor was extremely or largely challenging for their household. Forty-five percent of active-duty military households said it was extremely or largely challenging to deal with employment/work stress because of a new duty assignment or deployment. See Figure 3. Relative to other stressors, parenting and schooling issues were of least concern, but looking at the overall sample masks the views of parents of school-age children. When looking at only the latter group of respondents, we see that nearly two out of five (38%) say K–12 schooling issues are a major challenge. We observe similar proportions of parents indicating the same about lack of child care and social supports. See Appendix 12.

FIGURE 1

Number of Times Relocated, Deployed, or Assigned a Station

Fifty-four percent of respondents said they have relocated their family three or more times to meet service requirements. About one-third said they have deployed to another country three or more times.



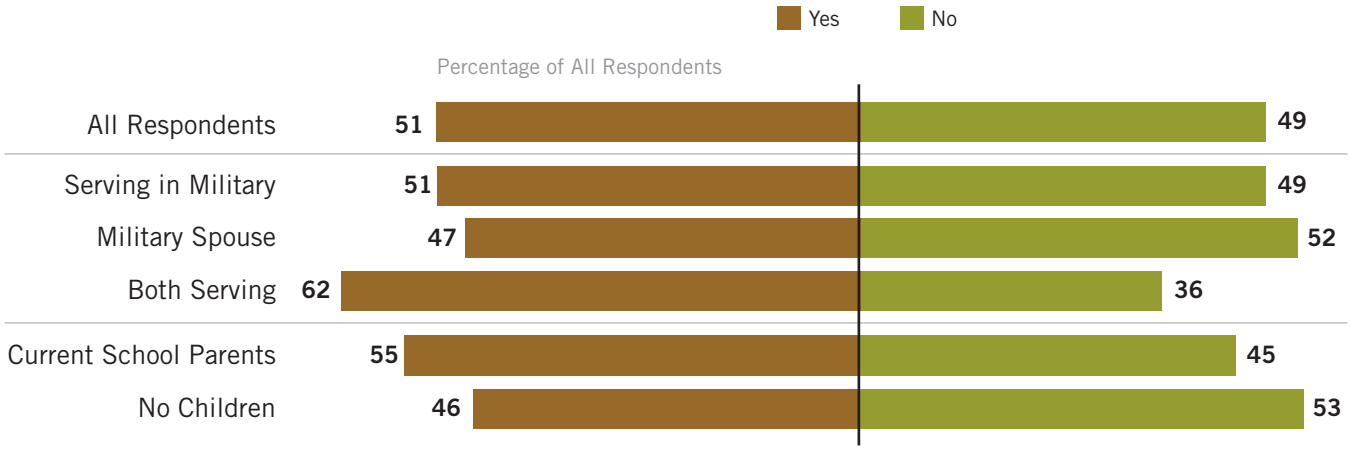
Notes: All statistical results reported in this figure and report reflect unweighted data. Respondents were allowed to skip all questions except those in the screener, and those responses are not shown on any tables or figures in this report. All tables and figures were created using numbers to the nearest tenth.

Source: EdChoice, *2019 Surveying the Military* (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q29 and Q30.

FIGURE 2

Considered Leaving Military Service in the Last Year

Respondents in dual servicemember households were most likely to have thought about leaving the military in the last year.



Source: EdChoice, 2019 *Surveying the Military* (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q31.

TABLE 3

Selected Demographics Among Active-Duty Military Households by Net Promoter Score (NPS) Groups

Forty-five percent of households indicated they are promoters of the military profession. The total sample of households produced an NPS score of 20, and NPS varies within a number of demographic categories.

Percentage of Respondents by Selected Demographic Groups and by Net Promoter Score (NPS) Groups

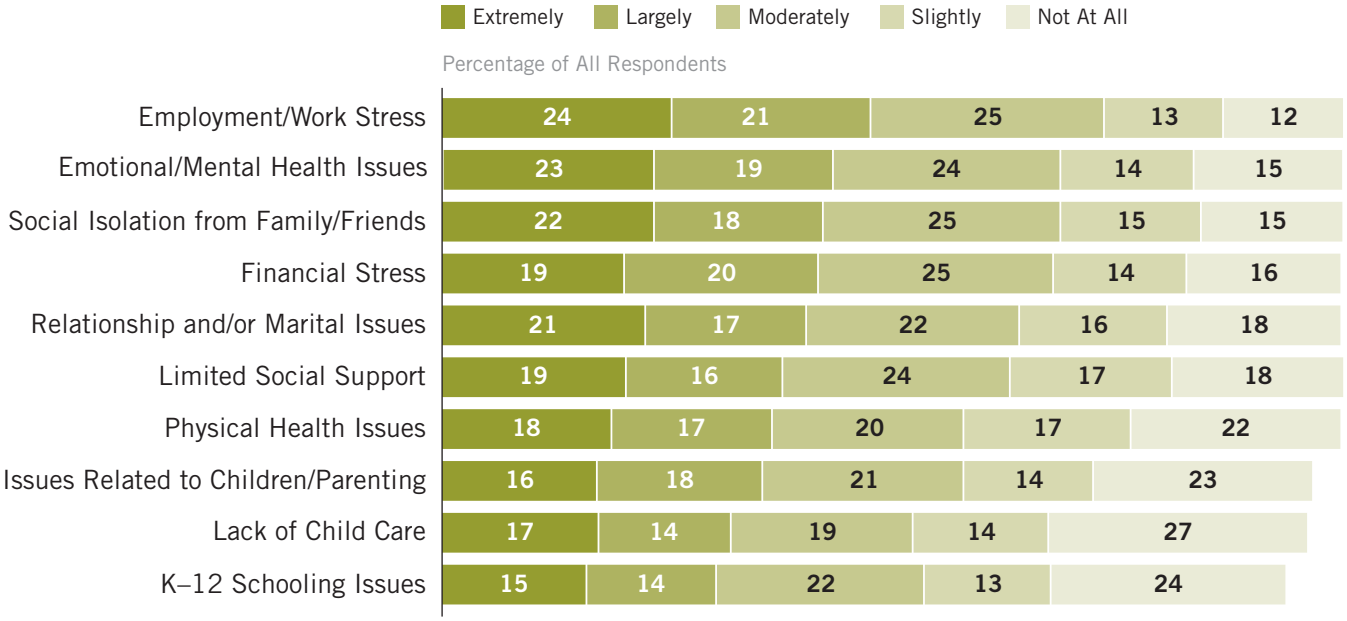
	Promoter (9 or 10) %	Passive (7 or 8) %	Detractor (0 to 6) %	NPS Score	N =
ALL ACTIVE-DUTY	**45**	**27**	**25**	**20**	**1,295**
Serving in Military	46	27	25	21	907
Military Spouse	41	29	27	15	291
Both Serving	49	24	28	21	97
Current School Parent	51	28	19	33	542
Children Not Yet School Age	38	23	36	2	190
Former School Parent	42	18	36	7	76
No Children	41	29	26	15	486
G.I. Bill Beneficiary	48	26	24	24	526
Did Not Use G.I. Bill	45	28	25	20	629
BRANCH					
Army	48	25	25	23	366
Navy	38	29	29	9	199
Air Force	49	27	23	26	236
Marines	50	26	22	29	133
Coast Guard	38	35	25	13	68
LENGTH OF SERVICE					
≤ 4 Years	39	27	31	8	557
5 to 10 Years	45	26	25	20	464
11 to 20 Years	56	30	13	43	220
≥ 20 Years	60	25	14	46	52
GENDER					
Female	43	26	27	16	599
Male	46	28	23	23	696
AGE GROUP					
18 to 34	42	28	28	13	889
35 to 54	51	27	19	32	361
≥ 55	72	8	13	59	39
RACE/ETHNICITY					
Asian/Pacific Islander	43	26	26	17	58
Black/African American	45	19	32	13	241
Hispanic/Latino	44	26	27	18	320
White	47	30	22	25	657
HOUSEHOLD INCOME					
< $40,000	37	27	32	5	339
$40,000 to $79,999	43	29	25	18	594
≥ $80,000	55	25	19	36	356
COMMUNITY					
Urban	53	26	19	33	407
Suburban	40	28	29	12	573
Small Town/Rural	45	27	26	19	308
EDUCATION					
< College Degree	39	30	27	12	788
≥ College Degree	54	23	22	32	503
PARTY ID					
Democrat	43	28	27	16	409
Republican	51	26	21	30	481
Independent	40	28	29	11	382

Notes: Bolding denotes statistically significant differences from all active-duty military households or from within-group comparison. Please consider that each subgroup has a unique margin of error based on the sample size (N) obtained in this survey. We advise strong caution when interpreting results for subgroups with small sample sizes. The subgroup sample sizes displayed in the far right column represent the unweighted number of interviews. NPS scores are calculated using percentages to the nearest tenth.

Source: 2019 Surveying the Military (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q1

FIGURE 3 Household Stressors Because of Assignment or Deployment

Forty-five percent of active-duty military households said it was extremely or largely challenging to deal with employment/work stress because of a new duty assignment or deployment. Approximately three of 10 say the same for all surveyed stressors.



Note: Excludes respondents who said "Don't Know" or "Prefer Not to Say."
Source: EdChoice, *2019 Surveying the Military* (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q33.

Critical Issues Facing Military Households

What is the most important problem facing active-duty military households that respondents believe should be addressed by the United States federal government? Respondents are most likely to say the federal government should address the economic issues that they are facing at home.

After asking this open-ended question, we coded the responses into general categories. Table 4 shows approximately one out of five in the overall sample (21%) indicated economic issues were a top priority for the household. A slightly smaller proportion of respondents (16%) identified lack of family time and moving/relocations. The percentage of respondents saying health issues and healthcare themes were a top concern decreased by half since our 2017 survey. Two other general problems that emerged in our coding include government leaders or activities (4%) and veteran care/Veterans Administration (4%), and national security/terrorism issues (7%). Eleven percent of all respondents said no problems need to be addressed by the federal government. Open responses mentioning "education" were among other issues that garnered three percent of responses.[30]

TABLE 4 Top Five Issues Facing Active-Duty Military Households, 2019

Respondents are most likely to say the federal government should address the economic issues that they are facing at home.

Percentage of All Respondents

Issue	%
Economic	21
Lack of Family Time, Moving	16
Healthcare, Health Issues	8
Government Leaders/Activities	4
Veteran Care, Veterans Administration	4

Source: EdChoice, *2019 Surveying the Military* (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q3.

PART II

Local Schooling Experiences and Opinions

Number of Schools Attended by Oldest/Only Child

In this section we focus on the separate military-connected populations of former school parents and current school parents to learn how often military families are changing K–12 schools and going through subsequent transitions. Figure 4 displays the number of school changes for the oldest child in the family.

The median number of school changes is three (mean = 3.30). This is consistent with what we found in 2017 (median = 3; mean = 3.37).[31] Nineteen percent of current or former school parents said their oldest child has been enrolled in at least five K–12 schools. Our findings differ from the Blue Star Family survey results, and we are unsure exactly why this discrepancy exists. We speculate the populations surveyed are different. Perhaps the Blue Star Family survey's inclusion of veterans, and hence more former school parents—with longer time periods for changing schools—can explain some of our differences in reporting. Fifty-nine percent of the Blue Star Family survey sample is comprised of veterans.[32]

School Type Enrollments and Satisfaction

We asked current school parents about their experiences and activities to support their children's education. Figure 5 shows substantial proportions of military parents having experiences—for at least one-half of a school year—with private schools (37%), and homeschooling (31%), public charter schools (31%), DoDEA schools (30%), and online schooling (27%). Among the observed military subgroups, Latino parents stand out for relatively high levels of choosing different types of school environments.

Current school parents are much more likely to be satisfied than dissatisfied across all types of schools. See Figure 6. Nearly four out of five public district school parents (78%) expressed satisfaction with their experiences—the highest level we observed, with a positive margin of +55 points. Homeschoolers are at the relatively lower end of the range of opinion—65 percent were strongly or somewhat satisfied. The home school responses generated a positive margin of +30 points. Proportions of 35 percent or more were "strongly" satisfied for any given school type. Strong dissatisfaction did not exceed 16 percent for any given school type. We see a positive intensity across the board for each type of schooling environment.

Factors Influencing Parents' School Decisions

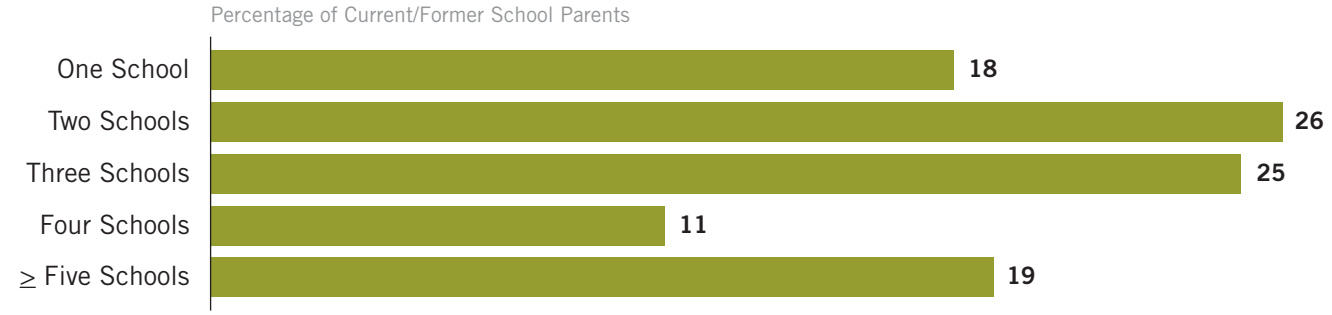
Which factors most influence parents' decisions to have their children attend a given school? We asked this simple question to learn about the underlying values that guide parents.[33]

A safe environment appears to be the most significant factor for military families to enroll their child in a given school. Forty-two percent ranked that reason in their top three. One out of five ranked safety as the highest priority for them. The second-most cited factor is a school's academic reputation (35%). Not surprisingly, residence and location also play a big role for parents. Thirty-one percent of parents noted school location as a top-three factor, though we do not know if the family actually moved to be closer to schools. School assignment or zoning also plays a major consideration—24 percent of military parents put this factor in their top three for this question. See Figure 7.

FIGURE 4

Number of Schools for Oldest Child in Active-Duty Military Household

Nineteen percent of current or former school parents said their oldest child has been enrolled in at least five K–12 schools.

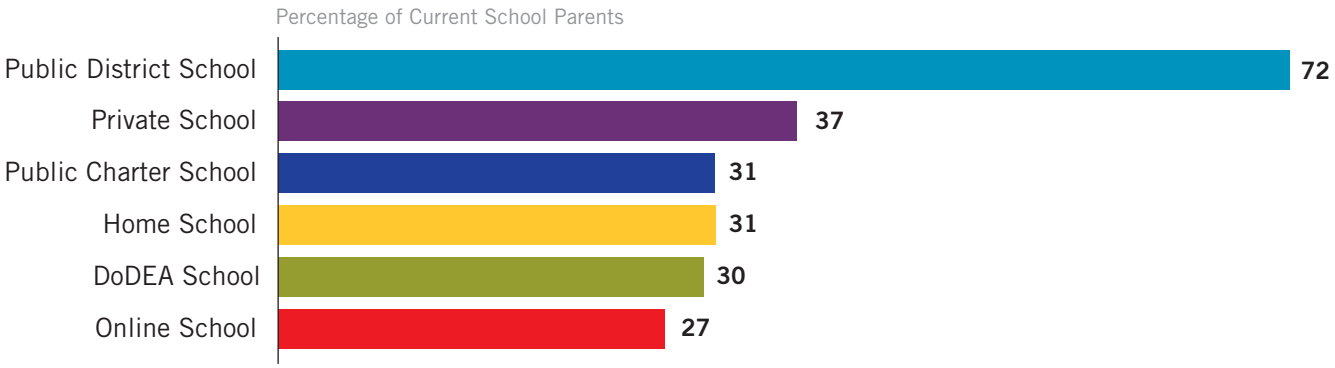


Source: EdChoice, *2019 Surveying the Military* (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q7.

FIGURE 5

School Types Children Have Attended for at Least One Year

Roughly three out of 10 active-duty military parents say they have tried various schooling options different than their local public district school.

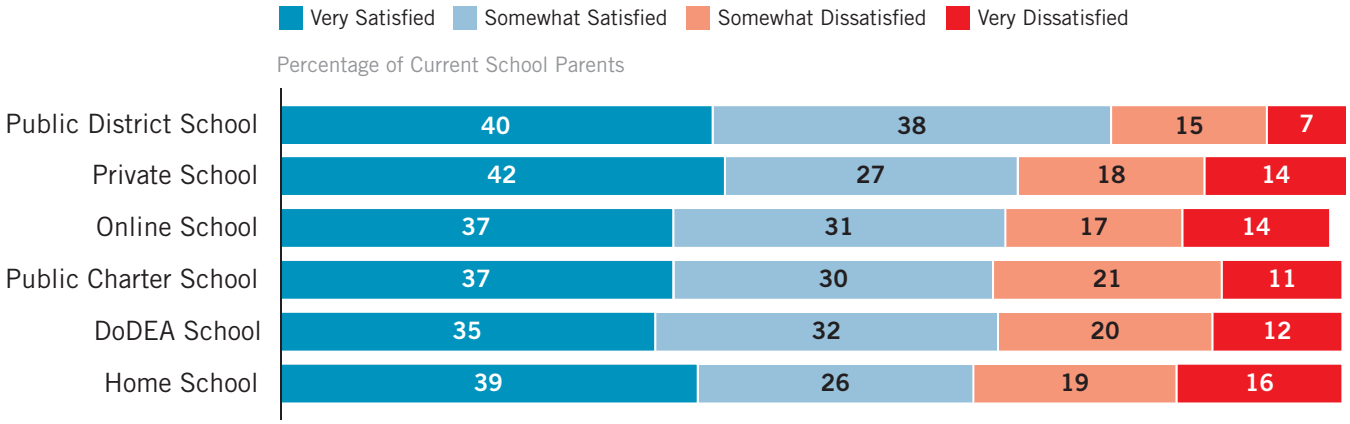


Source: EdChoice, *2019 Surveying the Military* (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q9.

FIGURE 6

Military Parents' Satisfaction with Different Types of Schools

Two-thirds of active-duty military parents expressed satisfaction for each type of school we asked about in our survey. Public school parents have the largest proportion who say they are satisfied.

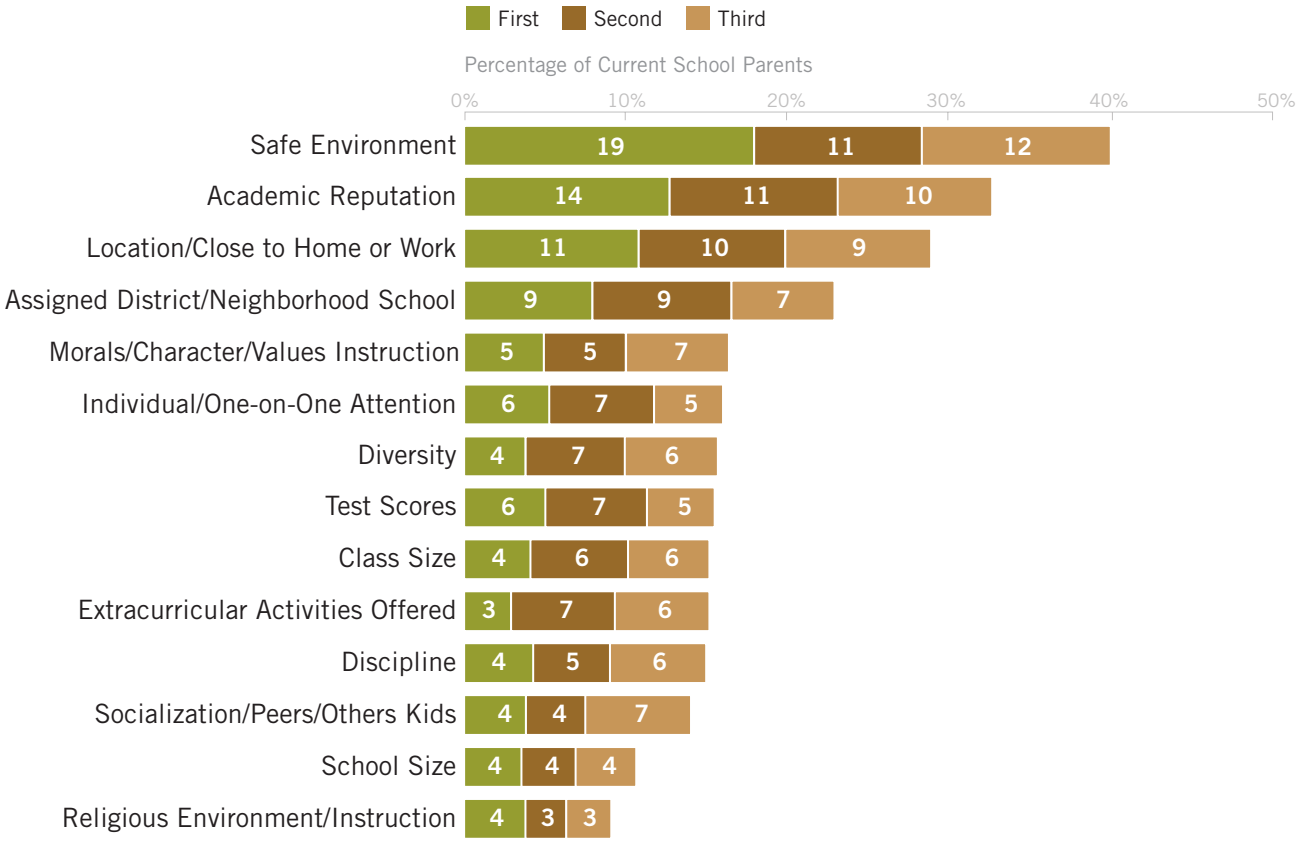


Source: EdChoice, *2019 Surveying the Military* (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q10, Q11, Q12, Q13, Q14, and Q15.

FIGURE 7

Ranking the Factors that Influence Parents' School Decisions

Forty-two percent of active-duty military parents said a safe environment was one of their top three factors influencing their school decision, with nearly one out of five saying it was the top factor.

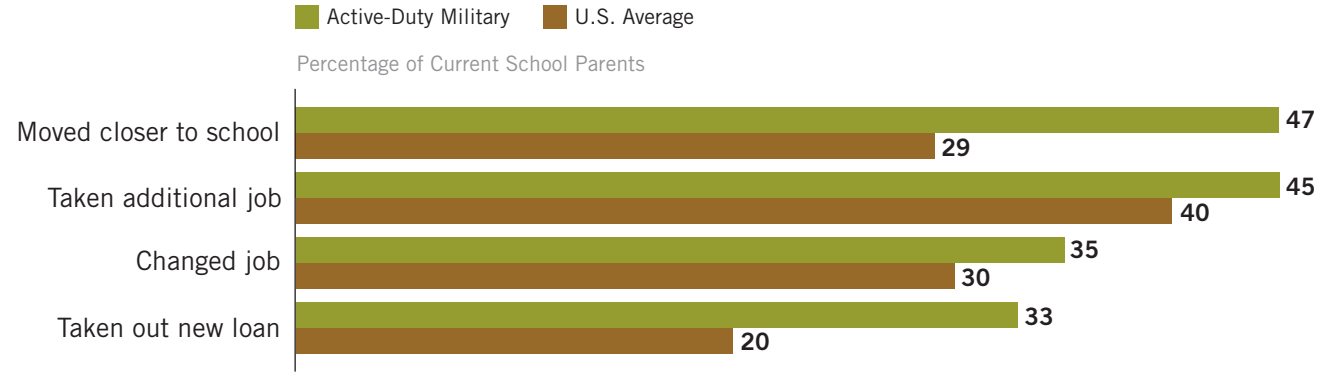


Note: Each half of respondents viewed seven factors.
Source: EdChoice, *2019 Surveying the Military* (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q8.

FIGURE 8

What Parents Have Done to Support Their Children's K–12 Education

Active-duty military parents are much more likely to say they have taken out a new loan or moved closer to school to support their child's education, compared to the national average we reported in 2018.



Sources: EdChoice, *2019 Surveying the Military* (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q16; EdChoice, *2018 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted September 25–October 7, 2018), Q11.

Securing Actions

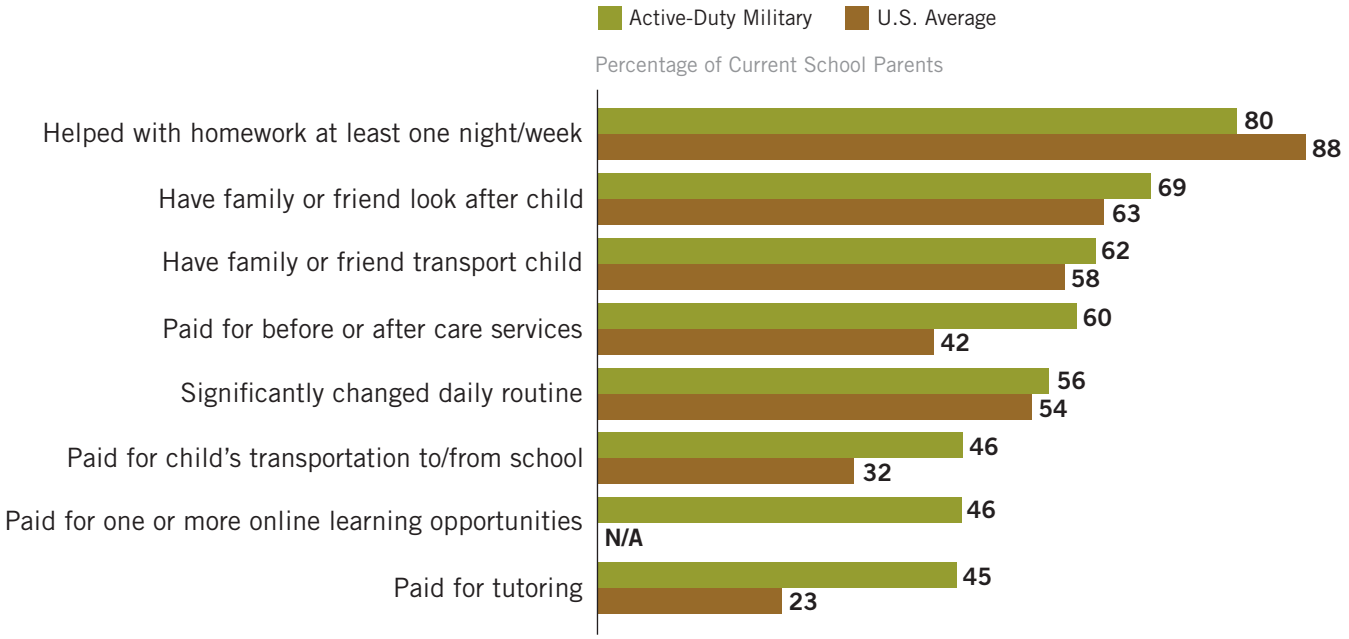
We asked military parents what sacrifices they have made to secure a good education for their children, and their reported activity levels consistently surpass what we observed of current and former school parents in our 2018 national survey of the general public.[34] Figure 8 shows a substantial difference between military families that have moved to be close to a school, compared to the current school parents among the general public (47% vs. 29%, respectively). One-third of military parents (33%) have taken out a new loan, which is again a substantially higher level of activity than what we observed among national average for American parents previously (13%). Military parents also appear more likely to change jobs or take additional jobs than the national average. The findings here are similar to what we observed in our 2017 survey of military households.

Accommodating Actions

Based on a range of indicators, military families are proactively supporting their children's education and at higher levels than the national current/former school parent average. As shown in Figure 9, several differences stand out. Military parents are much more likely than the national average to have paid for tutoring for at least four months of a school year (45% vs. 23%, respectively). The spread between those two populations is 22 points. Military families (60%) also are much more likely than the national average (42%) to have paid for before- or after-care services (a difference of 18 points). Forty-six percent of military parents have said they paid for transportation for their child for at least four months—14 points higher than the national average we recently observed. Four out of five military parents (80%) say they have helped with homework at least weekly, a slightly lower proportion observed for the national average (88%).

FIGURE 9 What Parents Have Done to Accommodate Their Children's K–12 Education

Active-duty military parents are much more likely to say they have paid for tutoring, before/after care services, or school transportation, compared to the national average we reported in 2018.



Sources: EdChoice, *2019 Surveying the Military* (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q17; EdChoice, *2018 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted September 25–October 7, 2018), Q12.

Rating Local School Districts

As we did two years ago, we asked military servicemembers and spouses to rate the effectiveness of their local public school districts when it comes to serving families, and in some cases, on some military-family specific subjects. Figure 10 shows school districts fare pretty well. Half or more respondents said their local school district did an "excellent" or "good" job in nine out of 10 performance areas—the lone exception was utilizing the military school liaison (45% "excellent" or "good"). Intensity was fairly strong. Respondents were three times more likely to select "excellent" than "poor" for most items.

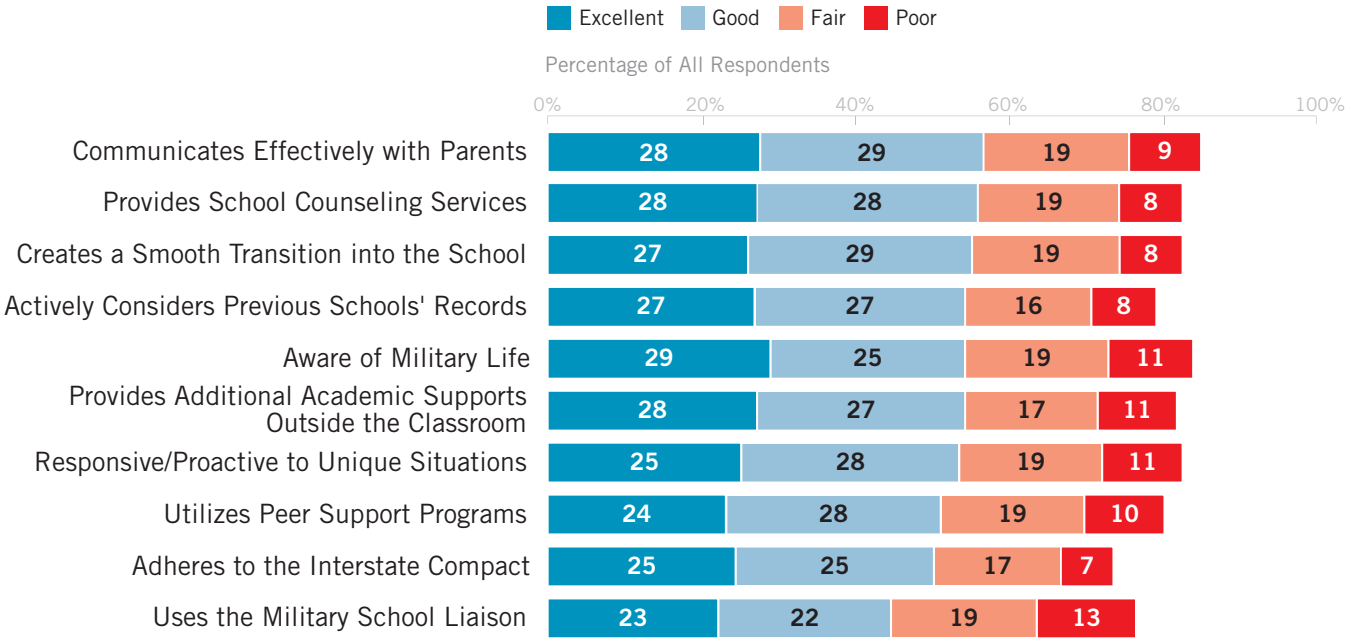
School districts get the highest ratings for communicating with parents, providing school counseling services, and helping for a smooth transition to school. Districts get relatively lower ratings for those items that tend to be more specific to the needs of military families, such as adhering to the Interstate Compact, and using the Military School Liaison. There is a remarkably consistent pattern and gap that shows current school parents are more positive on these matters—by about 8 to 10 percentage points—than the overall average that also includes households with no children.

School Type Preferences

When asked for a preferred school type, equal shares of military respondents would choose a regular public school (32%) or a private school (32%) as a first option for their child. One out of 10 respondents would choose to homeschool their child (6%). Slightly lower proportions would like to enroll their child a public charter school (9%), a DoDEA school (8%), or an online school (8%). See Table 5. Those private preferences signal a stark disconnect with military families' actual school enrollment patterns in the United States. About 80 percent of military-connected students attend public district schools across the country. It is estimated that just about 7 percent of the

FIGURE 10 Ratings of Local School Districts

A majority of active-duty military households give positive ratings to local school districts on various matters related to schooling. Roughly one-quarter or more of respondents give negative ratings to districts on each topic.



Notes: Excludes Respondants who said "Don't Know" or "Prefer Not to Say."

country's active-military-connected students are homeschooled.[35] Eight percent attend DoDEA schools. At the time of writing we do not have statistics for students attending charter schools or online schools.

How do response frequencies look if we only consider military parents of school-aged children? The numbers hardly shift in a meaningful way. Compared to the overall sample, roughly the same proportions of parents would choose a regular public school (31%) and private school (34%). A significantly higher proportion preferred a public charter school (20%). A similar response pattern holds up for those selecting home school (11%), charter school (8%), DoDEA school (9%), or online school (7%).

In a split-sample experiment, we observe a change in schooling preferences between public district schools and private schools. In the alternate version, the inserted language "financial costs and transportation were of no concern" appears to affect active-duty respondent opinions to be slightly more likely to pick private school and less likely to choose a district school. See Figure 11.

In a follow-up question we asked for the main reason they would choose a certain type of school. It is interesting to compare these responses—which are more aspirational—with those factors and reasons reported previously for actual school enrollments. Generally, for any given school type "better education" and "quality" are mentioned more frequently than others. That is not too surprising, and it is the top theme for those preferring to choose private schools or charter schools. It is more interesting to notice that military respondents offer "safety" as a relatively often-cited theme for five of the six schooling types. This reason stands out particularly among those who would like to homeschool. Socialization is another emergent theme that stands out among those who prefer public district schools. See Table 6.

TABLE 5 Active-Duty Military Households' Schooling Preferences by School Type: Composite Results

Military households have diverse schooling preferences. Largest proportions said they would choose a private school or public district school.

Percentage of Respondents by Selected Demographic Groups

	Private School %	Public District School %	Home School %	Public Charter School %	DoDEA School %	Online School %	N =
ALL ACTIVE-DUTY	**32**	**32**	**11**	**9**	**8**	**8**	**1,295**
Serving in Military	33	32	10	**9**	8	7	907
Military Spouse	29	29	14	**10**	10	8	291
Both Serving	33	32	16	**3**	8	8	97
Current School Parent	34	**31**	**11**	8	9	7	542
Children Not Yet School Age	35	**21**	**18**	7	10	8	190
Former School Parent	25	26	**18**	9	11	11	76
No Children	30	**37**	**8**	10	7	8	486
G.I. Bill Beneficiary	32	29	13	9	10	8	526
Did Not Use G.I. Bill	33	34	11	10	7	7	629
BRANCH							
Army	33	32	10	7	9	**9**	366
Navy	37	37	**7**	9	7	**5**	199
Air Force	34	31	11	9	8	6	236
Marines	29	31	**16**	8	5	**12**	133
Coast Guard	31	32	13	10	10	**3**	68

Notes: Bolding denotes statistically significant differences from all active-duty military households or from within-group comparison. Please consider that each subgroup has a unique margin of error based on the sample size (N) obtained in this survey. We advise strong caution when interpreting results for subgroups with small sample sizes. The subgroup sample sizes displayed in the far right column represent the unweighted number of interviews.

Source: EdChoice, *2019 Surveying the Military* (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q18A and Q18B (composite).

TABLE 6 Top Five Reasons for Choosing a Specific School Type

Safety is an important consideration for active-duty military households when it comes to their children's schooling.

Percentage of All Respondents by Preferred School Type

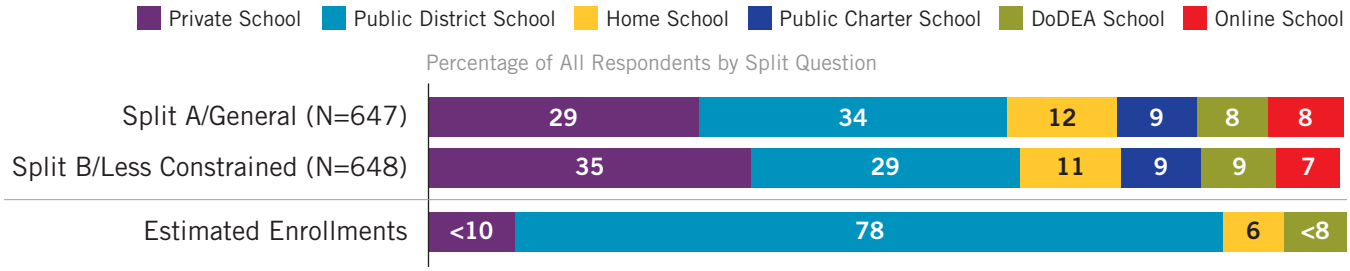
Private School	**N = 418**
Better Education / Quality	21%
Safety / Less Drugs, Violence, Bullying	12%
Class Size / Student-Teacher Ratio	9%
Individual Attention / One-on-One	9%
Academics / Curriculum / Standards / Results	9%
Public District School	**N = 409**
Socialization / Peers / Other Kids	19%
Better Education / Quality	9%
Diversity / Variety	8%
Cost / Tuition / Affordability	6%
Safety / Less Drugs, Violence, Bullying	5%
Home School	**N = 148**
Safety / Less Drugs, Violence, Bullying	18%
Better Education / Quality	11%
Individual Attention / One-on-One / Customized	7%
Parental Involvement	5%
Academics / Curriculum / Standards / Results	3%
Public Charter School	**N = 113**
Better Education / Quality	22%
Academics / Curriculum / Standards / Results	8%
Teachers / Teaching / Way They Teach	8%
Class Size / Student-Teacher Ratio	7%
Discipline / Structure / Consistency	5%
DoDEA School	**N = 105**
Discipline / Structure / Consistency	16%
Safety / Less Drugs, Violence, Bullying	14%
Better Education / Quality	10%
Academics / Curriculum / Standards / Results	6%
Morals / Values / Ethics	6%
Online School	**N = 99**
Freedom / Flexibility	12%
Better Education / Quality	9%
Safety / Less Drugs, Violence, Bullying	8%
Academics / Curriculum / Standards / Results	4%
Teachers / Teaching / Way They Teach	4%

Notes: Lists cite the total number of unweighted interviews (N) per school type grouping. Unweighted N's are provided so the reader can roughly assess the reliability of reported percentages.

Source: EdChoice, *2019 Surveying the Military* (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q19.

FIGURE 11 Comparing School Type Preferences Based on a Wording Experiment

The inclusion or exclusion of "financial costs and transportation" in the questions appears to affect how active-duty military parents prefer private school or public district school.



Q17-Split A. If it were your decision and you could select any type of school, what type of school would you select in order to obtain the best education for your child?

Q17-Split B. If it were your decision and you could select any type of school, *and financial costs and transportation were of no concern*, what type of school would you select in order to obtain the best education for your child?

Note: For enrollment data sources, see note 35. Estimated enrollment of public district school may include public charter school enrollment.
Source: EdChoice, *2019 Surveying the Military* (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q18A and Q18B.

PART III

Views Toward K–12 Education and Choice-Based Policies

National Direction of K–12 Education

EdChoice's annual national surveys consistently find that Americans are pessimistic about the trajectory of K–12 education in the country.[36] In a clear break with what we typically see in our polling, our survey's military respondents had relatively positive views on the national direction of K–12 education. See Figure 12. They are more likely to say K–12 education is heading in the "right direction" (53%), compared to the proportion feeling K–12 education has gotten off on the "wrong track" (47%). That is a 13 point increase in the positive response since our last survey in 2017 (40% right direction).[37] Active-duty military views also contrast with the 35 percent of the general public that said "right direction" in our 2018 national survey. These comparisons are noteworthy for their sizable differences.

On balance, we observe middling attitudes across most observed military demographic groups. See Appendix 13. Some key differences stand out while making comparisons within demographic categories:

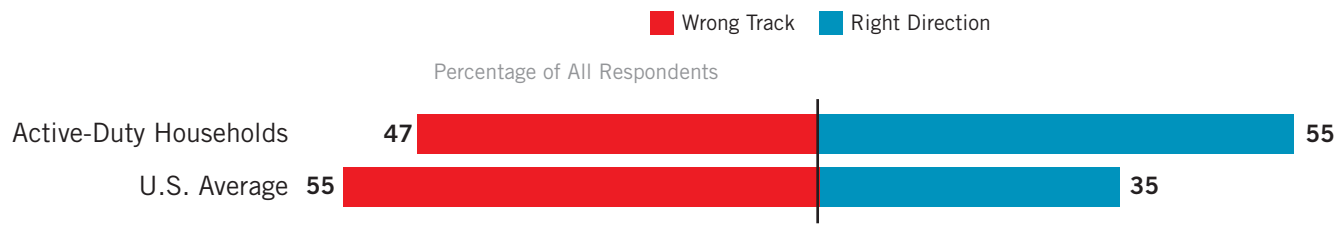
- Parents of school-age children (55%) are significantly more likely to choose "right direction" than households without school-age children (48%).
- Respondents who have been G.I. Bill beneficiaries (59%) are more positive than those who have not used the G.I. Bill program (48%).
- Army households (56%) are more upbeat than Coast Guard households (38%), who mirror the general public's sentiment and are more negative about K–12 education.
- African Americans (58%) and Latinos (59%) tend to be more positive than whites (49%) or Asian Americans (48%).
- Urbanites (58%) marked "right direction" more frequently than suburbanites (50%).
- Respondents having at least a college degree (60%) differ significantly from those without a college degree (49%).

Education Savings Accounts (ESAs)

Military respondents were much more likely to support ESAs than oppose them after given a description (72% favor vs. 27% oppose). The margin is roughly +45 points and is very large. The difference between strongly held positive and negative views is +22 points. About one-fourth of military households (27%) were initially unfamiliar with ESAs or had never heard of them. See Table 7.

FIGURE 12 Views on the Direction of K–12 Education

Active-duty military households are much more likely to say K–12 education in the United States is going in the right direction, compared to the general public surveyed in 2018.



Sources: EdChoice, *2019 Surveying the Military* (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q4: EdChoice, *2018 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted September 25–October 7, 2018), Q1.

The level of support among military households is similar to EdChoice's 2018 survey of the general public and roughly holding steady since our last military survey in 2017. The level of opposition is a little higher compared to the general public's views (by nine points) and what we observed among active-duty servicemembers two years ago (by 12 points).[38]

Our first question about ESAs asked for an opinion without offering any description. On this baseline question, 52 percent of respondents favored ESAs and 20 percent opposed the idea. In a follow-up question, interviewers gave respondents a description for an ESA program. With this context, support rose by 20 points, and opposition rose seven points. See Figure 13.

Why did respondents support ESAs? Access to schools that have better academics (32%) and more freedom and flexibility for parents (27%) were the top two reasons. See Figure 14. We also asked a similar follow-up to those military respondents who oppose ESAs. As shown in Figure 15, reasons varied widely. Roughly similar proportions (about one out of five) selected lack of accountability for service providers, diverting funding from public schools, and fraudulent behavior as the biggest concerns.

In a split-sample experiment, we observe that military respondents preferred universal access to ESAs much more than eligibility that would be based on financial need. See Figure 16.

- Nearly three-fourths (73%) of respondents agree with the statement, "ESAs should be available to all families, regardless of income and special needs." Of those agreeing, 35 percent "strongly agree." About one-fifth (22%), disagreed with universal access for ESAs, and less than one in 10 (6%) chose "strongly disagree."

- The comparison sample produced lower levels of support and higher levels of opposition for needs-based ESAs. Fifty-six percent agreed with the statement, "ESAs should be available only to families based on financial need." Close to half (46%) disagreed with this statement, and about one in six (16%) strongly disagreed with this condition.

TABLE 7 Views on Education Savings Accounts (ESAs): Descriptive Results

Nearly three-fourths of active-duty military households favor ESAs after being provided with a definition.

Percentage of Respondents by Selected Demographic Groups

	Favor %	Oppose %	Margin (net)	Intensity (strong net)	N =
ALL ACTIVE-DUTY	**72**	**27**	**46**	**23**	**1,295**
Serving in Military	72	26	46	23	907
Military Spouse	70	29	42	23	291
Both Serving	74	23	52	27	97
Current School Parent	**74**	**25**	50	27	542
Children Not Yet School Age	**66**	**33**	34	18	190
Former School Parent	**58**	**42**	16	11	76
No Children	**74**	**24**	50	22	486
G.I. Bill Beneficiary	**70**	28	42	22	526
Did Not Use G.I. Bill	**76**	24	52	25	629
BRANCH					
Army	**72**	**26**	46	21	366
Navy	**79**	**21**	58	31	199
Air Force	**72**	**25**	47	24	236
Marines	72	27	45	20	133
Coast Guard	**59**	**40**	19	16	68

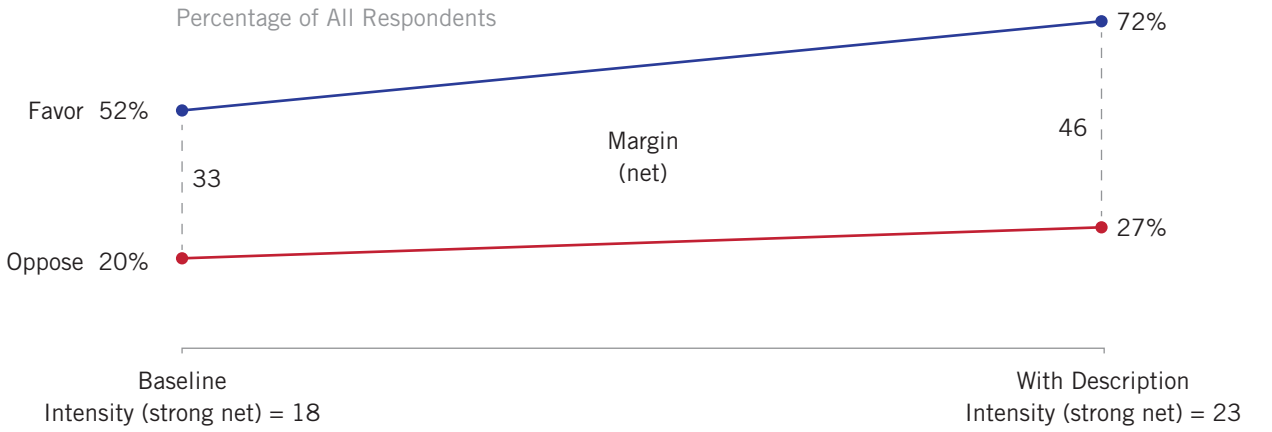
Notes: Bolding denotes statistically significant differences from all active-duty military households or from within-group comparison. Please consider that each subgroup has a unique margin of error based on the sample size (N) obtained in this survey. We advise strong caution when interpreting results for subgroups with small sample sizes. The subgroup sample sizes displayed in the far right column represent the unweighted number of interviews. Margins and intensities are calculated using percentages to the nearest tenth.

Source: EdChoice, 2019 Surveying the Military (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q25.

FIGURE 13

Active-Duty Military Households' Views on Education Savings Accounts (ESAs): Baseline vs. Descriptive Versions

When given a description of ESAs, support increased by 20 points and opposition increased by seven points. The net positive margin increased by 13 points.



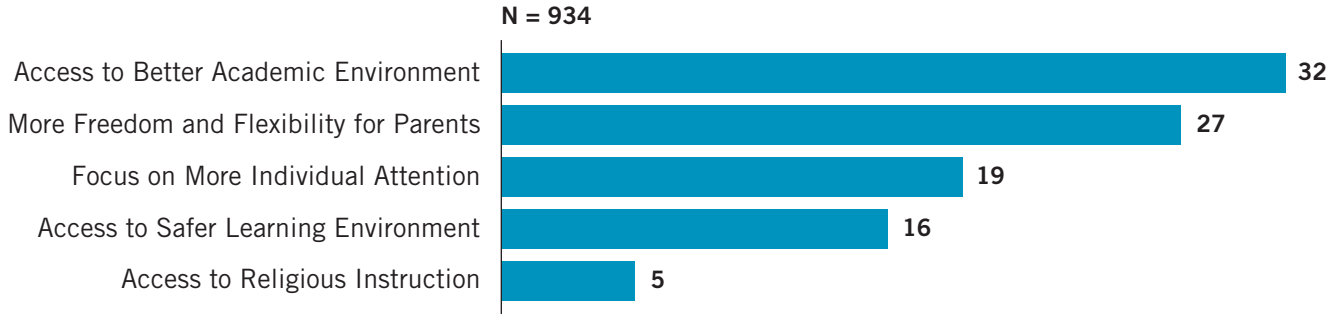
Note: Margins and intensities are calculated using percentages to the nearest tenth.
Source: EdChoice, *2019 Surveying the Military* (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q24 and Q25.

FIGURE 14

The Most Important Reason for Supporting ESAs

More than half of active-duty military households that support ESAs either said access to schools that have better academics or increased freedom and flexibility for parents was the most important reason they favor ESAs.

Percentage of Respondents Saying "Strongly" or "Somewhat" Favor ESAs



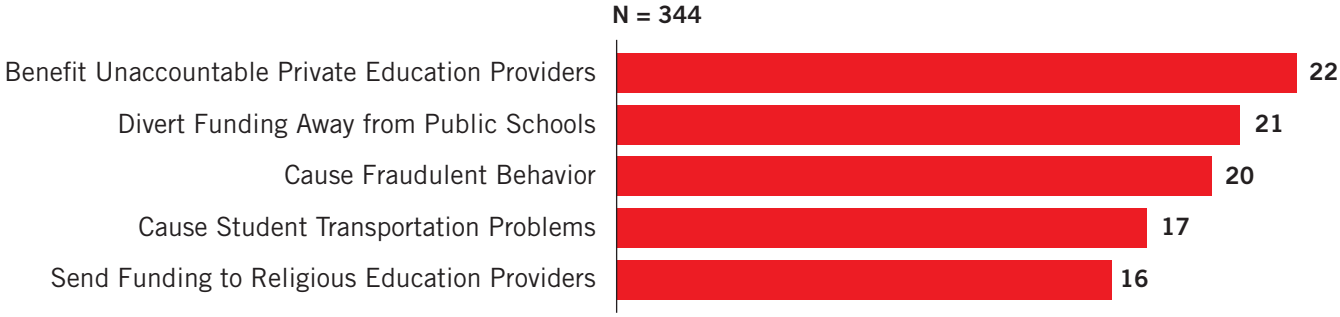
Source: EdChoice, *2019 Surveying the Military* (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q26.

FIGURE 15

The Most Important Reason for Opposing ESAs

Reasons for opposing ESAs vary by roughly similar proportions.

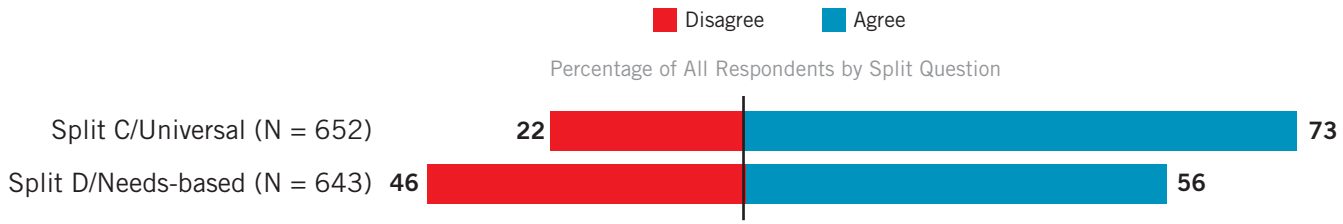
Percentage of Respondents Saying "Strongly" or "Somewhat" Oppose ESAs



Source: EdChoice, *2019 Surveying the Military* (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q27.

FIGURE 16 Comparing Views Regarding ESA Eligibility

Our question wording experiment indicates active-duty military households are much more likely to favor universal ESA eligibility than limited, needs-based eligibility.



Q28-Split C. Some people believe that ESAs *should be available to all families, regardless of income and special needs.* Do you agree or disagree with that statement?

Q26-Split D. Some people believe that ESAs *should be available only to families based on financial need.* Do you agree or disagree with that statement?

Source: EdChoice, *2019 Surveying the Military* (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q28.

School Vouchers

Nearly two out of three military households (66%) support school vouchers, compared with 33 percent who oppose such a reform. The margin of support is +34 points. Military respondents were much more likely to express an intensely favorable view toward school vouchers by +18 points (28% "strongly favor" vs. 10% "strongly oppose"). Approximately one-third of respondents (35%) were initially unfamiliar with school vouchers or had never heard of them. All of these results are similar to what we have recently observed among the general public and compared to our previous military survey.[39] See Table 8.

Similar to the pair of ESA questions, we asked baseline and follow-up description questions about school vouchers. In the first question, we asked respondents for their views on school vouchers without a definition or any other context: 44 percent favored vouchers; 46 percent opposed such a policy. The follow-up question with a basic description for a school voucher system had a positive impact on respondents. Support moved upward by 22 points (66%), while opposition increased by 13 points to 33 percent. See Figure 17.

Charter Schools

Military respondents support public charter schools. Given a description, two out of three (67%) support such schools whereas 31 percent oppose them. The margin is +35 percentage points. Military households are twice as likely to express intensely positive responses toward charters (18% "strongly favor" vs. 9% "strongly oppose"). Nearly one out of five military households (18%) were initially unfamiliar with charter schools or had never heard of them. See Table 9.

We also asked baseline and follow-up description questions about charter schools. On the initial baseline question, 53 percent favored charter schools and 27 percent indicated opposition. In the follow-up question—with a basic description for charter schools—support increased by 14 points to 67%, while those in opposition increased by four points to 31 percent. See Figure 18.

TABLE 8

Views on Vouchers: Descriptive Results

Nearly two-thirds of active-duty military households favor school vouchers after being provided with a definition.

Percentage of Respondents by Selected Demographic Groups

	Favor %	Oppose %	Margin (net)	Intensity (strong net)	N =
ALL ACTIVE-DUTY	**66**	**33**	**34**	**18**	**1,295**
Serving in Military	66	33	33	18	907
Military Spouse	65	34	31	17	291
Both Serving	72	25	48	21	97
Current School Parent	**70**	**29**	41	25	542
Children Not Yet School Age	63	35	29	15	190
Former School Parent	59	**41**	18	16	76
No Children	**64**	34	30	12	486
G.I. Bill Beneficiary	67	32	35	18	526
Did Not Use G.I. Bill	67	31	36	21	629
BRANCH					
Army	66	33	34	18	366
Navy	67	31	37	25	199
Air Force	67	31	36	17	236
Marines	64	35	29	16	133
Coast Guard	68	31	37	13	68

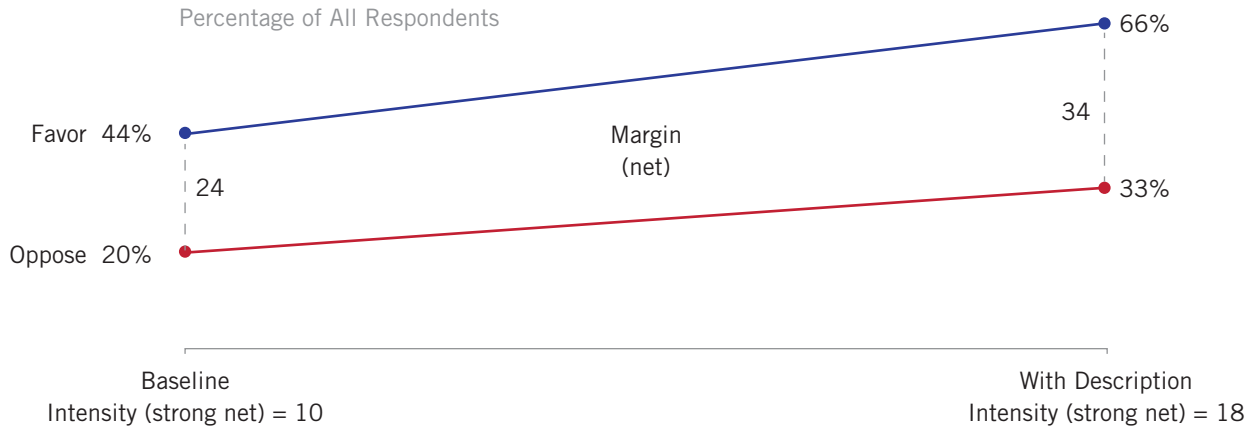
Notes: Bolding denotes statistically significant differences from all active-duty military households or from within-group comparison. Please consider that each subgroup has a unique margin of error based on the sample size (N) obtained in this survey. We advise strong caution when interpreting results for subgroups with small sample sizes. The subgroup sample sizes displayed in the far right column represent the unweighted number of interviews. Margins and intensities are calculated using percentages to the nearest tenth.

Source: EdChoice, *2019 Surveying the Military* (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q23.

FIGURE 17

Active-Duty Military Households' Views on Vouchers: Baseline vs. Descriptive Versions

When given a description of vouchers, support increased by 22 points and opposition increased by approximately 12 points. The net positive margin increased by 10 points.



Note: Margins and intensities are calculated using percentages to the nearest tenth.

Source: EdChoice, *2019 Surveying the Military* (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q22 and Q23.

TABLE 9

Views on Charter Schools: Descriptive Results

Approximately two-thirds of active-duty military households favor charter schools after being provided with a definition.

Percentage of Respondents by Selected Demographic Groups

	Favor %	Oppose %	Margin (net)	Intensity (strong net)	N =
ALL ACTIVE-DUTY	**67**	**31**	**35**	**10**	**1,295**
Serving in Military	68	**30**	39	12	907
Military Spouse	63	**36**	27	6	291
Both Serving	62	34	28	5	97
Current School Parent	**71**	**27**	44	14	542
Children Not Yet School Age	**61**	**36**	25	4	190
Former School Parent	**54**	**46**	8	7	76
No Children	66	**32**	34	7	486
G.I. Bill Beneficiary	**70**	28	42	13	526
Did Not Use G.I. Bill	67	30	37	9	629
BRANCH					
Army	69	29	40	12	366
Navy	66	30	36	13	199
Air Force	67	29	38	8	236
Marines	70	29	41	16	133
Coast Guard	59	38	21	6	68

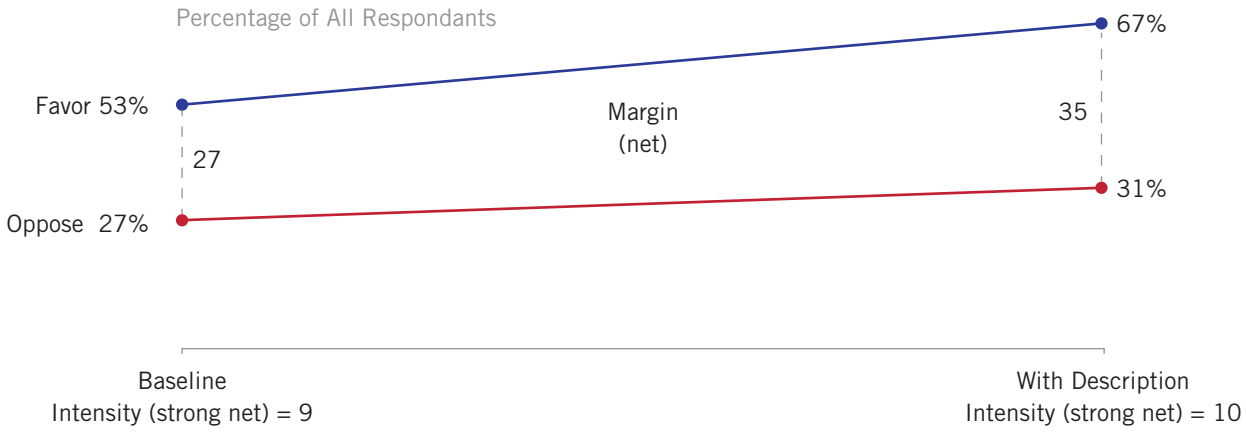
Notes: Bolding denotes statistically significant differences from all active-duty military households or from within-group comparison. Please consider that each subgroup has a unique margin of error based on the sample size (N) obtained in this survey. We advise strong caution when interpreting results for subgroups with small sample sizes. The subgroup sample sizes displayed in the far right column represent the unweighted number of interviews. Margins and intensities are calculated using percentages to the nearest tenth.

Source: EdChoice, *2019 Surveying the Military* (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q21.

FIGURE 18

Active-Duty Military Households' Views on Public Charter Schools: Baseline vs. Descriptive Versions

When given a description about charter schools, support increased by roughly 13 points and opposition increased by nearly five points. The net positive margin increased by nine points.



Notes: Margins and intensities are calculated using percentages to the nearest tenth.

Source: EdChoice, *2019 Surveying the Military* (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q20 and Q21.

CONCLUSION

EdChoice's second survey of active-duty military families sought to learn more about their experiences and opinions. We hope that the survey results and key findings and emergent themes can initiate more public dialogue about the current affairs of military life and K–12 schooling, and even perhaps have implications for policymaking.

What are some of the themes that emerged from our survey's online interviews?

- Military servicemembers and spouses/partners are promoters of the profession. Nearly half of those surveyed gave military service high ratings and indicated they are likely to recommend such a vocation to friends or colleagues.

- However, many different stressors confront military households. Certainly this is not surprising to those who serve, but the wide range and sum of stressors should alarm policymakers and lay readers. For each of 10 given issues or situations, approximately 30% of respondents said it was an "extremely" or "largely" significant source of household stress.

- Military families have a wide set of schooling experiences. Parents of school-age children have tried—for at least one year—different learning environments that include district schools, charter schools, private schools, DoDEA schools, online schools, and homeschooling. The vast majority have experience with local school districts and neighborhood schools. Surprisingly though, substantial proportions (all exceeding 25%) have also enrolled children in other types of public or private school settings.

- Majorities of military parents give positive ratings to their local public school districts regarding our curiosity about 10 services and activities. Generally, districts appear to excel at communicating with parents, providing counseling and transitional supports. However, at least 25 percent of respondents gave "fair" or "poor" ratings to districts on any of the 10 activities.

- Parents of school-age children like different school options. They are about twice as likely to say they are satisfied than dissatisfied with any given type of school environment.

- Military parents go above and beyond when it comes to supporting the education of their children. And in certain ways, this is especially true when compared to the national average. Active-duty military parents are much more likely to say they have taken out a new loan or moved closer to school to support their child's education, compared to current school parents in our 2018 national survey. Military parents are also more likely to say they have paid for tutoring, before/after care services, or school transportation. Military families are making big sacrifices and going to great lengths to give their kids a quality education. These activities point to real challenges for families in terms of time and resources, and federal reform could amplify those positive supports even further.

- A safe schooling environment is a high priority for military families. That finding arose out of two different lines of questioning. First, we see that roughly 40 percent of military parents ranked a safe learning environment in their top three factors for actual schooling decisions they have made in the past. Later in the questionnaire, we asked respondents for their preferred school type based on a provided list. We then followed up asking about the main reason they selected a given school type. Once again safety reasons showed up as a top-five reason for five of the six listed school types, and it was a top reason for those who prefer to homeschool.

- Active-duty military households overwhelmingly support choice-driven education policies and programs. Servicemembers and spouses/

partners are much more likely to support than oppose ESAs and other educational choice mechanisms. The margins of support for ESAs, school vouchers, and charter schools are very large, exceeding +30 points for any policy type. Seven out of 10 current school parents favor these policies.

Learning from military servicemembers and spouses/partners is vital to the national interest. The men and women in our armed forces—as well as their families and loved ones—disproportionately make sacrifices for the country. For those of us engaged in public education debates and reform discussions, it is imperative for us to ask timely and relevant questions that are of practical importance to them and informative to federal and state policymakers.

Discussions about injecting choice-based reforms into federal policies that serve military-connected students and families have amplified in recent years. Since the 1940s, the United States federal government has enacted laws to ensure that military families can access at least a basic public school education either directly on bases or in nearby public school districts. Military household challenges are persistent. New education funding mechanisms like education savings accounts (ESAs) could make a big difference for families, tapping into their proactive inclinations regarding schooling matters, and possibly affording more flexibility so they can spend time and resources on other aspects of military life.

A window of attention opened by the military community's evolving needs and priorities, recent decentralizing K–12 policies, and emerging choice-based funding mechanisms together demand the need for policymakers and school choice proponents to better understand the educational circumstances of military families. Military families continue to make tremendous sacrifices for the country—as reported in this survey and other surveys. They are highly engaged and supportive toward advancing the education and well-being of their children. Our survey's findings suggest policymakers and advocates have a major window of opportunity to address military families' needs and preferences to further their access to an expanded range of opportunities in K–12 education.

APPENDIX 1

Survey Project and Profile

Title:	2019 Surveying the Military Project
Survey Sponsor:	The Challenge Foundation
Survey Developer:	EdChoice
Survey Data Collection & Quality Control:	Braun Research, Inc.
Interview Dates:	March 8 to April 14, 2019
Interview Method:	Online Survey
Interview Length:	12 minutes (average)
Language(s):	English
Sample Frame:	Active-Duty Military Households, U.S. Domestic
Sampling Method:	Non-Probability; Stratified Online Panel
Sample Size:	N = 1,295
Margin of Error:	± 2.8%
Weighting?	No
Targets?	Yes (servicemembers ≥ 50% minimum; spouses ≥ 25% minimum)
Response Rate:	5.4% (AAPOR RR1)
Oversampling?	No
Project Contacts:	Paul DiPerna, paul@edchoice.org Lindsey Burke, Lindsey.Burke@heritage.org Drew Catt, dcatt@edchoice.org

The authors are responsible for overall survey design; question wording and ordering; this report's analysis, charts, and writing; and any unintentional errors or misrepresentations.

APPENDIX 2
Additional Information About Survey Methods

Online Interviews

Braun Research programmed and hosted the web-based survey for active-duty households (members or their respective spouses/partners). For three concurrently administered surveys of (1) active-duty households, (2) reservists, and (3) veterans, Braun Research used Lucid's Fulcrum online survey platform for purposes of recruitment and providing the panel sample. Panel administrators initially contacted 24,915 persons from March 1, 2019, to April 29, 2019. Those initial contacts were randomly selected from the opt-in non-probability online pool of panelists; 4,395 persons clicked into the survey and 815 persons terminated as disqualified. Appendix 3 displays the online sample dispositions, response rate and results against statistics. Appendix 3 displays the online sample dispositions and response rate.

Contact Procedures

Contacts with potential respondents generally function differently than by other modes like phone or mail. Braun Research creates and develops the survey instrument and gives it a title. For this project, the online panel connector (Fulcrum) takes that survey and, via a link, reaches out to its partners—who are online panel suppliers—to offer opportunities to participate. These online panel partners decide whether to participate and offer to their panelists based on their panel composition, survey topic and screening questions. The panel companies present these opportunities, generally in the form of an online dashboard or mobile app. The platform serves as a direct-to-consumer model—the link is created, sent out, and the panelist clicks on the survey if he/she wants to participate or not. Rather than sending email invitations to initiate contacts, most online panel companies use a dashboard-type platform and process, whereby panelists visit these dashboards (or apps) to see the latest survey offerings.

Weighting Considerations

Weighting is generally used in survey analysis to compensate for sample designs and patterns of non-response that may bias results. We did not weight the data for this study for three reasons: (1) there are no applicable statistics for some screening requirements; (2) we observed that the representativeness of completed interviews adequately fit within the margin of error on most external benchmarks—see Appendix 5; and (3) we did not weight the data in our previous survey of active-duty military households in 2017, and we wanted to remain consistent in approach.

[i]EdChoice intends to report at a later date the survey results for additional completed surveys of active-duty military households, as well as separately completes a surveys of reservists, and veterans.

[ii]For more information about Lucid's Fulcrum online survey and panel platform, see https://luc.id

APPENDIX 3

Active-Duty Sample Dispositions and Response Rate (Online)

Active-Duty Household Online Dispositions (N = 1,295)	
Description	**Total**
Full Completes	1,295
Email Bouncebacks	512
Emails Unopened After Reminders	20,008
Terminated Early/Breakoffs	1,183
Screened Out/Disqualified	815
Refusals	1,102
Total Contracts	24,915
Response Rate	**5.4%**
Cooperation Rate	**3.6%**
Refusal Rate	**4.6%**

APPENDIX 4
Screens for Online Surveys

All respondents were asked a series of screener questions to ensure relevance and qualification:

S1. Are you under 18 years old, OR are you 18 or older?

1) Under 18 * Thank, and terminate
2) 18 or older
9) Prefer not to say * Thank, and terminate

S2. Are you or your spouse or partner NOW SERVING in ACTIVE-DUTY in ANY of the United States Armed Forces? This does not include the Reserves or the National Guard.

1) Yes, self
2) Yes, my spouse or partner
3) Neither * Proceed to Reservist questionnaire
4) Prefer not to say

S3A. [If S2 = 1, or If S2 = 1 and 2] In which branch of the United States military are YOU SERVING?

1) Air Force
2) Army
3) Coast Guard
4) Navy
5) Marines
6) Prefer not to say * Thank, and terminate

S3B. [If S2 = 2 only] In which branch of the United States military?

1) Air Force
2) Army
3) Coast Guard
4) Navy
5) Marines
6) Prefer not to say * Thank, and terminate

S4. In what STATE do you currently live?

1) [Record U.S. State or District of Columbia]
2) Outside of USA * Thank, and terminate
3) Prefer not to say * Thank, and terminate

S5. What is your ZIP Code?

APPENDIX 5

Comparing Summary Statistics of 2017 and 2019 Survey Samples

Percentage of Active-Duty Military Households and Selected Demographic Groups

	2017 Active-Duty Sample Servicemembers Only (N = 473)	2019 Active-Duty Sample Servicemembers Only (N = 1,004)	External Benchmarks
MILITARY SERVICE BRANCH			
Air Force	25	24	24
Army	40	37	35
Coast Guard	6	7	3
Marines	12	13	14
Navy	17	20	24
CENSUS REGION			
Northeast	10	12	4
Midwest	14	15	8
South	51	49	57
West	25	25	31
GENDER			
Male	58	59	84
Female	42	41	16
RACE/ETHNICITY			
White	66	63	69
Hispanic [or Latino]	18	21	16
Black [or African American]	16	18	17
Native American [or American Indian]	1	3	1
Asian and Pacific Islander	5	4	6
Mixed Race	7	10	3
Other	2	2	4
AGE			
18 to 34	69	70	81 (18 to 35)
35 to 44	23	22	10 (36 to 40)
≥ 45	5	8	8 (≥ 40)

Source: Department of Defense (2018), 2017 Demographics: Profile of the Military Community, retrieved from *https://download.militaryonesource.mil/12038/MOS/Reports/2017-demographics-report.pdf*

APPENDIX 6

Number of Times Relocated to Meet Service Requirements

Percentage of Active-Duty Military Households and Selected Demographic Groups

	Never	1 to 3 Times %	4 to 6 Times %	≥ 7 Times %	Average	N =
ALL ACTIVE-DUTY	**10**	**56**	**28**	**4**	**3.0**	**1,295**
Serving in Military	11	**57**	**28**	4	**2.9**	907
Military Spouse	8	**59**	**27**	5	**3.1**	291
Both Serving	9	**45**	**40**	5	**3.5**	97
Current School Parent	**6**	56	**32**	**6**	**3.2**	542
Children Not Yet School Age	**8**	59	30	**3**	**3.0**	190
Former School Parent	**5**	57	24	**12**	**3.6**	76
No Children	**16**	56	**25**	**2**	**2.5**	486
G.I. Bill Beneficiary	**7**	**53**	**34**	6	**3.3**	526
Did Not Use G.I. Bill	**11**	**59**	**25**	4	**2.8**	629
BRANCH						
Army	**12**	54	**29**	5	2.9	366
Navy	9	**62**	**26**	3	**2.8**	199
Air Force	**11**	54	**28**	6	3.0	236
Marines	11	**60**	**26**	2	**2.7**	133
Coast Guard	**4**	**44**	**44**	4	**3.4**	68
LENGTH OF SERVICE						
≤ 4 Years	**16**	**62**	**19**	**1**	**2.3**	557
5 to 10 Years	**6**	**60**	**30**	**3**	**3.1**	464
11 to 20 Years	**5**	**41**	**48**	**7**	**3.8**	220
≥ 20 Years	**4**	**25**	**31**	**39**	**5.4**	52
GENDER						
Female	10	54	**31**	4	3.0	599
Male	10	58	**26**	5	2.9	696
AGE GROUP						
18 to 34	**11**	**62**	**26**	-	**2.6**	889
35 to 54	**7**	**45**	**34**	**13**	**3.7**	361
≥ 55	15	**41**	**21**	**21**	**4.0**	39
RACE/ETHNICITY						
Asian/Pacific Islander	7	62	22	9	3.2	58
Black/African American	9	56	30	4	3.0	241
Hispanic/Latino	10	56	29	4	2.9	320
White	10	56	29	5	3.0	657
HOUSEHOLD INCOME						
< $40,000	**18**	**62**	**17**	**1**	**2.2**	339
$40,000 to $79,999	**8**	**58**	**31**	**3**	**2.9**	594
≥ $80,000	**5**	**49**	**36**	**10**	**3.7**	356
COMMUNITY						
Urban	**9**	59	28	4	2.9	407
Suburban	**8**	55	**31**	5	**3.1**	573
Small Town/Rural	**15**	56	**24**	4	**2.7**	308
EDUCATION						
< College Degree	**13**	58	**26**	**2**	**2.6**	788
≥ College Degree	**5**	54	**32**	**8**	**3.4**	503
PARTY ID						
Democrat	**8**	58	29	4	3.0	409
Republican	**8**	58	29	4	3.0	481
Independent	**13**	55	27	5	2.9	382

Notes: Bolding denotes statistically significant differences from all active-duty military households or from within-group comparison. Please consider that each subgroup has a unique margin of error based on the sample size (N) obtained in this survey. We advise strong caution when interpreting results for subgroups with small sample sizes. The subgroup sample sizes displayed in the far right column represent the unweighted number of interviews.

Source: EdChoice, *2019 Surveying the Military* (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q29.

APPENDIX 7

Number of Times Deployed to Another Country to Meet Service Requirements

Percentage of Active-Duty Military Households and Selected Demographic Groups

	Never	1 to 3 Times %	4 to 6 Times %	≥ 7 Times %	Average	N =
ALL ACTIVE-DUTY	**20**	**56**	**19**	**3**	**2.2**	**1,295**
Serving in Military	**22**	56	**17**	3	**2.1**	907
Military Spouse	**14**	57	**24**	3	**2.5**	291
Both Serving	**14**	58	24	3	**2.6**	97
Current School Parent	**14**	**60**	**22**	**4**	**2.5**	542
Children Not Yet School Age	**15**	54	**26**	3	**2.6**	190
Former School Parent	**16**	51	22	7	**2.7**	76
No Children	**29**	**54**	**13**	**1**	**1.7**	486
G.I. Bill Beneficiary	**17**	56	**23**	**5**	**2.6**	526
Did Not Use G.I. Bill	**22**	58	**16**	**2**	**2.0**	629
BRANCH						
Army	21	58	19	3	2.1	366
Navy	24	**51**	20	4	2.2	199
Air Force	23	**54**	17	4	2.2	236
Marines	20	**65**	**13**	2	2.0	133
Coast Guard	18	54	18	6	2.5	68
LENGTH OF SERVICE						
≤ 4 Years	**28**	**57**	**13**	**<1**	**1.6**	557
5 to 10 Years	**16**	**58**	**22**	**2**	**2.4**	464
11 to 20 Years	**11**	**56**	**27**	**6**	**3.0**	220
≥ 20 Years	**4**	**39**	**27**	**29**	**4.6**	52
GENDER						
Female	19	58	20	**2**	2.2	599
Male	21	55	18	**4**	2.3	696
AGE GROUP						
18 to 34	**23**	57	19	-	**1.9**	889
35 to 54	**12**	58	21	**9**	**2.8**	361
≥ 55	18	44	15	**21**	**3.7**	39
RACE/ETHNICITY						
Asian/Pacific Islander	**10**	59	24	5	2.6	58
Black/African American	20	57	20	2	2.3	241
Hispanic/Latino	19	58	20	3	2.3	320
White	**20**	57	18	4	2.2	657
HOUSEHOLD INCOME						
< $40,000	**33**	**53**	**10**	**<1**	**1.4**	339
$40,000 to $79,999	**19**	**60**	**19**	**2**	**2.2**	594
≥ $80,000	**10**	**53**	**28**	**8**	**3.1**	356
COMMUNITY						
Urban	**18**	58	20	3	2.3	407
Suburban	**18**	**59**	19	3	2.3	573
Small Town/Rural	**27**	**51**	18	3	2.1	308
EDUCATION						
< College Degree	**24**	57	**16**	**1**	**1.9**	788
≥ College Degree	**14**	56	**24**	**6**	**2.7**	503
PARTY ID						
Democrat	**17**	**60**	21	**1**	2.2	409
Republican	**18**	58	19	**5**	2.4	481
Independent	**26**	**53**	17	**3**	2.1	382

Notes: Bolding denotes statistically significant differences from all active-duty military households or from within-group comparison. Please consider that each subgroup has a unique margin of error based on the sample size (N) obtained in this survey. We advise strong caution when interpreting results for subgroups with small sample sizes. The subgroup sample sizes displayed in the far right column represent the unweighted number of interviews.

Source: EdChoice, *2019 Surveying the Military* (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q30.

APPENDIX 8

Number of Times Assigned Station(s) in U.S. to Meet Service Requirements

Percentage of Active-Duty Military Households and Selected Demographic Groups

	Never	1 to 3 Times %	4 to 6 Times %	≥ 7 Times %	Average	N =
ALL ACTIVE-DUTY	**5**	**69**	**24**	**<1**	**2.6**	**1,295**
Serving in Military	5	70	23	<1	**2.5**	907
Military Spouse	3	69	24	-	2.6	291
Both Serving	5	60	30	-	**3.0**	97
Current School Parent	**3**	**65**	**30**	<1	**2.8**	542
Children Not Yet School Age	5	72	**21**	-	**2.5**	190
Former School Parent	9	65	25	-	2.6	76
No Children	5	**73**	**18**	<1	**2.3**	486
G.I. Bill Beneficiary	**3**	69	**27**	<1	**2.8**	526
Did Not Use G.I. Bill	**5**	70	22	<1	**2.5**	629
BRANCH						
Army	4	69	**25**	<1	**2.6**	366
Navy	6	68	**24**	-	**2.6**	199
Air Force	6	**65**	**25**	<1	2.6	236
Marines	7	**77**	**14**	<1	**2.3**	133
Coast Guard	4	65	**28**	-	**2.8**	68
LENGTH OF SERVICE						
≤ 4 Years	**6**	**80**	**10**	-	**2.1**	557
5 to 10 Years	4	**69**	**26**	<1	**2.6**	464
11 to 20 Years	**3**	**51**	**46**	<1	**3.3**	220
≥ 20 Years	**2**	**35**	**60**	2	**4.3**	52
GENDER						
Female	4	71	23	-	2.5	599
Male	5	67	24	<1	2.6	696
AGE GROUP						
18 to 34	5	**76**	**17**	-	**2.2**	889
35 to 54	4	**54**	**41**	-	**3.3**	361
≥ 55	10	**51**	**26**	8	**3.3**	39
RACE/ETHNICITY						
Asian/Pacific Islander	3	74	19	-	**2.4**	58
Black/African American	5	71	22	-	**2.4**	241
Hispanic/Latino	6	**74**	**18**	-	**2.4**	320
White	4	**66**	**28**	<1	**2.7**	657
HOUSEHOLD INCOME						
< $40,000	7	**76**	**13**	-	**2.1**	339
$40,000 to $79,999	4	**71**	**24**	-	**2.5**	594
≥ $80,000	3	**60**	**34**	<1	**3.1**	356
COMMUNITY						
Urban	**3**	72	23	-	2.5	407
Suburban	4	69	25	<1	2.6	573
Small Town/Rural	**7**	65	23	<1	2.5	308
EDUCATION						
< College Degree	**6**	**73**	**18**	-	**2.4**	788
≥ College Degree	**3**	**63**	**32**	<1	**2.9**	503
PARTY ID						
Democrat	5	69	24	-	2.5	409
Republican	4	70	25	<1	2.6	481
Independent	5	68	22	<1	2.5	382

Notes: Bolding denotes statistically significant differences from all active-duty military households or from within-group comparison. Please consider that each subgroup has a unique margin of error based on the sample size (N) obtained in this survey. We advise strong caution when interpreting results for subgroups with small sample sizes. The subgroup sample sizes displayed in the far right column represent the unweighted number of interviews.

Source: EdChoice, *2019 Surveying the Military* (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q30.

APPENDIX 9

Number of Times Assigned Station(s) in Another Country to Meet Service Requirements

Percentage of Active-Duty Military Households and Selected Demographic Groups

	Never	1 to 3 Times %	4 to 6 Times %	≥ 7 Times %	Average	N =
ALL ACTIVE-DUTY	**29**	**59**	**4**	**<1**	**1.4**	**1,295**
Serving in Military	**32**	**57**	**3**	<1	**1.3**	907
Military Spouse	**20**	**66**	**8**	<1	**1.7**	291
Both Serving	26	60	**1**	1	1.5	97
Current School Parent	**25**	**64**	**6**	1	**1.6**	542
Children Not Yet School Age	**23**	**65**	**6**	-	**1.6**	190
Former School Parent	**17**	**74**	7	1	**1.9**	76
No Children	**39**	**50**	**2**	<1	**1.0**	486
G.I. Bill Beneficiary	**22**	**68**	5	1	**1.6**	526
Did Not Use G.I. Bill	**36**	**52**	4	<1	**1.2**	629
BRANCH						
Army	**26**	**65**	3	<1	**1.4**	366
Navy	**43**	**47**	**3**	<1	**1.0**	199
Air Force	**28**	**60**	**2**	<1	**1.4**	236
Marines	**36**	**48**	**8**	<1	1.4	133
Coast Guard	35	57	**2**	2	1.3	68
LENGTH OF SERVICE						
≤ 4 Years	**32**	**56**	**2**	-	**1.1**	557
5 to 10 Years	27	**63**	**3**	<1	**1.4**	464
11 to 20 Years	26	63	**9**	<1	**1.7**	220
≥ 20 Years	21	52	**17**	6	**2.5**	52
GENDER						
Female	27	**63**	**3**	<1	1.4	599
Male	31	**56**	**6**	<1	1.4	696
AGE GROUP						
18 to 34	**32**	60	-	-	**1.1**	889
35 to 54	**23**	60	**14**	-	**1.8**	361
≥ 55	**15**	49	13	21	**3.6**	39
RACE/ETHNICITY						
Asian/Pacific Islander	35	59	2	-	1.3	58
Black/African American	**25**	**65**	3	2	**1.6**	241
Hispanic/Latino	26	**64**	5	<1	**1.5**	320
White	**32**	**56**	5	<1	**1.3**	657
HOUSEHOLD INCOME						
< $40,000	**36**	**53**	**<1**	-	**1.0**	339
$40,000 to $79,999	**30**	**61**	**4**	<1	**1.3**	594
≥ $80,000	**21**	**64**	**9**	**2**	**1.9**	356
COMMUNITY						
Urban	28	61	5	<1	1.5	407
Suburban	29	61	4	<1	1.4	573
Small Town/Rural	31	55	4	1	1.4	308
EDUCATION						
< College Degree	**33**	**56**	**3**	**<1**	**1.2**	788
≥ College Degree	**23**	**65**	**7**	**1**	**1.7**	503
PARTY ID						
Democrat	**26**	63	5	<1	**1.5**	409
Republican	28	60	5	<1	**1.5**	481
Independent	**34**	56	3	<1	**1.2**	382

Notes: Bolding denotes statistically significant differences from all active-duty military households or from within-group comparison. Please consider that each subgroup has a unique margin of error based on the sample size (N) obtained in this survey. We advise strong caution when interpreting results for subgroups with small sample sizes. The subgroup sample sizes displayed in the far right column represent the unweighted number of interviews.

Source: EdChoice, *2019 Surveying the Military* (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q30.

APPENDIX 10

Considered Leaving Military Service in the Last Year

Percentage of Active-Duty Military Households and Selected Demographic Groups

	Yes %	No %	Margin (net)	N =
ALL ACTIVE-DUTY	**51**	**49**	**2**	**1,295**
Serving in Military	**51**	**49**	2	907
Military Spouse	**47**	**52**	-6	291
Both Serving	**62**	**36**	26	97
Current School Parent	**55**	**45**	10	542
Children Not Yet School Age	51	48	3	190
Former School Parent	50	49	1	76
No Children	**46**	**53**	-7	486
G.I. Bill Beneficiary	**58**	**41**	17	526
Did Not Use G.I. Bill	**46**	**53**	-7	629
BRANCH				
Army	**56**	**44**	11	366
Navy	49	50	-1	199
Air Force	50	49	1	236
Marines	52	48	4	133
Coast Guard	44	54	-10	68
LENGTH OF SERVICE				
≤ 4 Years	49	50	-2	557
5 to 10 Years	53	46	7	464
11 to 20 Years	49	51	-3	220
≥ 20 Years	58	42	15	52
GENDER				
Female	49	50	-2	599
Male	52	47	5	696
AGE GROUP				
18 to 34	51	48	3	889
35 to 54	50	50	-1	361
≥ 55	44	54	-10	39
RACE/ETHNICITY				
Asian/Pacific Islander	55	45	10	58
Black/African American	52	47	5	241
Hispanic/Latino	49	50	-1	320
White	51	49	2	657
HOUSEHOLD INCOME				
< $40,000	51	48	2	339
$40,000 to $79,999	50	49	1	594
≥ $80,000	52	48	4	356
COMMUNITY				
Urban	**52**	**47**	5	407
Suburban	**54**	**46**	8	573
Small Town/Rural	**42**	**57**	-15	308
EDUCATION				
< College Degree	50	49	1	788
≥ College Degree	52	48	4	503
PARTY ID				
Democrat	49	51	-2	409
Republican	51	49	2	481
Independent	52	47	5	382

Notes: Bolding denotes statistically significant differences from all active-duty military households or from within-group comparison. Please consider that each subgroup has a unique margin of error based on the sample size (N) obtained in this survey. We advise strong caution when interpreting results for subgroups with small sample sizes. The subgroup sample sizes displayed in the far right column represent the unweighted number of interviews.

Source: EdChoice, *2019 Surveying the Military* (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q31.

APPENDIX 11

Top Five Reasons Thought About Leaving Military Service in the Last Year

Respondents from active-duty military households who thought about leaving the military service in the last year said their primary reason for doing so was to spend time with family and/or start a family.

Percentage of Active-Duty Military Households and Selected Demographic Groups Replying "Yes" to Previous Question

	Spend Time with Family/ Start Family %	Don't Agree with Military/ Bad Politics %	Retired %	Didn't Like It %	Became Tired/ Wanted to Relax More/More Freedom %	N =
ALL ACTIVE-DUTY	**30**	**6**	**5**	**5**	**5**	**655**
Serving in Military	**26**	7	**6**	**6**	5	459
Military Spouse	**43**	4	3	**<1**	4	136
Both Serving	**25**	5	-	5	5	60
Current School Parent	**33**	6	**7**	**3**	4	296
Children Not Yet School Age	**36**	4	**2**	4	3	97
Former School Parent	29	11	8	3	5	38
No Children	**22**	7	**3**	**8**	6	224
G.I. Bill Beneficiary	24	5	6	**3**	3	307
Did Not Use G.I. Bill	31	8	5	**8**	6	292
BRANCH						
Army	**26**	**6**	6	4	7	203
Navy	**22**	**14**	7	9	5	98
Air Force	**20**	**6**	7	6	3	118
Marines	33	**1**	-	4	1	69
Coast Guard	**50**	**3**	3	3	3	30
LENGTH OF SERVICE						
≤ 4 Years	32	4	**<1**	**8**	4	271
5 to 10 Years	30	7	**<1**	**2**	5	246
11 to 20 Years	26	9	**16**	**3**	7	107
≥ 20 Years	23	7	**37**	-	-	30
GENDER						
Female	**35**	6	**3**	5	6	292
Male	**26**	7	**6**	4	3	363
AGE GROUP						
18 to 34	**33**	7	**<1**	6	6	457
35 to 54	**24**	5	**15**	3	3	179
≥ 55	**12**	12	**24**	-	-	17
RACE/ETHNICITY						
Asian/Pacific Islander	25	-	9	-	3	32
Black/African American	**35**	**4**	5	2	6	126
Hispanic/Latino	**36**	**3**	**2**	6	3	157
White	**25**	**9**	**6**	5	4	333
HOUSEHOLD INCOME						
< $40,000	27	6	**1**	**7**	6	172
$40,000 to $79,999	33	**8**	**7**	**6**	5	299
≥ $80,000	27	**3**	**5**	**<1**	3	184
COMMUNITY						
Urban	**23**	4	3	4	5	212
Suburban	**31**	7	5	4	5	309
Small Town/Rural	**37**	7	7	5	4	130
EDUCATION						
< College Degree	**36**	7	4	**6**	4	394
≥ College Degree	**20**	5	7	**3**	6	260
PARTY ID						
Democrat	**35**	7	5	**2**	4	201
Republican	**26**	7	5	**3**	4	243
Independent	29	5	6	**10**	6	200

Notes: Bolding denotes statistically significant differences from all active-duty military households or from within-group comparison. Please consider that each subgroup has a unique margin of error based on the sample size (N) obtained in this survey. We advise strong caution when interpreting results for subgroups with small sample sizes. The subgroup sample sizes displayed in the far right column represent the unweighted number of interviews.

Source: EdChoice, *2019 Surveying the Military* (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q31.

APPENDIX 12

Extreme Challenges Due to Duty Assignment or Deployment

Percentage of Active-Duty Military Households and Selected Demographic Groups Responding "Extremely"

	Employment/ Work Stress %	Emotional/Mental Health Issues %	Social Isolation from Family/Friends %	Relationship and/or Marital Issues %	Limited Social Support %	
ALL ACTIVE-DUTY	**24**	**23**	**22**	**21**	**19**	
Serving in Military	24	23	22	21	18	
Military Spouse	23	22	25	22	22	
Both Serving	29	19	18	19	21	
Current School Parent	26	**25**	**25**	23	**24**	
Children Not Yet School Age	21	**17**	23	21	**17**	
Former School Parent	21	24	21	20	24	
No Children	24	22	**19**	19	**15**	
G.I. Bill Beneficiary	**28**	24	24	**24**	22	
Did Not Use G.I. Bill	**23**	21	21	**19**	18	
BRANCH						
Army	**26**	**26**	22	**24**	**21**	
Navy	**24**	24	19	22	**17**	
Air Force	**28**	23	24	19	**20**	
Marines	**23**	**17**	19	**15**	**16**	
Coast Guard	**10**	**15**	21	18	**6**	
LENGTH OF SERVICE						
≤ 4 Years	**19**	**20**	21	**19**	18	
5 to 10 Years	**30**	**26**	24	**25**	**23**	
11 to 20 Years	24	20	20	19	**13**	
≥ 20 Years	**37**	33	21	19	**29**	
GENDER						
Female	25	23	24	21	20	
Male	24	22	21	21	19	
AGE GROUP						
18 to 34	24	23	22	22	19	
35 to 54	24	23	22	20	21	
≥ 55	26	21	18	13	23	
RACE/ETHNICITY						
Asian/Pacific Islander	28	29	26	26	22	
Black/African American	22	22	20	20	17	
Hispanic/Latino	21	21	21	21	18	
White	25	23	22	21	20	
HOUSEHOLD INCOME						
< $40,000	24	24	23	20	**17**	
$40,000 to $79,999	24	23	21	21	**17**	
≥ $80,000	25	21	23	22	**25**	
COMMUNITY						
Urban	26	22	24	**26**	**23**	
Suburban	24	24	20	**19**	**17**	
Small Town/Rural	22	21	23	20	20	
EDUCATION						
< College Degree	**22**	**21**	21	20	**16**	
≥ College Degree	**27**	**26**	24	23	**24**	
PARTY ID						
Democrat	23	**26**	**26**	21	20	
Republican	24	**20**	21	22	20	
Independent	25	22	**19**	21	19	

Notes: Bolding denotes statistically significant differences from all active-duty military households or from within-group comparison. Please consider that each subgroup has a unique margin of error based on the sample size (N) obtained in this survey. We advise strong caution when interpreting results for subgroups with small sample sizes. The subgroup sample sizes displayed in the far right column represent the unweighted number of interviews.

Source: EdChoice, *2019 Surveying the Military* (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q33.

	Financial Stress %	Physical Health Issues %	Lack of Child Care %	Issues Related to Children/Parenting %	K–12 Schooling Issues %	N =
	19	**18**	**17**	**16**	**15**	**1,295**
	19	17	15	**15**	15	907
	17	19	20	**20**	16	291
	23	20	21	16	21	97
	22	18	**20**	**20**	**20**	542
	15	20	**24**	**19**	15	190
	18	25	**21**	20	**21**	76
	18	15	**9**	**11**	**10**	486
	22	**21**	**21**	**19**	**19**	526
	18	**14**	**15**	**13**	**12**	629
	20	19	17	16	16	366
	21	15	16	17	12	199
	21	17	16	13	17	236
	20	16	16	14	15	133
	12	16	10	15	13	68
	16	**15**	**15**	**13**	**14**	557
	23	**22**	**20**	**21**	**19**	464
	17	**13**	**14**	**14**	**11**	220
	25	25	17	17	19	52
	17	18	17	17	15	599
	21	18	17	15	16	696
	19	17	16	15	15	889
	21	19	**19**	19	**19**	361
	15	15	**8**	15	**8**	39
	19	17	17	24	16	58
	13	17	18	16	17	241
	20	18	19	**19**	17	320
	20	17	16	**14**	14	657
	18	18	**15**	**13**	**12**	339
	18	16	**14**	**15**	**13**	594
	22	20	**22**	**21**	**23**	356
	22	**20**	19	**19**	**20**	407
	17	**15**	15	**13**	**14**	573
	20	18	18	18	**14**	308
	19	**15**	**15**	**14**	**12**	788
	19	**21**	**20**	**20**	**21**	503
	17	15	17	18	**18**	409
	23	19	19	14	15	481
	17	19	15	17	**13**	382

APPENDIX 13

Military Household Views on the Direction of K–12 Education

Percentage of Active-Duty Military Households and Selected Demographic Groups

	Right Direction %	Wrong Track %	Margin (net)	N =
ALL ACTIVE-DUTY	**53**	**47**	**7**	**1,295**
Serving in Military	52	48	4	907
Military Spouse	58	42	16	291
Both Serving	51	49	2	97
Current School Parent	**55**	**45**	11	542
Children Not Yet School Age	**58**	**41**	17	190
Former School Parent	57	42	15	76
No Children	**48**	**52**	-4	486
G.I. Bill Beneficiary	59	**41**	19	526
Did Not Use G.I. Bill	**48**	**52**	-4	629
BRANCH				
Army	**56**	**43**	13	366
Navy	50	50	0	199
Air Force	51	49	2	236
Marines	50	49	2	133
Coast Guard	**38**	**60**	-22	68
LENGTH OF SERVICE				
≤ 4 Years	**54**	**46**	8	557
5 to 10 Years	**56**	**43**	13	464
11 to 20 Years	**48**	**52**	-4	220
≥ 20 Years	**37**	**64**	-27	52
GENDER				
Female	52	48	4	599
Male	54	45	9	696
AGE GROUP				
18 to 34	53	46	7	889
35 to 54	53	47	6	361
≥ 55	56	44	13	39
RACE/ETHNICITY				
Asian/Pacific Islander	48	52	-3	58
Black/African American	**58**	**42**	16	241
Hispanic/Latino	**59**	**40**	19	320
White	**49**	**51**	-1	657
HOUSEHOLD INCOME				
< $40,000	54	46	8	339
$40,000 to $79,999	52	47	5	594
≥ $80,000	53	46	7	356
COMMUNITY				
Urban	**58**	**42**	16	407
Suburban	**50**	**50**	0	573
Small Town/Rural	53	46	7	308
EDUCATION				
< College Degree	**49**	**51**	-2	788
≥ College Degree	**60**	**40**	20	503
PARTY ID				
Democrat	54	46	8	409
Republican	**56**	**43**	4	481
Independent	**48**	**51**	-3	382

Notes: Bolding denotes statistically significant differences from all active-duty military households or from within-group comparison. Please consider that each subgroup has a unique margin of error based on the sample size (N) obtained in this survey. We advise strong caution when interpreting results for subgroups with small sample sizes. The subgroup sample sizes displayed in the far right column represent the unweighted number of interviews.

Source: EdChoice, *2019 Surveying the Military* (conducted March 8–April 14, 2019), Q4.

NOTES

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18. National Center for Education Statistics, Table 206.10. Number and Percentage of Homeschooled Students Ages 5 through 17 with a Grade Equivalent of Kindergarten through 12th Grade, by Selected Child, Parent, and Household Characteristics: 2003, 2007, and 2012 [Web page], last modified November 2014, retrieved from https://nces.ed.gov/ programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_206.10.asp; U.S. Department of Education (2017), *Impact Aid: Fiscal Year 2017 Budget Request*, retrieved from http://www2.ed.gov/ about/overview/budget/budget17/justifications/b-impactaid.pdf

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21. Fifty-eight percent said dissatisfaction was not a significant factor. See Note 5.

22. Blue Star Families (2019), *2018 Blue Star Families Military Family Lifestyle Survey: Comprehensive Report*, Blue Star Families: Encitas, CA.

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24. The survey's margin of error is the largest 95 percent confidence interval for any estimated proportion based on the total samples – the one around 50 percent. The margins of error for the active-duty sample and the veteran sample are both 4.0 percent. This means that in 95 of every 100 samples drawn using the same method, estimated proportions based on the entire sample will be no more than 4.0 percentage points away from their true values in the population. In addition to sampling error, question wording, ordering, and other practical difficulties when conducting surveys may introduce error or bias into the findings of public opinion research.

25 EdChoice (2019), *Questionnaire and Topline Results: 2019 Military Survey,* retrieved from edchoice.org/2019MilitarySurvey. The Questionnaire and Topline Results document allows the reader to follow the survey interview by question as well as item wording and ordering.

26. For terminology: We use the label "current school parents" to refer to those respondents who said they have one or more children in preschool through high school. We use the label "former school parents" for respondents who said their children are past high school age. We use the label "non-parents" for respondents without children. For terms regarding age groups: "younger" reflect military respondents who are age 18 to 34; "middle-age" are 35 to 54; and "seniors" are 55 and older. Labels pertaining to income groups go as follows: "low-income earners" < $40,000; "middle-income earners" ≥ $40,000 and < $80,000; "high-income earners" ≥ $80,000.

27. Frederick F. Reichheld (2003), The One Number You Need to Grow, *Harvard Business Review*, *81*(12), pp. 46–54, retrieved from http://hbr.org/2003/12/the-one-number-you-need-to-grow. The original purpose of computing Net Promoter Score (NPS) was to measure loyalty and attempt to predict growth. Reichheld's work has shown NPS correlates with customer and revenue growth. Though there has been research that criticized the extent to which NPS can be a predictor and whether or not it is superior to other loyalty and growth measures, NPS has been validated by empirical research as a measure of customer loyalty, and some versions of NPS are commonly used today by many organizations in the private and nonprofit sectors. See Timothy L. Keiningham, Bruce Cooil, Tor Waillin Andreassen, and Lerzan Aksoy (2007), A Longitudinal Examination of Net Promoter and Firm Revenue Growth, *Journal of Marketing, 71*(3), pp. 39–51, http://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.71.3.39.

For examples of EdChoice adapting NPS for professional loyalty and enthusiasm, see Paul DiPerna (2016), *Surveying State Legislators: Views on K–12 Education, Choice-Based Policies, and the Profession*, retrieved from EdChoice website: https://www.edchoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Surveying-State-Legislators-By-Paul-DiPerna.pdf; DiPerna, Burke, and Ryland, *Surveying the Military*; Paul DiPerna and Michael Shaw (2018), 2018 Schooling in America: *Public Opinion on K–12 Education, Parent and Teacher Experiences, Accountability, and School Choice*, retrieved from EdChoice website: https://www.edchoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/2018-12-Schooling-In-America-by-Paul-DiPerna-and-Michael-Shaw.pdf

28. Medallia, Net Promoter Score Definition [Web page], accessed June 12, 2019, retrieved from http://www.medallia.com/net-promoter-score. SurveyMonkey provides useful articles that show how Net Promoter Score can be calculated and weighs the pros and cons of using the method. See SurveyMonkey, Net Promotor® Score Calculation [Web page], accessed June 12, 2019, retrieved from https://www.surveymonkey.com/mp/net-promoter-score-calculation; SurveyMonkey, NPS Pros and Cons: Why Use NPS? [Web page], accessed June 12, 2019, 2019, retrieved from http://www.surveymonkey.com/mp/nps-pros-cons-why-use-nps

29. See Note 1.

30. We are not surprised active-duty and veteran households do not consider education their most important problem. It is our speculation that households may find education and schooling a challenge or problem, but not one the federal government should address above economic or other reasons, per wording of the question. For future surveys it might be more revealing to ask respondents to rank-order "top three" concerns based on the emergent codes we have developed so far in our two surveys of the military.

31. See Note 1.

32. Blue Star Families, *2018 Blue Star Families Military Family Lifestyle Survey*, p. 58

33. There were a total of 14 possible reasons to select from on this question. To make the online inquiry more user-friendly, we split the reasons intro two sets and offered each respondent only one set of seven reasons. So in the end, we presented any given reason to half the respondents. We asked each respondent to rank-order their top three reasons among the seven that were listed for them.

34. DiPerna and Shaw, *2018 Schooling in America*

35. Authors' email conversation with John Ballantyne, Military Child Education Coalition Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, May 3, 2019

36. See Note 34.

37. See Note 1.

38. DiPerna and Shaw, *2018 Schooling in America*; DiPerna, Burke, and Ryland, *Surveying the Military*

39. Ibid.

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ABOUT THE SURVEY ORGANIZATION

Braun Research, Inc.

The Braun Research network of companies, founded in 1995, engages in data collection via telephone, and internet for various survey research firms, government and advertising agencies, local community organizations, local and national business groups, foundations, universities and academic entities, as well as religious organizations. In 24 years Braun Research has conducted over 10,000 research projects by telephone, internet, and mail worldwide.

Nationally-known research firms have hired Braun Research, including the Gallup Organization, the Pew Research Center, the Eagleton Poll, Mathematica Policy Research, and the Washington Post. Braun Research has worked for the New Jersey Department of Health and Human Services, as well as other government agencies including the United States Departments of the Treasury and Defense, and the Center for Disease Control.

The work we accomplish for other research firms requires us to perform all work up to standards required by the various research organizations where we enjoy membership and, in some cases, participate actively. Paul Braun is recognized as a leader in the field by colleagues who asked him to serve on these committees. He is a member of the MRA/CMOR committees on response rate improvement and in launching a seal of quality for the industry. He has served as President of the New Jersey Chapter of AAPOR, and he is currently a member of the International Association for the Measurement and Evaluation of Communication (AMEC) in North America.

Braun Research is a well-respected firm employing techniques and standards approved by various survey research associations and other affiliations including those with whom Braun is an active member, including AAPOR (American Association for Public Opinion Research) and MRA/CMOR (Market Research Association/Council on Marketing and Opinion Research) and CASRO (Council on American Survey Research Organizations).

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All individuals have opinions, and many organizations (like our own) have specific missions or philosophical orientations. Scientific methods, if used correctly and followed closely in well-designed studies, should neutralize these opinions and orientations. Research rules and methods minimize bias. We believe rigorous procedural rules of science prevent a researcher's motives, and an organization's particular orientation, from pre-determining results.

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