



Safe Haven Student Enrollment - FAQ

Purpose

This fact sheet provides guidance for families on student enrollment options during Safe Haven relocations, both within the U.S. (CONUS) and overseas (OCONUS).

Due to OPSEC considerations, DoWEA may not be informed of your safe haven location in time to provide support before or immediately after your arrival. With that in mind, we want to provide a general point of contact to ensure your questions and concerns are addressed as quickly as possible. This mailbox will also help connect you with the appropriate point of contact for more specific inquiries.

Please use this email as your general point of contact: BahrainSchoolSupport@dodea.edu

The District Counseling and School Psychology team remains committed to student well-being. For Bahrain students we have our school counselors available to provide counseling support. To request a time, please contact Mr. Eric Shelstad, District Counseling Eric.Shelstad@dodea.edu or Dr. Josh Zola, District Psychology Joshua.Zola@dodea.edu.

- Please note, before any virtual counseling or support session begins, counselors are required to collect a "Safety Contact Record" from the student. The "Safety Contact Record" includes the following: Student's full name, current phone number, Sponsor's (parent/guardian) name, and Sponsor's direct contact information. This information is vital for immediate parental notification should a student disclose intent to harm themselves or others.
- After you register at your Local Education Agency (LEA), the local school team will be able to provide a full complement of school counseling and school psychological support

Frequently Asked Questions

Current DoWEA Students

1. Where should my child enroll if we are returning to the Continental U.S. (CONUS)?

Answer: Students in prekindergarten through grade 12 should enroll in the public school serving your new location within the local school district, also called the Local Education Agency (LEA). Enrolling in the LEA ensures your child continues receiving instruction without interruption and has access to all required courses, extracurricular opportunities, and support services. If there is an operating DoWEA school at your location, you may enroll there as your LEA.

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We strongly encourage all students to enroll in a school, as doing so provides access to the most comprehensive educational support, structured learning environments, qualified instructors, and a wide range of academic resources. Being part of a school community also offers opportunities for guidance counseling, extracurricular involvement, and peer collaboration, all of which contribute to both academic success and personal development.

For high school students who need another option, virtual will be available. High School Students can enroll in DoWEA Virtual High School (DVHS). DoWEA Virtual High School will provide structured online instruction, academic support and the opportunity to continue progressing toward their educational goals. Decisions regarding middle school students who may need options for remote or virtual learning will be decided on a case by case basis.

2. What if my high schooler cannot access the Advanced Placement (AP) courses they need at the local school?

Answer: The DoWEA Virtual High School (DVHS) offers enrollment for students who cannot access select AP courses at their local school. DVHS allows students to stay on track for college-level coursework and maintain academic continuity during the move. Some AP courses may not be available through the DVHS. DoWEA will work with individual students to ensure there is a way forward.

3. My child is a senior, how do we ensure they meet graduation requirements after moving. What options are available?

Answer: DVHS can support seniors who might not meet their new local school's graduation requirements. This ensures students can complete necessary courses on time and graduate without delay. DVHS works closely with families and schools to create an individualized plan for meeting all graduation standards. <https://dvhs.dodea.edu/>. The Military Interstate Compact also provides guidelines and support to ensure students' requirements are not impacted due to transitions. <https://www.dodea.edu/education/partnership-and-resources/military-interstate-compact>

DoWEA is committed to supporting your senior and ensuring they have every opportunity to complete their senior year successfully. Bahrain's senior class counselor, C.J. O'Hanrahan, is available to assist you with any questions related to senior transfers or graduation requirements. Please contact her at: CJ.Ohanrahan@DODEA.edu.

4. What should we do if we are relocating to an approved safe haven outside of the U.S. (OCONUS)?

Answer: If in the installation commuting area of a DoWEA school, students should enroll in the nearest DoWEA school. You can learn more and find registration information here:

- DoWEA schools: <https://www.dodea.edu/registration>

5. What schooling options are available for non-DOW affiliated students in Bahrain?

Answer: DVHS can enroll middle and high school students who do not depart. Students who choose this option must remain enrolled in the DoWEA Bahrain school. OCONUS tuition rates and requirements remain applicable.

6. How will my student's special education be impacted?

Answer: We are deeply committed to ensuring the continuity of care and services for your child during this transition.

If your student will transition to a stateside non-DoWEA school, here is a breakdown of what you can expect and the steps you should take:

1. If you can hand-carry documents:

- The most current, signed Individualized Education Program (IEP).
- All past IEPs and evaluation reports, if available.
- All recent evaluation reports, progress reports, and any related medical or diagnostic records.
- Contact the School Liaison: If you are near a military installation, your first call should be to the School Liaison. They are your advocate and expert in navigating local school district policies for special education.

Having these documents on hand will dramatically speed up the process of getting comparable services started at the new school. If you are not able to hand carry the documents, they are stored digitally and can be securely shared with you once you are at your child's new school.

2. If you transition to a DoWEA School (OCONUS or CONUS):

The process for transferring within the DoWEA system is designed to be as seamless as possible.

- Hand carry all IEPs and evaluations reports you may have and provide them to the new school to expedite comparable services.
- Upon enrollment, please inform the receiving school your child has an active DoWEA IEP. Also, please ensure you complete DoWEA Form 620, checking boxes 3a and 3b as appropriate.
- IEP Review: The special education team will review your child's current IEP and work to immediately implement services that are comparable to what they were receiving previously. Your child's placement will be in a program that is consistent with their existing IEP.

Your child's well-being is our top priority. Please do not hesitate to reach out to your School Liaison or the special education team at your new school. They are there to help you every step of the way. Please contact gary.cummins@dodea.edu if you have any questions or need any support.

Transitioning to a U.S. School

7. Who can assist with school enrollment near a U.S. military base?

Answer: The installation's School Liaison Officer (SLO) is a great point of contact <https://www.dodea.edu/education/partnership-and-resources/department-defense-school-liaison-program>. They can help you navigate enrollment requirements, connect with local school districts, and assist with placement in the best school for your child. If the installation has a DoWEA school, then you can find school information at www.dodea.edu.

8. Where can I find detailed information about local schools?

Answer: The local school district's website is the most reliable source. You can access enrollment checklists, required documentation, school calendars, and staff contact information to help with a smooth transition.

9. What academic support is available for my child during relocation?

Answer: Military-connected students have free, 24/7 access to online tutoring in many subjects through Tutor.com. This ensures students can maintain academic progress, receive help with challenging topics, and adjust to new school environments without disruption.

10. How can families obtain student transcripts/records?

Answer: Families enrolling in a local U.S. public school can request official transcripts directly from the Department of War Education Activity (DoWEA).

There are three ways to request transcripts:

- **Online:** <https://www.dodea.edu/education/student-services/transcripts>
- **Email:** Bahrain.RecordsRequest@dodea.edu for Bahrain students and transcripts@dodea.edu for all other students.
- **Phone:** (571) 372-1886

It is recommended that families request transcripts as soon as possible to prevent delays in class placement, credit transfers, or graduation planning.

If your child is enrolling in a DoWEA school OCONUS, student records will transfer seamlessly between DoWEA schools. Families do not need to request transcripts separately in that situation, as records are shared internally to ensure continuity of instruction.

11. When will my Junior be able to take the SAT?

Answer: The grade 11 SAT School Day window is extended until April 30 for juniors who were required to take the SAT in school this spring. If the student attends a DoWEA school, we will coordinate with College Board for the test to be taken at the designated DoWEA school. If students are attending a non-DoWEA school, we are working with College Board on vouchers for the test to be taken on a weekend free of charge. More information will follow as families settle in safe locations. Please contact Eric.Shelstad@dodea.edu or brian.newsom@dodea.edu for any questions or assistance.

12. How will my child take the test if they are enrolled in a Department of War Education Activity (DoWEA) school (OCONUS)?

Answer: If your child has enrolled in a DoWEA school at your new location, the process will be managed for you. The school's designated testing coordinator will handle all the arrangements for SAT administration. We advise you to have your student contact the school's counseling office or the testing coordinator as soon as possible. They should introduce themselves as a recently transitioned student from Bahrain to ensure they are included in the school's testing plans within the approved April deadline.

13. What is the plan for my student to take their AP Exams?

Answer: We are committed to ensuring that every student has the opportunity to take their scheduled AP exams. The process for testing depends on the type of school your student enrolls in at your safe haven location. If the student is enrolled in a DoWEA school, we can transfer the AP exam to the school. If the student is enrolled in a non-DoWEA school, we can coordinate with College Board to locate a school that can administer the AP exam needed. The DoWEA Virtual High School (DVHS) can facilitate ongoing AP *instruction* to help your student stay on track with their coursework, but the actual exams are always administered in person at a physical high school. It is critical that we identify your student's situation quickly to meet the College Board's deadlines. Please contact Eric.Shelstad@dodea.edu or Tami.Elder@dodea.edu for any questions or assistance.

14. What are the official dates for the 2026 AP Exams?

Answer: The College Board has several testing windows. It is important to know these dates to coordinate with your student's new school.

- Standard Testing Window: May 4–15, 2026
- Late Testing Window: May 18–22, 2026
- Exception Testing Window: May 25–29, 2026
 - Please Note: Not all AP exams are available during this final "Exception" window. It is reserved for specific, pre-approved situations.

15. How will my student take their AP Exam if they are enrolled in a DoWEA school?

Answer: If your child is enrolled in a Department of War Education Activity (DoWEA) school, the process is straightforward. We will need to transfer your student's AP exam to the new

school in College Board's system. This is an administrative change that officially links your student to their new school.

Once this is done, your student's name and their specific AP exams will automatically appear on the new school's AP testing roster. The school's AP Coordinator will then manage all testing arrangements. It is essential for your student to connect with the counseling office at their new DoWEA school to ensure this process is completed.

16. My child is NOT at a DoWEA school. How can they take their AP Exam?

Answer: For students enrolled in a non-DoWEA school (e.g., a local U.S. public or private school), there is a specific process that requires immediate action.

1. If an AP exam is already requested for your student, the College Board will assist with finding a local school where your student can test. They will work with the school to transfer the existing exam to the school.
2. If your student does not have an existing AP exam ordered for them, then they will need to Request an "AP Exam Only" Seat: Your student must contact the counseling office at the local high school they wish to test at and formally request to register as an "AP Exam Only" student. Most high schools are able to accommodate such requests from students in the community.
3. **CRITICAL DEADLINE - NOTIFY US IMMEDIATELY:** You must inform us as soon as you know your student will need to test at a non-DoWEA school. The national deadline for schools to order "AP Exam Only" tests is March 13, 2026. We must notify the College Board of your student's situation before this date to ensure an exam is ordered for them. If we miss this deadline, it may not be possible to arrange for an exam.

17. Who is responsible for coordinating the test once we make the request?

Answer: Once the "AP Exam Only" request is made and we have notified the College Board, the AP Coordinator at that local high school will take over. They will be responsible for ordering the correct exam, telling your student where and when to report for the test, and managing the exam administration on test day. Your student should maintain contact with the AP Coordinator at that school to receive all necessary information.