

State of Delaware

MIC3 Annual Report June 2021

Delaware continues to be an active partner in MIC3. Delaware was an original member of the Compact with Delaware's Interstate Compact on Education for Children of Military Families legislation signed on July 9, 2008. Dr. Susan K. Haberstroh was appointed by then Governor Minner to serve as the State Commissioner and continues to serve in this position.

The State Council meets annually. The 2021 State Council meeting was held virtually on March 12, 2021. The meeting notes (Appendix A) were provided to the National Office. The highlights from the meeting included a presentation from The National Guard's Youth ChalleNGe Program by Karen Hughes; a presentation by Cherise Imai, Executive Director for Military Interstate Child Compact Commission, on "Should the Compact be Expanded to Include Dependents of the National Guard and Reserves beyond Title 10"; Observance of Recognition of the Military Child in the State of Delaware; Purple Star Update; review of the current number of military dependents based on the State's definition; programming highlights from the National Guard; and plans for a next steps meeting regarding the National Guard and Reserve Task Force decision.

At the 2020 Annual Business Meeting, all states plus DC were asked to provide their position on the recommendation of the National Guard and Reserve Coverage Task Force. On May 10, 2021, a follow up meeting was held to determine Delaware's decision. Delaware will provide its decision to the National Office as requested by August 31, 2021.

Delaware is considered a small state in regard to military dependents. Delaware's number of Active Military Dependents (ages 5-18) was determined to be 1,666 (reported as FY22 Dues from the 2020 Annual Business Meeting). Delaware laws were changed in August 2015 and the State has been collecting "military connected student" information beginning with the 2016-17 school year. The number of students reported at the March 2020 meeting was 4,638. Because of COVID-19, the reporting for the 2020-21 school year was not completed by all districts and schools as was demonstrated by much lower "military connected student" numbers.

Delaware's definition is more expansive than that used for dues and is as follows:

Developing a process for districts and charter schools to annually identify any enrolled student who is a "military-connected youth." For purposes of this section, a "military-connected youth" means having an immediate family member, including a parent, stepparent, sibling or any other person residing in the same household, who is on active duty in; serving in the reserve component; or recently retired from a "branch of the United States armed forces." For purposes of this section, "branch of the United States armed forces" means:

- a. *United States Army;*
- b. *United States Air Force;*
- c. *United States Marine Corps;*
- d. *United States Navy;*
- e. *National Guard;*

f. *United States Coast Guard;*

g. *National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; or*

h. *United States Public Health Service.*

Over this past year (2020-2021), as Commissioner, no calls came to my office related to the Compact. Last year, there was an issue with a family that wished to enroll without established residency. While this was resolved by contacting the school district, legislation has been introduced by Delaware's General Assembly ([House Bill No. 173](#)) outside of the Compact language to address this issue. This legislation is not in conflict with the Compact language. As of May 24, 2021, this legislation has not passed into law.

The synopsis of the HB 173 bill reads:

This Act allows the parent or guardian of a military-connected student to preliminarily enroll the student by remote registration in a school district where the parent or guardian is in the active military of the United States or in full-time status during active service with a force of the Delaware National Guard, if the parent or guardian is being transferred to Delaware under military orders and is transferred to or is pending transfer to a military installation within Delaware.

During the course of the year, there have been opportunities for the field to learn more about the Compact. The 2020-2021 school year was particularly challenging because of COVID 19. Typically, there would be an opportunity for training of our school counselors and other school support staff. This did not occur as planned but the hope is that during the 2021-2022 school year, trainings will resume.

Delaware has decided to move forward with implementing the Purple Star program. It has been clearly articulated to the State Council that the Purple Star program is outside of the Compact. Additionally, legislation has also been introduced ([Senate Bill 117 as amended](#)) to codify this program in Delaware Code. As of May 24, 2021, this legislation has not passed into law.

The Month of the Military Child in Delaware was celebrated differently last year and this year because of COVID 19. Governor Carney issued his annual Proclamation this year via Zoom on April 23, 2021. The recording was made available through the Governor's [Facebook](#) page. On occasion we have honored a person that has held significant contribution to our military connect students. This year Major General Carol A. Timmons was honored. The Governor signed the 2021 April Month of the Military Child Proclamation during a Live Zoom. Also participating in the Zoom were Dr. Susan Bunting, the Delaware Secretary of Education; Adjutant General Major General Mike Berry with the Delaware National Guard; Joe Huber, student and first recipient of the Major General Carol A. Timmons Scholarship; Col. Shanon Anderson, Vice Wing Commander of the 436 Airlift Wing the Dover Air Force Base and family, Major Kady Griffin, 436 Force Support Squadron Commander and family; and Dr. Kevin Fitzgerald, Superintendent with the Caesar Rodney School District.

Current State Council Roster for 2021

Dr. Susan Haberstroh, State Commissioner for the MIC3	Delaware Dept. of Education
Dr. Susan Bunting, Secretary of Education	Delaware Dept. of Education
Doug Crouse, 4H Military Liaison	UD Cooperative
Jennifer Davis, Education Associate, Student Supports and Special Populations	Dept. of Education
Patrick "Mickey" Devlin	DE National Guard
Laurie Sisk	DAFB School Liaison
Dr. Kevin Fitzgerald, Superintendent	Caesar Rodney SD
Carey Corbin, President	DE PTA
Representative Kimberly Williams	DE House of Representatives
Christine Kubik	DE National Guard
Colonel Phelemon Williams	Dover Air Force Base
Dr. Ronald Sarg	Military Officers Assoc. of America
Senator Laura Sturgeon	DE Senate

The primary contact is Susan Haberstroh, Delaware Department of Education
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The secondary contact is Jennifer (Jenn) Davis, Delaware Department of Education
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Respectfully submitted,
Susan K. Haberstroh
State Commissioner

Attachments: Appendix A

Appendix A
DRAFT MEETING NOTES – to be approved at the 2022 meeting

**STATE COUNCIL FOR THE INTERSTATE COMPACT ON EDUCATION FOR
CHILDREN OF MILITARY FAMILIES**

March 12, 2021

Meeting was held virtually.

Attendees:

Dr. Susan Haberstroh, Dept. of Education	Dr. Susan Bunting, Dept. of Education
Patrick “Mick” Devlin, DE National Guard	Doug Crouse, UD Cooperative
Jennifer Davis, Dept. of Education	Christine Kubik, DE National Guard
Dr. Kevin Fitzgerald, Caesar Rodney SD	Carey Corbin, DE PTA
Colonel Phelemon Williams, DAFB	Senator Laura Sturgeon, DE Senate
Laurie Sisk, DAFB School Liaison	Representative Kim Williams, DE House of
Dr. Ronald Sarg, Military Officers Assoc.	Representatives

Introductions and Welcome:

The State Council for the Interstate Compact on Education for Children of Military Families (MIC) was called to order at 11:30 a.m. on Friday, March 12, 2021 by State Commissioner for MIC Dr. Susan Haberstroh. Dr. Haberstroh explained that the group is required to meet once a year. Everyone was welcomed to the meeting and introductions were made. Karen Hughes, who is the Counselor Liaison with Youth ChalleNGe Program and Cherise Imai, Executive Director for the Military Interstate Childrens Compact Commission were also in attendance to make presentations.

Approval of Meeting Notes from March 12, 2020:

The Committee reviewed meeting minutes from March 12, 2020 meeting. Dr. Sarg made a motion to accept the meeting minutes and Ms. Davis seconded, motion passed. Abstaining from this vote were Dr. Bunting, Doug Crouse, Carey Corbin, Christine Kubik, Representative Kim Williams, Senator Laura Sturgeon, Colonel Phelemon Williams.

Presentation From The National Guard’s Youth ChalleNGe Program

Karen Hughes explained that this program is for youth 16-18 that are at-risk, disengaged high school students and produce program graduates with the values, skills, education, and self-discipline necessary to succeed as adults. Karen also commented on the requirements for the program which include the students must be committed to making a change, drug free, no violent or felony offenses, no history of mental disorders, citizen or legal resident of the United States and resident of Delaware, and must undergo an up-to-date medical review.

Karen explained that the program is broken into three phases. The pre-challenge is the first two weeks where the students get acclimated to being away from home. After the two weeks they will move to Cadet and this phase lasts for five months. During the five months they take classes and their PT and go through the structure of the program. After they graduate, for the next year

the program will continue working with the students to help them in any way that they can. Karen shared success stories and commented that this program is affiliated with Washington DC because Delaware does not have its own program.

Karen reviewed different events that the program offers throughout the year such as Military Exploration Day, Community Service Day, Exploration Day and Graduation Day.

Representative Kim Williams asked how long this program has been in effect and if there were any data around how many cohorts of students there has been and how many of the students have gone on to graduating or technical field. Karen responded that Delaware has its own data regarding their cadets and will forward that information to Susan Haberstroh. Karen also responded that the program started in 1996 and Delaware has been affiliated with the DC program since 2016.

Presentation from the MIC3 National Office Update on National Guard and Reserve Coverage Task Force:

Cherise Imai, Executive Director for Military Interstate Child Compact Commission (MIC3), provided a presentation on “Should the Compact be Expanded to Include Dependents of the National Guard and Reserves beyond Title 10?”

Cherise explained that when the Compact language was first being developed the Department of Defense provided a grant to the Council of State Government (CSG) and formed a task force that looked at who should be covered by this potential compact language. Cherise explained that at that time the National Guard and Reserve outside of Title 10 were not experiencing moves as frequently as those included under Title 10 and thus the reason why only Title 10 was used in the Compact language. Over the past several years, this mobility has changed.

Cherise explained that the Compact covers which includes “active-duty members of the uniformed services, including members of the National Guard and Reserve on active-duty orders (Title 10)”. Cherise stated that several years ago the State of Utah requested that the Compact expand to other titles partly because the State of Utah actually extended their compact coverage to all National Guard and Reserve families by changing their compact statute. Cherise explained that a compact is an agreement between all the signing states. Because the State of Utah changed its compact they actually changed their contract with all the other states by expanding their compact. Cherise commented that in 2019 the MIC3 Executive Committee created the National Guard and Reserve Task Force and their mission was to collect and analyze relevant data in order to recommend whether MIC3 protections for military-connected students already in place should be expanded to cover children of members in other title status situations as well.

Cherise reviewed data for Active-Duty Sponsors and commented that Delaware is on the lower scale for impaction of active duty and that Delaware pays the minimum dues amount as there is a minimum and maximum established. Cherise explained that if there were a change the dues for Delaware would increase from \$2300.00 to \$4108.00 based on the same dues calculation. Cherise

commented that the impact of the budget increase to states is a concern. She also commented that the dues formula for the dues is in the Bylaws.

Cherise presented that the National Guard and Reserve Task Force recommendation was presented to the commission at the Annual Business Meeting (ABM) in October 2020 and included the projected financial impact by State. Cherise reported that the recommendation from the Task Force supported expansion of the compact to include all duty statuses. The recommendation also took into account for the commission to propose amendments to the model compact language for enactment by member states and no amendment shall be effective until it is enacted into law unanimously.

Cherise reviewed some of the Commissioner's concerns and stated that the MIC3 National Council decided not to adopt the Task Force recommendation and asked states to discuss with their state councils and stakeholders the proposal including the dues increase with the addition of the National Guard and Reserve dependents. Cherise commented that from October through December the Executive Committee developed a guidance to help Commissioners have a discussion regarding the options. Cherise then reviewed the pros and cons of the options for possible courses of action. The five options were: 1) Amend the Compact Statute; 2) Amend State Codes Outside the Compact; 3) Create an "Enhanced Compact"; 4) Adopt a Memorandum of Agreement; or 5) Take No Action At This Time.

Susan Haberstroh commented that the National Guard has been involved with Delaware's State Council since the Compact began in Delaware. (*Note: Delaware passed legislation in 2008 and was one of the 11 originating states*). In addition, she reported that she has not had concerns voiced by National Guard families since she has been involved. Since the MIC3 National Council is asking for input from each state, Delaware's position will need to be presented at the 2021 ABM. Christine Kubik commented that from a National Guard's perspective they have not had any concerns or barriers serving the military connected youth in Delaware. Dr. Susan Bunting commented that speaking from the side of a school district where she has spent a lot of time it was their privilege to work with the military children and did whatever they needed to do to accommodate them and agrees that she has not seen any problems in the past. Dr. Kevin Fitzgerald also commented that he has not had any issues and commented that the National Guard has been a part of the MIC3 compact commission as long as he has been involved and has always been welcomed and a viable part of our school community. Susan Haberstroh commented that this Commission will need to review the options and take a position and plan to meet in May to discuss the options. Since the MIC3 National Council is in the fall, there would not be a need for any legislation this legislative session.

Observance of Recognition of the Military Child in the State of Delaware

Susan Haberstroh reminded the Commission that April is the month of the Military Child and typically we draft a Senate Concurrent Resolution that is introduced to the Senate and the House and have the military families come to meet with the Governor and the Senate and the House and do a presentation. In the past we have also recognized an individual and this year we are suggesting to honor Major General Carol A. Timmons. Christine Kubik was able to provide proposed language honoring Major General Carol A. Timmons. There was discussion regarding how best

to conduct this ceremony during COVID-19. Representative Williams and Senator Sturgeon noted that Resolutions and public opportunities were not available at this time. Dr. Fitzgerald noted he would look into options.

Susan Haberstroh also commented that we do usually provide a report on the number of military connected children in the Resolution. Susan commented that Jenn Davis was able to pull the data for this year and it is down from the past year. Jenn Davis explained that when she ran the data for this year she noticed the numbers were low in many of our districts. Jenn Davis commented that she reached out to some of the districts to find out why the numbers were low and through conversation with some of the people from the districts identified that the challenges around COVID and the students not returning to school at the beginning of the year presented challenges for the schools to get the information back which has impacted the numbers. Jenn Davis commented that the schools do have the forms for next year and are working on increasing messaging around making sure they are getting the forms completed and back to the schools. Jenn commented that this year's data does not accurately reflect what we currently have in the schools. Susan commented that they will work on some language around this sentence in the resolution.

There was discussion regarding how best to conduct this ceremony during COVID-19. Susan Haberstroh asked Representative Williams and Senator Sturgeon if a presentation via zoom could be done with the kids in regards to the resolution. Representative Williams commented that they have not been having anyone speak since they are virtual. Senator Sturgeon commented that it is the same in the Senate with no guests. Susan commented that we have not picked an exact date but would happen in April. Senator Sturgeon commented that she would speak with her leadership and get back with DOE. Dr. Fitzgerald suggested doing a zoom presentation where the Governor was going to sign the proclamation with Dr. Bunting, Senator Sturgeon, Representative Williams, and other members of the House or Senate, member of the military committee or DAFB and we could do what we could with the students. Susan Haberstroh said that she will work on this with Dr. Bunting. Dr. Fitzgerald commended the Commissioner for honoring Major General Timmons.

Purple Star Update:

Jenn Davis updated the Council on Purple Star and commented that there have been conversations around the Purple Star's School designation. This is an initiative from the Department of Defense and the Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC). Jenn explained that this gives the schools the opportunity to get a specific designation to identify them as schools that go above and beyond for the military connected youth. Jenn further explained that the primary goal of the program is to insure that staff can help manage the challenges of military connected children based on when they move between schools with their different school cultures, curriculum standards, sports offerings, scheduling, and graduation requirements. Jenn commented on the requirements and that states can identify additional requirements. The requirements could include designating a staff for point of contact for military students, establish a dedicated page on the school website that includes information and resources for military families, maintain a student led transition program, and providing professional development for addition staff on special considerations for military students and families. Jenn commented that she has pulled together a group of people to see if this would be a good idea for Delaware

students. Laurie Sisk commented that she feels that this will help all of the military connected students. Cherise commented that Hawaii has a similar program and the schools that received the award would do a video highlighting what they do for the military students. Susan commented that Purple Star is not a requirement of MIC3 but MCEC is advocating for this as well as the DOD. Susan commented that some states have created legislation and would like to be part of the conversation if Delaware decides to go through legislation for this program. Susan also commented there may need to be a subcommittee of this Council to review applications. Dr. Fitzgerald suggested waiting to see what the program involves before going to legislation.

Other Discussion as needed:

Patrick Devlin, Delaware National Guard, shared that last year they did a variety of virtual programs but that this year they plan to do more in person events following the CDC guidelines. The week-long summer camp will not happen this year but will have other programs for the kids to get together with other National Guard kids.

Susan summarized that there will be a meeting scheduled in May regarding the next steps related to the National Guard and Reserve Task Force decision needed for the MIC3 National Council Annual Business Meeting in the fall. We will also connect with Christine to see if there is any other data that could be shared before that meeting. We will also keep everyone updated on the Purple Star.

Public Comment:

None.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.