

# *DoDEA*

*(Department of Defense Education Activity)*

## *The US Military-Connected Student: Unique Issues in the College Application Process*



**REGIONAL INSTITUTE**  
**Europe 2025**

High School Counselor

IB University & Career Counselor

College & Career Advisor

Current Position:

US DODEA- Europe East District

Vilseck High School



**Presented By:**  
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## Session Overview-

- Who is a military-connected student?
- Challenges & Considerations for a holistic application review
- Transcript Inconsistencies
- Frequent relocations
- Residency and Tuition confusion
- Lack of volunteer opportunities and community connections
  
- Strengths & Opportunities:
  - Adaptability & Resilience
  - Global Perspective
  - Leadership & Service
  - DoDEA Support Programs
  
- Application Strategies:
  - Highlight Unique Experiences
  - Early Planning
  - Connect with Military-friendly schools
  - Utilize resources

## ***Who is the Military-connected student?***

- Born in the USA but has lived abroad since an early age
- Born in a foreign country, but a U.S. Citizen, and may have never lived in the states
- A U.S. Citizen due to marriage/step-parent/sponsor
- A world traveler, but not by choice
- A student who has an active-duty sponsor
- A student who has a civilian-duty sponsor
- A student who may have attended 3 or 4 different high schools in three years.

# Challenges & Considerations

## Transcript Inconsistencies-

Differences in grading scales, course titles, and curriculum standards across schools and countries can complicate transcript evaluation.

## Challenges & Considerations

- ▶ Frequent Relocations-Students often change schools multiple times due to military assignments, leading to disrupted academic continuity and limited access to long-term extracurricular or AP/Honors courses.

# Challenges & Considerations

## ▶ Residency Confusion

- ▶ 99% of students attending a DODEA School are US Citizens and have an HOR in one of the 50 states within the continental US or a US territory.
- ▶ Students are NOT considered International Students although they attended school outside the United States on a US Military Base on foreign soil.

## ▶ Tuition Confusion

- ▶ For tuition purposes, students are residents of the state where they have a HOR. This will be listed on their Active Duty or Civilian Duty Military Sponsor's current Orders. The student will be listed on the orders as accompanying the Sponsor.



## Challenges & Considerations

# Volunteer Opportunities

- Limited on base
- For students who speak English only, volunteering off base may be challenging due to the language barrier
- Most students will volunteer at school for teachers or via clubs: JROTC; Peer-tutoring; National Honor Society, etc.

# Strengths & Opportunities

- Adaptability and Resilience
- Global Perspective
- Leadership & Service
- DoDEA Support Programs

# Strengths & Opportunities

## Adaptability and Resilience

Military-connected students often demonstrate strong coping skills, flexibility, and maturity due to their lifestyle. This is an asset for first-time in college Freshman and universities concerned about retention. These students have been there done that and more likely to stay the course even when things get rough!

## ► Strengths & Opportunities

### Global Perspective

Exposure to diverse cultures and international experiences can enrich college essays and interviews.



# Strength & Opportunities

## ▶ Leadership

- ▶ Career Practicum
- ▶ Student Council
- ▶ Class Officers
- ▶ Sport Team Managers
- ▶ Educators Rising
- ▶ AVID Tutors
- ▶ JROTC
  - ▶ Award-winning Marksmanship Team

## ▶ Service

- ▶ Red Cross
- ▶ First Aid Training
- ▶ Peer-Tutoring
- ▶ Student Ambassadors
- ▶ National Honor Society
- ▶ AVID Tutors



# Strengths & Opportunities

## DoDEA Support Programs

- ▶ AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination)
- ▶ College & Career Fair/Fall & College & Career Fair 101 Series/Spring
- ▶ School Liaisons-Assistance for students transitioning/PCS
- ▶ Partnerships with Universities including International/Local Universities to ease the transition to post-secondary institutions.



# Application Strategies

- ▶ Unique Experiences
- ▶ SchoolLinks
- ▶ Connect with Military-friendly Schools
- ▶ Early Planning

# Application Strategies

## Unique Experiences

Military connected students present with so many unique stories of personal growth through constant changes. We encourage them to share their story through their personal statement and supplemental essay to strengthen their application.

# Application Strategies

## SchoolLinks

DoDEA Schools throughout the world utilize the SchoolLinks platform for document submission for admissions applications to universities.

- Counselor Evaluations
- Teacher Recommendations
- Application Fee Waivers
- School Profiles
- Direct link to Common App
- Direct link to Institutions.

# Application Strategies

## Connect with Military-friendly Schools

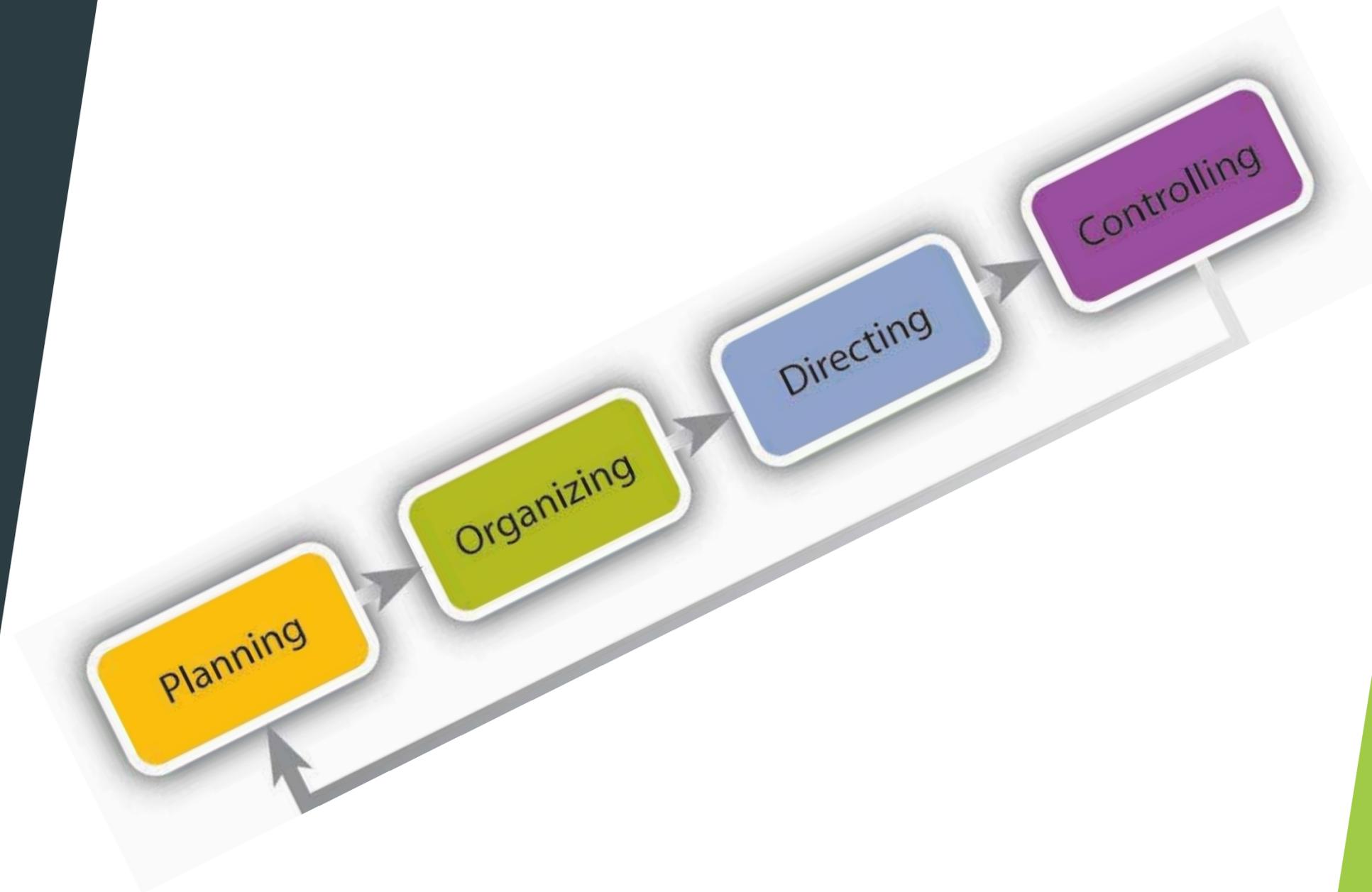
Many colleges offer specific support or scholarships for military-connected students (e.g., Yellow Ribbon Program, Service to School, etc.).



# Application Strategies

## Early Planning

- DoDEA students begin their Course Planning in Middle School via SchoolLinks
- Students are scheduled for courses throughout high school based on their post-secondary goals.



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<https://youtu.be/CZirw6t10YM>

# Questions?? Comments??

## Presentation credits:

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