

Sample letter for DDESS Schools

Please customize this letter by addressing it to your Senator or Representative and adding your name and address at the bottom. Delete this heading or cut-and-paste the body of the letter into another document before printing and signing your letter. Feel free to personalize the letter in any way you can, such as adding a paragraph explaining your involvement with DDESS schools (“I am an educator at...” or “I am serving in the military and my children attend...”). You can find mailing address for members of Congress at www.senate.gov or www.house.gov.

Dear Senator/Representative (name):

I urge you to support our military families by strongly voicing your support for Department of Defense schools within the United States.

These schools, known as the Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools (DDESS), provide an outstanding education to thousands of school-age children of military personnel on bases throughout the U.S.

DDESS, along with its overseas counterpart schools, routinely places its students at the top of nationwide assessment rankings and has been cited by Vanderbilt University, among others, as a model school system that should be emulated across our nation.

Despite this, DDESS schools now face the possibility of being dismantled and turned over to public school systems in their respective areas. Doing so would not only destroy an outstanding school system and attractive Quality of Life incentive for our military, it would place enormous financial burdens on the states and localities required to take in thousands of displaced DDESS students. Everyone loses!

A GAO report (GAO-05-469) found serious fault with a congressional study that included recommendations to transfer control of DDESS schools to local education agencies.

We need these schools now more than ever. Tens of thousands of military personnel are expected to be redeployed to U.S. bases in the coming years. The arrival of these personnel and their children will overwhelm local school systems. If anything, we should be looking into expansion of the DDESS school system onto more bases as a way to provide for military dependents.

As a voter and a taxpayer, I urge you stand up for military families and quality education: ***Voice your support for DDESS schools and tell the Department of Defense it cannot dump responsibility for these students onto local communities.***

Sincerely,

(your name and address)