Module Project: Helping new students overcome challenges

Walk the halls of your own school and consider the challenges students face when they enter a new school:

- Transfer of records may be delayed.
- Credits toward graduation might not transfer.
- They may be unable to obtain services for gifted and talented and special education equal to the services in the previous district.
- They may need remedial help or advanced placement due to the differences between the old and new schools’ curricula.
- They may be barred from continuing in areas of talent, such as sports, art, drama, or other extracurricular activities.

Investigative Process

- Choose one challenge topic from the bullets above and investigate the school district and state policies and regulations. Suggested resources to research these topics include: www.militarystudent.org, your school district or State Department of Education web site, and your school district leadership.
- Does your investigation reveal state or district policies and regulations that create barriers to overcoming the challenge topic? What are the barriers?
- What does your school district do to reduce these barriers?
- What do you believe should be done to help your students overcome these barriers?
- Write a plan that would help students in the area you’ve chosen. In your plan, address obstacles you might confront and how you will overcome them. Will you have to advocate for a change in district or state policy? How would you accomplish these changes?

An Example

You are a middle school teacher with a number of new students who had been in the gifted and talented program in their old schools. They do not qualify for these services in your school. Your investigation reveals that only a few qualify for these services due to the requirement that students achieve a very high IQ score on a test. You decide to write a plan for an “inclusion” policy for the school district regarding gifted and talented services.