

## **SECTION IV.**

# **Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Education**

### **Introduction**

Colorado Springs area public schools are directly affected by changes in the number of assigned Soldiers at Fort Carson and changes in Soldier family demography. One of the principal objectives of Phase II of the Fort Carson Regional Growth Plan (Growth Plan) was to develop refined projections of education services demand for three Fort Carson associated groups: overall K-12 school children; children with special needs; and adult education/job skills training. This section describes the current and projected K-12 educational services demand associated with Fort Carson Soldier families and the incidence of special needs among children in these families. Demand for adult education/job skills training is described in Section V.

Conclusions and recommendations for better aligning the services of area school districts with the future needs of Fort Carson families are provided at the end of this section.

### **Current and Projected School Age Children Among Soldier Households**

The Study Team developed estimates of the current number of school age children from Fort Carson Soldier households living in the region's school districts, and the projected number of school age children in each district through 2013. Those projections were based on three types of analyses.

The current and future overall demand for K-12 education services for the children of Fort Carson Soldiers is based on the estimated and projected number of Soldier children, by age, present in the region. Quarterly projections for federal fiscal years 2009 through 2013 were developed using the Fort Carson Demographic Model (FCDM). A brief summary of the relevant portions of the FCDM is provided in this section, a more complete description is provided in Section I.

The housing analysis conducted for Phase II of the Growth Plan contains projections of Fort Carson households by type and zip code. The zip code projections were then used to develop projections of the number of school age children by school district, using Geographic Information System (GIS) techniques.

The assumptions regarding the demographics of Fort Carson Soldier households in the FCDM and the estimated distribution of school age children by school district were tested and refined based on data gathered from the regional school districts.

**Summary of FCDM projections.** The FCDM produces detailed projections of the demographics of Fort Carson Soldiers and their families. The projections are based on forecasts of unit assignments and deployments provided by garrison command and a host of demographic characteristics developed from a number of data sources. FCDM output used in analyzing the demand for K-12 education services included:

- Number of Fort Carson children living in the region.
  - Number of children of Soldiers who are physically present.
  - Number of children of Soldiers who are deployed.
  
- Number of Fort Carson children by parental pay grade category and child’s age category.
  - Parental pay grade categories are E-1–E-6, E-7–E-9, O-1–O-4, O-5–O-10 and all warrant officers.
  - Child’s age categories were defined to reflect level of schooling. Age estimates were defined to correspond to the beginning of each school year. For example, 5-year-olds reported in any quarter of FY 2010 (October 2009 through September 2010) were actually 5 years old during the first quarter of the fiscal year (October through December). Age categories include:
    - Newborn/toddler (Less than 3 years old);
    - Pre-School (3-4);
    - Elementary (5-10);
    - Middle School (11-13);
    - High School (14-17), and
    - College age (More than 18 years old).

Exhibit IV-1, on the following page, shows the breakdown of children by parental Soldier pay grade and age category. For example, almost 65 percent of all Fort Carson Soldier children are children of parents in the E-1 through E-6 pay grade range. Among those children, the largest group (34.3 percent of E-1 through E-6 children) are ages 5 through 10. Conversely, Soldier parents in the O-5+ pay grade range have just over two percent of all Fort Carson Soldier children. A relatively large portion of these children (17.9 percent) are at least 18 years of age.

**Exhibit IV-1.**  
**Proportions of Fort Carson Soldier Children by Parental Pay Grade and Student Age**

	Age 0-2	Age 3-4	Age5-10	Age11-13	Age14-17	Age18+	Percent of Total
<b>ALL</b>	<b>19.2%</b>	<b>14.4%</b>	<b>32.2%</b>	<b>12.4%</b>	<b>12.7%</b>	<b>9.1%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
E1-E6	24.3%	17.5%	34.3%	10.4%	8.3%	5.1%	64.9%
E7-E9	7.0%	7.0%	26.0%	16.9%	24.1%	19.1%	22.0%
O1-O4	20.2%	15.0%	33.9%	12.1%	10.3%	8.6%	7.0%
O5+	2.1%	5.5%	30.7%	18.3%	25.5%	17.9%	2.2%
All Warrant	10.9%	7.4%	29.8%	17.7%	18.8%	15.4%	3.9%

Source: BBC Research & Consulting from DEERS weighted by 4ID G-1, 2009.

The overall number of children in Fort Carson Soldier families was projected in the FCDM based on the estimated average number of children per Fort Carson Soldier. This average was derived from a combination of data sources (as discussed in Section I) and then adjusted to insure that the estimated number of school age children in the fall of 2008 and the fall of 2009 was consistent with actual data from the school districts (as described later in this section). In the FCDM, the Study Team estimated an average of 0.87 children per Soldier.

The average was then adjusted to capture the proportion of children that live in the region while the Soldier was physically present. Based on the Niehaus Housing Survey conducted in 2008 and the Fort Hood survey of Soldiers coming to Fort Carson conducted by BBC in 2009, the Study Team calculated that 90 percent of the children would be present in the region while the Soldier was physically present. Therefore, the average number of children of each Soldier who is physically present in the region and who is also living in the region is equal to  $0.87 * 0.90 = 0.78$ .

For accompanied Soldiers with children, approximately 82 percent indicated that their family will stay in the region when the Soldier is deployed. Therefore, the average number of children of deployed Soldier's that continue to live in the region during the Soldiers deployment is equal to  $0.87 * 0.90 * 0.82 = 0.64$ .

Exhibit IV-2, on the following page, depicts the number of school age children of Fort Carson Soldiers estimated and projected to live in the region from FY 2008 through FY 2013. The beginning of the federal fiscal year generally coincides with the beginning of the school year, and the official school enrollment count day (October 1) is the beginning of the federal fiscal year. The bottom two rows in Exhibit IV-2 show the projected growth from the beginning of one school year to the next and the growth in the total number of school age children projected to occur during each school year (from the fall to the following spring). For example, the number of school age children in the first quarter of fiscal year 2010 is estimated to be 29 percent greater than the number of school age children during the first quarter of fiscal year 2009. The number of children is projected to decrease by one percent during the fiscal year 2010 school year.

**Exhibit IV-2.  
Projected Fort Carson Soldier Children Living in Region, FY2008-FY2013**

	FY2008		FY2009		FY2010		FY2011		FY2012		FY2013	
	Q1	Q3	Q1	Q3	Q1	Q3	Q1	Q3	Q1	Q3	Q1	Q3
Children present when Soldier present	6,934	9,847	8,191	9,015	14,735	12,610	11,632	12,661	16,574	11,105	13,634	14,048
Children present when Soldier deployed	5,676	3,590	5,961	5,931	3,587	5,492	6,514	5,759	2,696	7,059	4,916	4,842
<b>Total children (present)</b>	<b>12,611</b>	<b>13,437</b>	<b>14,152</b>	<b>14,947</b>	<b>18,322</b>	<b>18,102</b>	<b>18,146</b>	<b>18,420</b>	<b>19,270</b>	<b>18,164</b>	<b>18,550</b>	<b>18,890</b>
Newborn/toddler (Less than 3 years old)	2,420	2,579	2,716	2,868	3,516	3,474	3,482	3,535	3,698	3,486	3,560	3,625
Pre-School (3-4)	1,814	1,933	2,036	2,150	2,636	2,604	2,611	2,650	2,772	2,613	2,669	2,718
Elementary (5-10)	4,060	4,326	4,556	4,812	5,899	5,828	5,842	5,931	6,204	5,848	5,972	6,082
Middle School (11-13)	1,562	1,664	1,753	1,851	2,269	2,242	2,247	2,281	2,386	2,250	2,297	2,339
High School (14-17)	1,605	1,710	1,801	1,902	2,332	2,304	2,309	2,344	2,452	2,312	2,361	2,404
College age (More than 18 years old)	1,150	1,225	1,290	1,363	1,670	1,650	1,654	1,679	1,757	1,656	1,691	1,722
<b>Subtotal (K-12)</b>	<b>7,227</b>	<b>7,701</b>	<b>8,110</b>	<b>8,565</b>	<b>10,500</b>	<b>10,374</b>	<b>10,399</b>	<b>10,556</b>	<b>11,043</b>	<b>10,410</b>	<b>10,630</b>	<b>10,825</b>
Percent change from preceding fall			12%		29%		-1%		6%		-4%	
Percent change during school year		7%		6%		-1%		2%		-6%		2%

Note: Totals may include children that are home schooled or attending private schools.

Source: BBC Research & Consulting, 2010.

**Actual data from school districts in Fort Carson region.** School districts in the Fort Carson region that educate a large number of military students are eligible for Federal Impact Aid. This aid is intended to compensate the districts for tax revenue lost because of federal activity.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, these districts conduct annual surveys (in October) to determine the number of military children attending their schools. Because the amount of aid varies based on several factors, districts track the number of:

- military students that reside on federal property;
- disabled military students that reside on federal property;
- military students that reside off-post; and
- disabled military students that reside off-post.

The Study Team worked with the districts in the Fort Carson region that educate large numbers of military children to obtain summaries of their Federal Impact Aid surveys for fall 2008 (Federal FY09 Q1) and fall 2009 (Federal FY10 Q1). The total number of children from Army families enrolled in each district is summarized in Exhibit IV-3. The figures for Cheyenne Mountain D-12 and Harrison D-2 reflect the districts' estimates of the proportion of Army children among all of their military children, since those districts do not track specific branch of service. Exhibit IV-3 also includes the Study Team's estimate of the number of Fort Carson Soldier children attending other school districts, private schools, or in home schooling arrangements. The Federal Impact Aid data summarized in Exhibit IV-3 provide the best available information on the number of Fort Carson Soldier children in each district, though some parents fail to complete and return the impact aid surveys.

**Exhibit IV-3.  
Enrolled Army Children in Fort Carson Region School Districts, Fall 2008 and Fall 2009**

Districts	2008-2009		2009-2010		Percent Growth
	Army Children	Percent of Total	Army Children	Percent of Total	
Academy D-20	605	7%	775	7%	28%
Cheyenne Mountain D-12	360	4%	362	3%	1%
Colorado Springs D-11	714	8%	999	9%	40%
Falcon D-49	545	6%	785	7%	44%
Fountain-Fort Carson D-8	3,762	44%	4,263	40%	13%
Harrison D-2	916	11%	1,157	11%	26%
Widefield D-3	1,187	14%	1,662	16%	40%
Other districts, private or home schooled	<u>426</u>	<u>5%</u>	<u>526</u>	<u>5%</u>	<u>NA</u>
<b>Total</b>	8,515	100%	10,529	100%	24%

Note: Total in other districts, private or home schooled is an estimate by BBC Research & Consulting.

Source: Data provided by Fort Carson region school districts, 2009 and 2010.

<sup>1</sup> To be eligible for Federal Impact Aid, a district must have at least 400 federally-connected students, or the number of those children must be at least 3 percent of the district's average daily attendance. National Military Family Association, Impact Aid Fact Sheet, January 2006.

As shown in Exhibit IV-3, Fountain-Fort Carson D-8 has the largest number of enrolled students from Fort Carson Soldier households. Fountain-Fort Carson D-8 operates the on-post schools at Fort Carson as well as schools in Fountain and currently enrolls over 40 percent of all Fort Carson Soldier children living in the region. There are also over one thousand Fort Carson Soldier children enrolled in both Widefield D-3 and Harrison D-2, and nearly one thousand Fort Carson children enrolled in Colorado Springs D-11. Together, these three districts educate about 36 percent of the children from Fort Carson Soldier families.

From school year 2008-09 to school year 2009-10, the largest percentage increases in the number of Fort Carson Soldier children have been in Falcon D-49, Widefield D-3, Colorado Springs D-11, Academy D-20 and Harrison D-2. These districts enrolled between 25 and 44 percent more Fort Carson children in the fall of 2009 than they had in the fall of 2008. Overall, the number of Fort Carson school age children increased by more than 2,000 (24 percent) from the fall of 2008 to fall of 2009. This increase is primarily attributable to the relocation of the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade of the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division (1-4ID) and 4ID headquarters from Fort Hood to Fort Carson during the first half of 2009.

Exhibit IV-4 compares the number of Fort Carson Soldier children to total district enrollments in the fall of 2009. The proportion of total district enrollment comprised of Fort Carson Soldier children ranges from 58 percent in Fountain-Fort Carson D-8 to about three percent in Academy D-20 and Colorado Springs D-11.

**Exhibit IV-4.**  
**Proportions of Total District Enrollment Due to Fort Carson Soldier Children, Fall 2009**

Source:  
 Data provided by Fort Carson region school districts and Colorado Department of Education data, 2010.

Districts	2009-2010		Army Share
	Army Children	Total Enrollment	
Academy D-20	775	22,620	3%
Cheyenne Mountain D-12	362	4,578	8%
Colorado Springs D-11	999	29,673	3%
Falcon D-49	785	14,398	5%
Fountain-Fort Carson D-8	4,263	7,365	58%
Harrison D-2	1,157	11,309	10%
Widefield D-3	1,662	8,851	19%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,003</b>	<b>98,794</b>	<b>10%</b>

**Projected future Soldier children by district of residence.** As described in Section VII, the Study Team analyzed the supply and demand for on-post and off-post housing of Soldiers and their families in the Fort Carson region. The housing analysis produced projections of the number of military families living in the region, by zip code areas. Projected populations of Army children, by zip code, were then allocated to local school districts using geographic information system (GIS) techniques. The housing allocation model was calibrated, in part, based on the actual number of students enrolled in the region’s school districts described previously.

The housing analysis begins with the distribution of Soldiers with families into on- and off-post housing. For the housing portion of the study, the Study Team developed a model that estimates the following for Fort Carson Soldiers and their spouses:

- Families living on-post—the number of Soldiers with families living on-post (in married family housing). This is a fixed number that is determined by the availability of on-post married family rental units. The housing model assumes that demand for on-post married family housing exceeds supply for the duration of the modeling period. This is based on the current married family housing wait list of more than 2,000 Soldier families compared with estimated construction of 430 units.
- Families living off-post—the number of Soldiers with families and children living off-post equals the total number of Soldiers with families minus those living on-post in married family housing.

Using the FCDM data on the number of children by school level (elementary, middle and high school) children were assigned a residence on- or off-post using the following steps:<sup>2</sup>

1. First, children were grouped into households by pay grade and school age range. This was done because the overall number of children, as well as the age distribution of children within pay grade range, varies dramatically by pay grade. Soldier families with pay grades of between E-1 and E-6 make up the majority of Soldier households with children. They also have younger children than other Soldier households with children.
2. Children were then assigned to on- and off-post housing based on where Soldier families live to determine the total number of elementary, middle and high school children living on and off-post.
3. From there, the FCDM calculated the change in children living on- and off-post over time.
4. Finally, off-post children were assigned to a zip code using a distribution of the Soldier residence zip codes.<sup>3</sup>
5. These zip codes were aggregated at the school district level to determine the projected change in children by district.

**Housing influences.** The rental/purchase choice of Soldier families and varying affordability of housing by school district are important influences on current and future school district enrollments and future enrollment trends. Even without growth at Fort Carson, area school districts can see wide variations in annual Fort Carson associated enrollments as families adjust their living situation to changes in local housing pricing and availability. The housing market analysis conducted for this study determined that the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) Soldiers receive is adequate for Soldier families to rent the median-priced two bedroom unit in the Fort Carson area. The BAH is also adequate to cover the rent on many condominiums and some single family homes in the immediate Fort Carson area.

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<sup>2</sup> The number of Soldiers who are accompanied with children and whether or not these children stay in the Fort Carson region when their parent Soldier deploys is directly linked to the FCDM developed for Phase II of the Regional Growth Plan.

<sup>3</sup> Based on the 2008 Niehaus Housing Survey (detailed in Section I).

The housing market analysis also determined that there was a more than adequate number of rental units available to meet demand in the immediate Fort Carson area. However, some submarkets are expected to tighten over time as rental unit supplies diminish. Soldier surveys indicate high levels of interest in homeownership but concurrent concerns about housing values. Even if ownership is generally preferred, many families are deferring home purchases because of uncertainty over the current and future housing market conditions. Should market perceptions change and there is a notable movement toward home ownership, there will be an impact on the distribution of students between school districts.

For Soldiers wanting to purchase housing, with pay grades of E1-E6, affordable units are limited in the areas with the highest demand based on survey data.<sup>4</sup> Soldiers wanting to buy in these areas will only be able to afford attached housing products (condominiums, townhomes). As such, the schools may see some children in other zip codes as Soldier families trade desirability for affordability if they want to buy.

Projections of the number of school age children, by district of residence, were developed by combining the geographic distribution from the housing analysis with the projected total number of school age children of Fort Carson Soldiers depicted earlier in Exhibit IV-2.

Exhibit IV-5 shows the projected total number of school age children by district of residence from FY10Q1 (Fall 2009) through FY13Q3 (Spring 2013).

**Exhibit IV-5.  
Estimated and Projected School Age Soldier Children by District of Residence**

District	FY2010		FY2011		FY2012		FY2013	
	FY 10 Q1	FY 10 Q3	FY 11 Q1	FY 11 Q3	FY 12 Q1	FY 12 Q3	FY 13 Q1	FY 13 Q3
Academy D-20	420	403	403	410	428	401	410	418
Cheyenne Mountain D-12	436	411	412	421	447	408	422	433
Colorado Springs D-11	1,244	1,173	1,175	1,202	1,276	1,164	1,205	1,237
Ellicott D-22	27	25	25	26	27	25	26	27
Falcon D-49	603	568	569	583	618	564	584	599
Fountain/Fort Carson D-8	4,047	4,281	4,295	4,314	4,425	4,362	4,376	4,408
Hanover D-28	321	303	304	311	330	301	311	319
Harrison D-2	1,158	1,093	1,094	1,120	1,189	1,084	1,122	1,152
Widefield D-3	1,815	1,712	1,715	1,754	1,862	1,698	1,758	1,804
Other Districts*	144	205	203	206	216	201	206	216
Pueblo County	286	270	270	277	294	268	277	284
<b>Totals</b>	<b>10,500</b>	<b>10,443</b>	<b>10,466</b>	<b>10,623</b>	<b>11,111</b>	<b>10,476</b>	<b>10,697</b>	<b>10,898</b>

Note: \*Other districts includes children living in El Paso, Fremont and Teller Counties.

Source: BBC Research & Consulting, 2010.

In general, the estimated and projected distribution of Fort Carson school age children by district of residence is similar to the geographic distribution of actual enrollment shown earlier in Exhibit IV-3. The most substantial difference is in Academy D-20. Based on the FCDM and the housing analysis, the Study Team estimated that 420 school age children of Fort Carson Soldiers resided in D-20 during FY10Q1 (including 120 children of Fort Carson Soldiers living on the grounds of the Air Force Academy). However, Academy D-20 actually had 775 children of Fort Carson Soldiers enrolled

<sup>4</sup> These include zip codes 80916 and 80906 in Colorado Springs and 80817 and 80911 in the Fountain Valley.

during that quarter. Actual enrollment may differ from the number of children residing in the district for several reasons, but the primary difference between these figures is likely due to the ability of families in Colorado to choose to send their children to schools in another district.

Exhibits IV-9 through IV-11, provided at the end of this section, provide additional detail regarding the projected number of Fort Carson school age children, by school level, for each district from 2010 through 2013.

**Comparison with Regional Growth Plan Phase I projections.** The previous phase of the Fort Carson Regional Growth Plan, conducted by another consulting team and completed in late 2007, developed projections of the number of additional Fort Carson Soldier children expected to attend the region's school districts. Those projections anticipated an increase of 5,991 school age Soldier children from the 2006-2007 school year to the 2010-2011 school year. The Phase I analysis also anticipated that 33 percent of new students would attend Fountain-Fort Carson D-8, 25 percent would attend Widefield D-3, 16 percent would attend Colorado Springs D-11, 13 percent would attend Harrison D-2, and 4 percent would attend Cheyenne Mountain District 12. Only four percent were expected to attend other school districts (excluding private school and home schooled children). These projections were based on the assumption that the number of Soldiers assigned to Fort Carson would increase from 12,600 in 2006-2007 (Federal FY 2007) to about 24,000 by Federal FY 2011.<sup>5</sup>

Some of Phase I projections can be compared with the results from Phase II described in this section. The latest estimates from Fort Carson anticipate that 25,531 Soldiers will be assigned to Fort Carson during Federal FY 2011 – about 6 percent more than anticipated in the Phase I reports. Exhibit IV-2 (from page 5 of this section) indicates that the number of school age children will have increased by about 3,014 between FY 2008 and FY 2011. While this level of growth is approximately 50 percent of the growth projected in Phase I, it is important to recognize that some of the growth anticipated in Phase I had already occurred prior to FY 2008. The number of Soldiers assigned to Fort Carson during FY 2008 was about 18,271. Comparison of this figure to the Phase I estimate that 12,600 Soldiers were assigned to Fort Carson in FY 2007 suggests that about one half of the growth anticipated in Phase I had already occurred by FY 2008. With this in mind, the overall Phase I growth estimates appear to have been reasonably accurate. However, since the number of Soldiers has actually grown more than anticipated in Phase I, it is clear that the actual number of school age children in the region per Soldier assigned to Fort Carson (described on pages 3 and 4 of this section) is less than the Army-wide factors used in Phase I. This difference is attributable to demographic factors specific to Fort Carson families and accompaniment rates affected by deployments.

The Phase I estimates regarding the locations of student growth appear less accurate in retrospect than the overall projections. As shown in prior Exhibit IV-3, Academy D-20 and Falcon D-49 have significant numbers of Fort Carson Soldier children, together accounting for about 14 percent of the regional total in the fall of 2009. Neither of these districts was discussed in the Phase I reports. This change is at least partially attributable to changes in Soldier and family housing preferences and current national and local housing market conditions.

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<sup>5</sup> Education Technical Report, Fort Carson Regional Growth Plan (Phase I), December 15, 2007.

## **Special Needs among Children of Fort Carson Soldiers**

In addition to planning for changes in total school enrollment resulting from changes in the number of Soldiers stationed at Fort Carson, school districts are also concerned about the number of those children that may have special educational needs. Although the districts receive additional funding for children with special educational needs, these supplemental funds are often far less than the actual cost of educating children with disabilities.

The following discussion examines the prevalence of special educational needs among Fort Carson children. The Study Team's analysis was based on information from three sources: discussions with, and data from, the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) coordinator for Fort Carson; surveys of incoming 1-4ID troops and their spouses; and data gathered from local school districts for the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 school years.

**EFMP information.** Fort Carson's EFMP Coordinator reports that, as of August 2009, there were 443 children with registered special educational needs among the Fort Carson population. The Coordinator also indicated this count likely underestimates the total number of special education children because some families are not aware they need to register with EFMP office and a substantial portion of the troops recently transferring to Fort Carson from Fort Hood may not have yet registered.

This number is lower than expected. Given that there are approximately 8,500 school age children of Fort Carson Soldiers, and given rates of special education that appear to range from 8 to 14 percent among the school districts in the region, the Study Team would expect about 700 to 1,300 children with special education needs among the Fort Carson population.

The view that the EFMP is under represented is consistent with national reports on the program. A 2003 assessment of Tricare Management Activity noted that "Though [EFMP is] a 'mandatory' program, there is little administrative consequence of not enrolling." Further, enrollment may be "viewed by some as a career limiter." This assessment also noted that total EFMP enrollment among all services was in the range of 50,000 to 60,000 compared with projected needs of about 134,000 based on the 2000 incidence rates for qualifying conditions. Finally, the assessment noted that the EFMP program, which gives EFMP families preferences regarding assignments, "results in concentrations of children with special needs in focused locations near metro areas."<sup>6</sup>

**Surveys of incoming Soldiers from Fort Hood.** The Study Team conducted two surveys with members of the 1-4ID relocating to Fort Carson. The surveys were conducted in May, 2009 (in Texas) and in July 2009 (at Fort Carson). A total of 952 surveys were completed (899 by Soldiers, 53 by Soldiers' spouses). One hundred twenty-six households completed the survey at both locations and were included in both survey samples. After netting out families that completed more than one survey, the combined survey results represent 836 households consisting of a total of 1,994 Soldiers, spouses and children.

The surveys asked families with children whether their children had autism, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) or any type of developmental disability. Results are summarized on the following page, in Exhibit IV-6.

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<sup>6</sup> *Serving TRICARE's Most Vulnerable Beneficiaries.* Presentation by Geoffrey W. Rake, Col., USAF, MC, FS. TRICARE Medical Director. January 2003.

The surveys of incoming 1-4ID troops indicated that the incidence of disabilities among their children is about 12 percent.<sup>7</sup> This figure appears to be slightly higher than the national incidence of children with special educational needs (11 percent) based on the most recent National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH) funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and completed in 2007.<sup>8</sup> The statistics shown in Exhibit IV-6 do not include households with children with asthma (reported in about 10 percent of all households with children).

The reported rate of autism among 1-4ID families with children coming to Fort Carson (2.9 percent)<sup>9</sup> is about three times the estimated national incidence of autism among children (1 percent), although this difference may be inflated by differences in the survey methodologies.<sup>10</sup> The relatively high rate of autism reported among 1-4ID households coming to Fort Carson, however, tends to confirm anecdotal reports from school districts in the region that Fort Carson is a posting of choice for parents with autistic children because of the strong treatment and support services available in Colorado Springs and Denver. The incidence of children with ADD/ADHD (7 percent)<sup>11</sup> also appears to be slightly higher than the national average (6 percent), although the results from the initial survey (May 2009) of incoming troops from Fort Hood indicated a lower incidence rate for this disorder than the national average.

**Exhibit IV-6.  
Prevalence of Special Needs Among 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division (1-4ID) Troops**

Households with Children with Special Needs	4th ID Survey				National Incidence
	Survey Location		Percent		
	Ft. Hood	Ft. Carson	Ft. Hood	Ft. Carson	
Children with Autism (ASD)	10	5	2.8%	3.2%	1.0%
Children with ADHD	21	17	5.8%	11.0%	6.4%
Children with other developmental disability*	8	3	2.2%	1.9%	3.2%
Children who are deaf/hard of hearing	1	1	0.3%	0.6%	1.4%
Children with other physical disability**	0	0	0.0%	0.0%	—
Children with other disabilities***	3	1	0.8%	0.6%	—
<b>Total households with children with a disability</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>11.6%</b>	<b>13.5%</b>	<b>11.2%</b>
<b>Total households with children</b>	<b>361</b>	<b>155</b>			

Note: \*Excludes households that also indicated their children had Autism or ADD/ADHD.

\*\*Excludes households that indicated a specific physical disability (e.g. deaf/hard of hearing).

\*\*\*Excludes households that indicated their children had a more specific disability.

Source: BBC Research & Consulting, 2009; National Survey of Children's Health, US Department of Health and Human Services, 2007.

<sup>7</sup> Percentage based on the weighted average of the results from the surveys at Fort Hood and Fort Carson.

<sup>8</sup> Note, however, that the surveys of 1-4ID households asked whether the family had any children with special needs. Since some families likely have both children with special needs and children without special needs, the incidence rates from the survey of troop households are not directly comparable to the incidence rate from the NSCH survey.

<sup>9</sup> Percentage based on the weighted average of the results from the surveys at Fort Hood and Fort Carson.

<sup>10</sup> See footnote 6 above.

<sup>11</sup> See footnote 7 above.

**Special needs data from regional school districts.** As discussed earlier in this section, the Study Team collected data from the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 Federal Impact Aid applications of the school districts in the Fort Carson region. In addition to the total number of Army children, these data also provide information on the incidence of special needs among those children.

Exhibit IV-7 summarizes the special needs data provided by the districts. Overall, the incidence of special educational needs among Fort Carson children was about 10 percent during the 2008-09 school year and has increased to about 11 percent during the 2009-10 school year. These figures are comparable to the national average incidence rate for special educational needs, but about one to two percentage points greater than the overall special needs incidence rate for El Paso County in 2008 (9 percent). The current (school year 2009-10) rate of special needs among Fort Carson children is also about one percentage point greater than the special needs incidence rate for Colorado as a whole (10 percent).

**Exhibit IV-7.  
Prevalence of Special Needs  
among Army Children in  
Fort Carson Region: 2008-  
2009 and 2009-2010**

Source:  
BBC Research & Consulting, 2009 based on  
data provided by the districts from their 2008-  
2009 and 2009-2010 Federal Impact Aid  
applications.

	Special Education	Total Army Children	Percent in Special Education
<b>2008-2009 School Year</b>			
Cheyenne Mountain D-12	24	605	4.0%
Colorado Springs D-11	51	714	7.1%
Falcon D-49	62	545	11.4%
Fountain-Fort Carson D-8	497	3,762	13.2%
Harrison D-2	74	916	8.1%
Widefield D-3	155	1,187	13.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>863</b>	<b>8,515</b>	<b>10.1%</b>
<b>2009-2010 School Year</b>			
Academy D-20	56	775	7.2%
Cheyenne Mountain D-12	24	362	6.7%
Colorado Springs D-11	76	999	7.6%
Falcon D-49	73	785	9.3%
Fountain-Fort Carson D-8	579	4,263	13.6%
Harrison D-2	100	1,157	8.6%
Widefield D-3	268	1,662	16.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,176</b>	<b>10,529</b>	<b>11.2%</b>

As shown in Exhibit IV-7, there is considerable variation in the incidence of special needs among Fort Carson children by school district. Fort Carson children attending Fountain-Fort Carson D-8 and Widefield D-3 have a considerably higher incidence rate for special needs (12 to 16 percent) than found in the overall regional and state population. Fort Carson children attending the other districts generally have an incidence rate for special needs that is somewhat below the state average. These differences may partly reflect the reputation of certain districts within the Fort Carson community for having excellent resources for children with special needs and substantial special needs populations.

Exhibit IV-8 compares the incidence of special needs among Fort Carson Soldier children to the overall incidence of special needs in each district. The incidence of special needs among Fort Carson Soldier children is substantially higher than the overall district incidence rate in Widefield D-3 and Cheyenne Mountain D-12. For the other districts, the incidence rate is similar to or lower than the incidence rate for the district as a whole. Note, however, that this comparison is somewhat misleading for Fountain-Fort Carson D-8 because Fort Carson children make up the majority of the district's total enrollment.

**Exhibit IV-8.  
Special Needs Incidence among Fort Carson Soldier Children  
Compared to Overall District Averages, 2009-2010 School Year**

	Army Children			Overall District Enrollment		
	Special Education	Total Army Children	Percent in Special Education	Special Education	Total Enrollment	Percent in Special Education
<b>2009-2010 School Year</b>						
Academy D-20	56	775	7.2%	1,702	22,620	7.5%
Cheyenne Mountain D-12	24	362	6.7%	246	4,578	5.4%
Colorado Springs D-11	76	999	7.6%	2,408	29,673	8.1%
Falcon D-49	73	785	9.3%	1,386	14,398	9.6%
Fountain-Fort Carson D-8	579	4,263	13.6%	955	7,365	13.0%
Harrison D-2	100	1,157	8.6%	1,108	11,309	9.8%
Widefield D-3	268	1,662	16.1%	1,202	8,851	13.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,176</b>	<b>10,519</b>	<b>11.2%</b>	<b>9,007</b>	<b>98,794</b>	<b>9.1%</b>

Source: BBC Research & Consulting, 2010 based on district Federal Impact Aid data and Colorado Department of Education data.

**Summary of key findings.** Overall, the incidence of special needs among Fort Carson children during the 2009-2010 school year (11 percent) is about two percentage points higher than the incidence among all El Paso County school children (9 percent) and about one percentage point higher than the statewide incidence (10 percent). This overall average masks the considerably higher incidence of special needs among Fort Carson children attending the Fountain-Fort Carson D-8, Widefield D-3 and Falcon D-49 school districts. District 8 also reports an incidence of children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) that is about double the national incidence rate for this developmental disability. Children with ASD can require expenditures of \$50,000 or more per year to educate, depending on the severity of their condition. The survey of incoming 1-4ID families indicates a somewhat higher incidence of special needs than the overall El Paso County and statewide incidence rates. The survey also indicates an incidence rate for ASD that is about three times the national average. This higher ASD incidence rate is consistent with District 8's reported experience.

## Implications and Recommendations

This analysis was completed in coordination with the Growth Plan K-12 Education Partnership Group, comprised primarily of local school district representatives. The Partnership Group, in coordination with the study team, have suggested a number of recommendations regarding future efforts to better coordinate growth at Fort Carson with public school K-12 education.

1. The Phase II study demonstrates the need for timely information regarding anticipated changes at Fort Carson and the effects of these changes on local school districts. It is important to continue to obtain regular updates regarding projected changes in Soldier assignments and deployments at Fort Carson. It will also be important to continue to review and update the demographic models developed in this phase. At a minimum, updates should be provided to school districts prior to each budgeting cycle. *(Responsibility – PPACG, Fort Carson)*

The Phase II study also illustrates the value of the information obtained by the districts in their Federal Impact Aid applications in describing the size and distribution of the Fort Carson Soldier children population. It will be useful to continue to compile that data from local school districts each year. Each district should be encouraged to collect branch of service data for their military children. Further efforts to publicize the value of the impact aid data to the parents of Soldier children are also important — both to maintain the most accurate information possible and to insure full funding for the districts that educate Fort Carson children. *(Responsibility – PPACG, school districts)*

2. The Phase I study recommended that districts work with Fort Carson to encourage, where possible, family transitions during summer months to assist in district budgeting and funding for these children. This remains a worthy, but mostly impractical objective, given military necessity. A corollary goal is to seek, as soon as fiscally possible, restoration of the second count day in the spring to help districts that receive a large number of Fort Carson Soldier children (or other military children) obtain full funding. *(Responsibility – local legislators, Fort Carson, DoD)*
3. The relatively high incidence of special needs among Fort Carson children has a fiscal impact on local school districts. Because the funding for these children is often less than the cost of their education, there is an impact on the resources available to educate other children in the districts. Promoting awareness of this issue may ultimately assist in developing other revenue sources for special needs education. Reducing lags in receiving Federal Impact Aid could also reduce the fiscal challenges facing local districts. *(Responsibility – school districts, DoD, PPACG)*
4. Efficient and effective delivery of educational services to children with special needs would be improved by greater efforts to have military families with children with special needs register with the Post's EFMP program. This can reduce delays in obtaining complete educational records for children transferring into the region and providing more information to families locating to Fort Carson regarding special needs educational opportunities. *(Responsibility -- Fort Carson, school districts)*
5. Fort Carson has provided military family life counselors to local districts to assist children in dealing with the issues posed by deployments and other aspects of military life. The districts see considerable value in this program and hope to see it continue. *(Responsibility – Fort Carson)*

6. Implement and expand Fort Carson’s pilot program to place school-based behavioral health teams in heavily impacted schools to provide behavioral health services to military students on-site. *(Responsibility – Fort Carson)*
7. School district capacity has not been as significant an issue as anticipated in Phase I of the Regional Growth Plan, largely due to the economic downturn that has reduced overall regional growth. However, several school districts have identified capital construction needs that could be alleviated with federal funding. Efforts should continue to obtain that funding. *(Responsibility – OEA, PPACG, school districts)*
8. The Partnership Group meetings during Phase II have provided a valuable forum for communication among local districts regarding Fort Carson related issues. The districts and PPACG staff should continue to meet, perhaps on a less frequent basis, to review anticipated changes at Fort Carson and other issues. *(Responsibility – school districts, PPACG)*

### Additional Tables

The tables on the following pages provide additional detail showing the projected number of school age children of Fort Carson Soldiers by district of residence and school age level.

**Exhibit IV-9.  
Projected Fort Carson Children by District of Residence and School Age Level (Table 1 of 3)**

District	FY2010		FY2011		FY2012		FY2013	
	FY 10 Q1	FY 10 Q3	FY 11 Q1	FY 11 Q3	FY 12 Q1	FY 12 Q3	FY 13 Q1	FY 13 Q3
<b>Academy D-20</b>								
Elementary (5-10)	236	226	227	230	240	225	231	235
Middle School (11-13)	91	87	87	89	92	87	89	90
High School (14-17)	93	89	90	91	95	89	91	93
<b>District Total</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>403</b>	<b>403</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>418</b>
<b>Cheyenne Mountain D-12</b>								
Elementary (5-10)	245	231	231	237	251	229	237	244
Middle School (11-13)	94	89	89	91	97	88	91	94
High School (14-17)	97	91	91	94	99	91	94	96
<b>District Total</b>	<b>436</b>	<b>411</b>	<b>412</b>	<b>421</b>	<b>447</b>	<b>408</b>	<b>422</b>	<b>433</b>
<b>Colorado Springs D-11</b>								
Elementary (5-10)	699	659	660	675	717	654	677	695
Middle School (11-13)	269	253	254	260	276	252	260	267
High School (14-17)	276	260	261	267	283	258	267	275
<b>District Total</b>	<b>1,244</b>	<b>1,173</b>	<b>1,175</b>	<b>1,202</b>	<b>1,276</b>	<b>1,164</b>	<b>1,205</b>	<b>1,237</b>

Note: Based on children’s’ ages as of Army first quarter of each year (October through December).

Source: BBC Research & Consulting, 2010.

**Exhibit IV-10.**  
**Projected Fort Carson Children by District of Residence and School Age Level (Table 2 of 3)**

District	FY2010		FY2011		FY2012		FY2013	
	FY 10 Q1	FY 10 Q3	FY 11 Q1	FY 11 Q3	FY 12 Q1	FY 12 Q3	FY 13 Q1	FY 13 Q3
<b>Ellicott D-22</b>								
Elementary (5-10)	15	14	14	15	15	14	15	15
Middle School (11-13)	6	5	5	6	6	5	6	6
High School (14-17)	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
<b>District Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Falcon D-49</b>								
Elementary (5-10)	339	319	320	327	347	317	328	337
Middle School (11-13)	130	123	123	126	134	122	126	130
High School (14-17)	134	126	126	129	137	125	130	133
<b>District Total</b>	<b>603</b>	<b>568</b>	<b>569</b>	<b>583</b>	<b>618</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>584</b>	<b>599</b>
<b>Fountain/Fort Carson D-8</b>								
Elementary (5-10)	2,273	2,405	2,413	2,424	2,486	2,451	2,459	2,477
Middle School (11-13)	874	925	928	932	956	943	946	953
High School (14-17)	899	951	954	958	983	969	972	979
<b>District Total</b>	<b>4,047</b>	<b>4,281</b>	<b>4,295</b>	<b>4,314</b>	<b>4,425</b>	<b>4,362</b>	<b>4,376</b>	<b>4,408</b>

Note: Based on children's ages as of Army first quarter of each year (October through December).

Source: BBC Research & Consulting, 2010.

**Exhibit IV-11.**  
**Projected Fort Carson Children by District of Residence and School Age Level (Table 3 of 3)**

District	FY2010		FY2011		FY2012		FY2013	
	FY 10 Q1	FY 10 Q3	FY 11 Q1	FY 11 Q3	FY 12 Q1	FY 12 Q3	FY 13 Q1	FY 13 Q3
<b>Hanover D-28</b>								
Elementary (5-10)	180	170	171	174	185	169	175	179
Middle School (11-13)	69	65	66	67	71	65	67	69
High School (14-17)	71	67	67	69	73	67	69	71
<b>District Total</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>319</b>
<b>Harrison D-2</b>								
Elementary (5-10)	651	614	615	629	668	609	630	647
Middle School (11-13)	250	236	237	242	257	234	242	249
High School (14-17)	257	243	243	249	264	241	249	256
<b>District Total</b>	<b>1,158</b>	<b>1,093</b>	<b>1,094</b>	<b>1,120</b>	<b>1,189</b>	<b>1,084</b>	<b>1,122</b>	<b>1,152</b>
<b>Widefield D-3</b>								
Elementary (5-10)	1,020	962	963	986	1,046	954	987	1,014
Middle School (11-13)	392	370	371	379	402	367	380	390
High School (14-17)	403	380	381	390	413	377	390	401
<b>District Total</b>	<b>1,815</b>	<b>1,712</b>	<b>1,715</b>	<b>1,754</b>	<b>1,862</b>	<b>1,698</b>	<b>1,758</b>	<b>1,804</b>

Note: Based on children's ages as of Army first quarter of each year (October through December).

Source: BBC Research & Consulting, 2010.