



# VOTE YES ON HB24-1076

## Purple Star School Program

**Sponsors: Rep. B. Marshall & Rep. M. Weissman | Sen. R. Fields**

**Background:** HB24-1076 establishes a Colorado program to designate and recognize K-12 schools that show a strong commitment to military-connected students and their families. The program will be administered by the Department of Education (DOE), following the concepts and standards of the national Purple Star Schools Program.

**The Need:** With five military bases in Colorado and a sixth just across the border in Wyoming, there is a significant annual migration of military-connected students into and within the state's schools.

- Colorado military-connected students data: 44,000 attending approximately 1,377 schools.
- Military-connected students are **five times** more likely than their civilian peers to change schools during their K-12 years.
- The Purple Star School program is proven to help mitigate the academic and socio-emotional challenges military-connected students face as a result of frequent moves, new schools, parental deployments and changing social circles and experiences.

**Purple Star Program Benefits:** Purple Star School Program recognizes schools that provide strong services and support for military-connected students and their families.

- This initiative, featuring a set of defined standards, has been successfully adopted by 42 states.
- Success is credited to streamlining the transition process, creating different avenues for ongoing communication, increasing staff awareness of and sensitivity to the unique needs of military-connected children, and facilitating opportunities for community building.

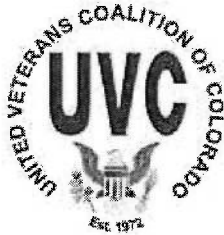
**Purple Star School Qualification:** The program is **optional** for individual schools.

- To qualify for the Purple Star designation via DOE, individual schools would:
  - Designate a staff member as a Military Liaison
  - Maintain webpage with resources for military-connected students and families.
  - Maintain student-led transition programs.
  - Offer professional development opportunities relating to military-connected students.
  - Complete one additional item from a list of options.

**Designated schools will be recognized & presented with a certificate by the Governor or the Governor's agent, which will be valid for 3 years.**

**Supported by: Military Child Education Coalition; Department of Defense; Colorado Military School Liaisons; Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission; United Veterans Coalition; Colorado Association of School Executives; Aurora City Council; Aurora Veterans Committee, Aurora Public Schools, Colorado Springs District 20; Colorado Springs District 49**

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## United Veterans Coalition of Colorado

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Denver, CO 80222  
[www.uvcoc.org](http://www.uvcoc.org)

January 29, 2024

Dear House Education Committee members,

We are writing to inform you that the United Veterans Coalition of Colorado (UVC) has a support position on HB24-1076 Purple Star School Program and urges all committee members to vote yes when the bill comes before you this coming Wednesday.

The Purple Star School Program is designed to help K-12 schools respond to the educational and social-emotional challenges military-connected children face during their transition to a new school and keep them on track to be college, workforce, and life-ready. Colorado is one of eight states that has yet to institute this program. Yet the State is home to five important military bases and in any given school year educates an estimated 44,000 military-connected students, who move to new schools on average every two to three years. It's time for Colorado to join the 42 states that have proven their willingness to go the extra mile to support military-connected students and their families. Keep HB24-1076 moving to the Governor's desk for signature.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. E. Crockett". The signature is written in a cursive style.

M. E. Crockett  
President, United Veterans Coalition  
(303) 919-7601  
[www.uvcoc.org](http://www.uvcoc.org)

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shelly Kalkowski". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Michelle "Shelly" Kalkowski  
Chair, UVC State Legislative Committee  
970) 430-0632  
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The UVC, a nonpartisan coalition of veteran service organizations, advocates with one united voice on behalf of Colorado's veterans, currently serving military and their families. Member organizations include the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Enlisted Association, Military Officer Association, Disabled American Veterans, Marine League, Gold Star Wives and several additional organizations.