

MIC3 WA State Council Meeting

9am
10/11/2022
Zoom

Greg Lynch, WA MIC3 Commissioner opened meeting at 9am. Reviewed agenda and overview of topics to be covered today.

Goal of compact: to remove barriers for students of uniformed military families to receive equitable education opportunities.

Brief History: WA State Compact began in 2008 with a Study & Report to Legislature, signed into law conditionally in 2009, recommended and approved during 2015 legislature. State Council reviews annually, just ahead of National Council meeting. WA State Council organizational flowchart included in agenda packet.

WA State is the 7th in the nation in number of military children/uniformed families. Last spring the number was over 27,000. Compact applies to children of active duty military and uniformed services.

Focus areas of compact are: educational records, immunizations, special education, Kindergarten & 1st grade eligibility, extracurricular activities, curriculum and placement.

Commissioner Lynch introduced Commander of Navy Region NW Rear Admiral Mark Sucato. Navy Region NW oversees naval bases and facilities mostly in the Puget Sound, 45,000 active duty personnel. Puget Sound is 3rd largest worldwide, with approximately 200,000 Naval personnel & family members in Washington. They have a lot of moves, finding housing is a challenge. Not only moving in summer and the high cost of housing causes some to move out to the country, sometimes to different school districts. Gave examples of residency issues and special education becoming two of the current largest areas of concern in WA. Compact allows school districts to re-evaluate for SPED services, but there are big staffing issues for SPED statewide which is adding to the problem. Superintendent Ron Banner of Clover Park School District also gave examples. Meeting participants were given the opportunity to make comments and ask questions.

Superintendent Tom Siegel of Bethel School District also having staffing issues. 9% of their students (approx. 1,800 students) in Bethel SD are military kids. The district is currently half staffed for paraeducators, which affects the services the kids receive. Also the gap between the \$ allotment per student and SPED \$ is another problem issue.

Tammi Perrault, Defense State Liaison Officer, mentioned two items in legislation that are helping. Recent HB1210 regarding advance enrollment, and there is an Initiative to expand the

flexibility for kids to enroll where they will be living instead of their current place when transfers are occurring. She is excited about what this group can do to provide help to families.

Superintendent Tim Ames of Medical Lake, WA has 45% MIC students! Of these 45%, 18% are SPED, yet they are SPED funded for only 13.7%. The district has been doing all it can to fill the gaps but also facing a significant staff shortage in SPED especially, and being underfunded not helpful. They will be asking legislature to fully fund SPED for all the students identified for services.

Erin Prince, Central Kitsap School District, went to WADC to advocate for Impact Aid. They have 70% of students impacted. Also an Exceptional Family Base, families stay; yet continue to be underfunded by flat funding for Impact Aid. Meeting with State Rep. Derek Kilmer this week to request \$ help at state level.

JBLM Commander Col Phil Lamb gave a little background on growing up as an 'Army brat' and how he understands the significance of being a military child who moves a lot, and how interconnected we all are. Their main concern this year is force readiness concerns. Expensive housing, PCS woes, different seasons of transfers, schools and childcare are all issues affecting our military families. JBLM trying to assist with all of these items and focusing a lot on spouse employment, moving and temporary lodging and childcare. Their good news is their "People 1st" Focus, and they will be getting a 4.6% raise in January. Junior service members will get Basic Needs Allowance permanently, and increase in moving expenses. They are advocating strongly for spouse employment in 7 licensure categories including Teaching, Social Work, Cosmetology, School Psychology, and more.

JBLM is #2 of bases with highest percentage of families with exceptional family; this creates a problem with childcare and SPED services, especially with statewide staff shortages. They are giving access to off-base providers for many families now. On-base only has capacity for single parent or dual-military parent households.

Starbase Program is coming to JBLM. It starts in 5th grade, is a STEM focused program students will attend 1x a week for half a day. They will expand to 6 elementary schools on base.

Commissioner Lynch asked for any questions or comments.

Ron Banner gave praise to JBLM, and especially Military Family Liaison Norma Melo, for their partnerships and being proactive in solving problems at the lowest possible level. Working together has been an awesome experience for his employees in Clover Park SD.

Early Learning – there is an acute shortfall of qualified early learning staff; recruitment and retention is a significant problem. Over 600 families on waiting list at JBLM. This also affects readiness of JBLM forces. Similar problems in Kitsap County. ECEAP credentialing and requirements got stricter for teachers. Services aren't available. Statewide problem getting worse. Just 6 months ago, 2 facilities at JBLM staffed at 59%, now down to 48%. Waiting lists getting longer for early learning, housing and childcare not available on bases, all are

contributing to readiness of forces. Meeting participants were given the opportunity to make comments and ask questions.

Norma Melo and Antoinette Walker work at JBLM as family liaisons and appreciate the kudos from Clover Park. Gave an example of one Bethel student who had a problem with transfer grades and how, through working with Commissioner Lynch and OSPI they got it worked out. Also another student from Steilacoom who moved to Alabama and the credit system was different there and they were able to have him walk with his classmates here in WA and graduate on time. JBLM is a great partner for families and schools.

NOAA Lt Commander Jesse Melton of Oregon thanked Commissioner Lynch & MIC3 for their continuing support of NOAA families.

Dixie Grunenfelder of OSPI stated that compact specific issues at state level similar to local levels. Student Info Data Collection continues to be robust. OSPI records indicate 30,902 students identified as military involved this year in Washington. Data puts MIC3 kids at the forefront in decision making, with Graduation Requirements currently the #1 issue. Washington students also get out of school later in the year than other states which can be problematic on duty station transfers also. Districts have stepped up however in counting other state requirements now in foreign language graduation requirements, WA State History, Senior Project requirements and residency – legal counsel is working on long-term solutions, apportionment and funding.

Meeting break from 10:09-10:15.

Comm. Lynch started with a shoutout to Charisse Imai, Executive Director of the National MIC3 Organization located in Lexington, KY. Greg will be going to the National Compact Meeting next week and will be voting on two items behalf of the MIC3 WA and would like input from everyone around the table.

Cherise Imai and MIC3 legal counsel Stuart Michael summarized the two items that will be voted on by the state commissioners during the upcoming meeting. More details of the two issues were provided to state council members in advance and are also attached to the minutes.

- I. Issue One Summary: Involves a citation problem identified in the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children (the “Compact”), which has been codified in state laws across the country. The model language of the Compact in Article II(A) and in Article III(A)(1), both

of which refer to “members of the National Guard and Reserve on active duty orders pursuant to 10 U.S.C. Section 1209 and 1211.” (emphasis added). These provisions should both cite instead to 10 U.S.C. Chapter 1209 and 1211. This is a scrivener’s (i.e. technical) error in a section of the Compact which controls its coverage area, and as such it is best practice that the citation error should be corrected in each impacted state.

- II. Issue two Summary: Should the compact be amended at the national level, and consequently be required for formal adoption by every state, to include children of National Guard and Reserve members?

Discussion followed with state council members to include questions, and answers provided by Commissioner Lynch, MIC3 Executive Director, Cherise Imai and MIC3 General Counsel Stuart Michael. The discussion also included the review of the numbers of full time and active Guard Members in WA. Numbers provided by Nation Guard member, CSM Bruce Ecclestone, (included in the attached PowerPoint presentation).

For issue number one; a potential “technical fix” to correct the administrative error outlined above would be required by the WA state legislature. Each state to include WA, would need to make an independent decision to make the technical fix following their respective legislative processes.

For issue number two; should the WA National Guard and Reserve receive identical benefits as those currently provided under the Compact. The Compact currently provides identical benefits for National Guard and Reserve members who are working full-time or have been federally activated as highlighted in the current Compact. The numbers of full-time and activated members in WA and past history around support of children in WA public schools suggest children of activated and full-time members are receiving Compact support as intended. As part of the discussion, and also highlighted in the attachments, every state if they so choose, could adopt separate legislation outside the National Compact, to accommodate National Guard and Reserve families as required and within their respective states.

Discussion also included the potential costs of opening the Compact, and compelling every state to readopt any new changes that could include changes beyond the current proposal. Commissioner Lynch pointed out that it took nearly ten years for every state plus Washington DC to adopt the current Compact. Any additional material changes could be costly, time-consuming and potentially eliminate states who could decide to not readopt the Compact.

Commissioner Lynch called for questions, additional discussion and summarized the two issues require state council guidance in preparation for the MIC3 National Meeting in Baton Rouge, LA on 18 and 19 Oct. The two questions to the Council were:

Issue one: should WA pursue a technic fix to the current Compact language as outline above? The WA MIC3 Council agreed to support a technical change to the Compact.

Issue two: should the WA National Guard and Reserve receive identical benefits as those currently provided under the Compact. The WA MIC3 Council agreed to not support any additional Compact change at this time.

Matt Schulz of OSPI Legal Counsel, Chief Legal & Civil Rights Officer, Navy Veteran, Commander in Reserves, spoke of challenges regarding residency, and the pre-COVID challenge when online schools were not an issue to current educational structures. With apportionment funding based on student count, big question: How to differentiate between short-term and long-term TAD orders? Convoluted funding models and ways school districts are paid for students have made it harder post-COVID when virtual schools want kids to stay enrolled, yet districts cannot support students who are not physically there. School districts get unfunded mandates and have to pay for programs. The educational environment has changed and getting worse post-COVID.

Comm. Lynch thanked Ex-Officio Members and all for coming, thanked schools and superintendents for data information. Although Commissioner Lynch retired in June as the ESD 114 Superintendent, he will remain as the WA MIC3 Commissioner and continue to represent WA during the upcoming National MIC3 Meeting.

Adjourned at 11:28am.

Agenda and handouts attached.



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Respectfully submitted by

Ronnie Larson, CEOE

Administrative Assistant

Student Engagement and Support

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)

Phone: 360.725.4967

All students prepared for postsecondary pathways, careers, and civic engagement.



MIC3 WA State Council Meeting - IN ATTENDANCE 10/11/22

Council Members:

Greg Lynch, Commissioner, Superintendent, OESD 114
Christine Rolfes, Senator
Phil Lamb, Colonel, JBLM Commander
Norma Martinez-Melo, Military/Uniform Family Liaison, JBLM
Kelly Scheese, Military/Uniform Family Liaison, NRNW
Erin Prince, Superintendent, Central Kitsap School District
Ron Banner, Superintendent, Clover Park School District
Tim Ames, Superintendent, Medical Lake School District
Mick Hoffman, Executive Director, WIAA
Andrew Estep, Executive Director, PTA

Additional Meeting Attendees:

Rear Admiral Sucato
CDR Jon Burby
Adrienne Perez
Antoinette Walker
Arielle Matthews
Brian Lowney
Cherise Imai
Dixie Grunenfelder
Jesse Milton
Kirsten Rue
Krestin Bahr
Matt Schulz
Michael Stuart
Natalie Wimberley
Rey Ornelas
Ronnie Larson
Shawn Lewis
Stephanie Laux
Tammie Perreault
Teri Hebert
Tim Winter
Tina Schulz

Council Members Not in Attendance:

Carrie Basas, Director, Office of Education Ombuds
Ann Rivers, Senator
Dave Paul, Representative
Chris Reykdal, State Superintendent of Public Instruction
Aaron Leavell, Superintendent, OESD 114
Randy Spaulding, Exec. Director SBE