

Five Lowndes County School District schools were among 31 Mississippi schools Friday that earned the Military Star School designation for 2024-26.

West Lowndes High School, West Lowndes Elementary School, New Hope High, New Hope Middle and New Hope Elementary received the designation from the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE). Those schools join Caledonia High, Caledonia Middle and Caledonia Elementary in earning the recognition. All LCSD schools now have the Military Star School designation.

“At the Mississippi Department of Education, we applaud our schools who are willing to go above and beyond to answer the call to serve the dependent children of our active-duty service members throughout our state,” said Allen L. Williams, JROTC director and LPS program supervisor for MDE's Office of Secondary and Career & Technical Education. “This honor symbolizes a true commitment to the removal of barriers to the highest levels of achievement for all Mississippi students, especially those who might face challenges through no fault of their own.”

The Military Star School designation recognizes schools that have made a significant commitment to supporting military families and children of service members.

Military Star Schools must meet specific requirements that address the unique needs of military students and families. These include appointing a dedicated school liaison for military families, providing student-led transition services and peer support, ensuring professional development for staff to respond to the needs of military students and families, and publicly recognizing service members and their families.

Gov. Tate Reeves established the Military Star School program in February 2022 through Executive Order 1561, making Mississippi one of 31 states at that time with a formal program to recognize schools that

support military families. In 2023, 61 schools earned the designation for 2023-25.

The Military Star School program is designed to help 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. Military-connected refers to children of service members on active duty and in the National Guard and Reserves.

The Military Star School designation remains in effect for two years. Schools can reapply to maintain the designation. New schools can apply to receive the designation in 2025.

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