



ALABAMA STATE COUNCIL
Friday, August 9, 2024

PRESENT	Dr. Douglas L. Ragland Dr. Autumm Jeter	Alabama Compact Commissioner, Chair Assistant Superintendent for Support Services, Alabama State Department of Education & Military Education Family Liaison
	Nick Moore	Education Policy Advisor, Executive Office of the Governor
	Brigadier General David Pritchett Joshua Robertson Kim Vickers	Alabama National Guard Superintendent, Daleville City Schools Associate Athletic Director, Alabama High School Athletics Association
NON-VOTING MEMBERS		
	Kimberly Kozel	Department of Defense Military Representative, and School Liaison, Fort Novosel, US Army
	Robert Richert	School Liaison 42nd Force Support Squadron, Maxwell AFB
	Katheryn Ganster	School Liaison 42nd Force Support Squadron, Maxwell AFB
	Erica Lewis	School Liaison, Fort Rucker, US Army
STAFF		
	Cherise Imai	MIC3 Executive Director
	Lindsey Dablow	MIC3 Training and Operations Associate
	Allie Thomas	MIC3 Operations Coordinator
EXCUSED		
	Dr. Eric Mackey Nyoka Johnson Sen. J. T. "Jabo" Waggoner	State Superintendent of Education CYS Coordinator, Anniston Army Depot Alabama Senator for District Sixteen and Senate Rules Chairman State of Alabama

ITEM 1 – CALL TO ORDER

1. The meeting was called to order at 10:02 AM CT by Alabama Compact Commissioner and Chair, Dr. Douglas L. Ragland.

ITEM 2 – ROLL CALL

2. The Chair directed Ms. Allie Thomas, MIC3 Operations Coordinator, to call roll. A quorum was established.

ITEM 3 – WELCOME

3. Chair Ragland welcomed the state council members and provided opening remarks. Brigadier General (BG) David Pritchett was introduced as a new member to the state council, replacing Major General Sheryl Gordon as the Alabama National Guard representative.

ITEM 4 – APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

4. **Mr. Joshua Robertson motioned to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Kim Vickers. The motion carried.**

ITEM 5 – APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

5. **Mr. Robertson motioned to approve the minutes of August 9, 2023, as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Vickers. The motion carried.**

ITEM 6 – NEW BUSINESS

6. **Alabama Department of Education Update** – Dr. Autumm Jeter provided an update on the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) Strategic Plan – Five Pillars of Service with a report provided by the State Superintendent of Education, Dr. Eric Mackey. Key data points of the report included significant improvements to Alabama's state reading scores, the rise of high school graduation rates above 90%, and increases in career planning programs for post-graduate paths and secondary education. Dr. Jeter announced a new partnership between Dr. Mackey and the Maxwell Leadership Foundation that would offer free programs to school districts for character education and organization.

7. **Alabama High School Athletic Association Update** – Ms. Vickers reported the Alabama High School Athletic Association welcomed Mr. Heath Harmon as the new Executive Director and announced that practices had begun for Alabama school sports. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed with Madison City Schools allowing students from Redstone Arsenal to attend private or public schools in Huntsville and Madison City, allowing immediate eligibility to participate in varsity athletics upon enrollment. Ms. Erica Lewis shared that her students from Redstone Arsenal were very excited about the MOU and the opportunities to participate in athletic programs.

8. **Governor's Office** – Mr. Nick Moore reported Governor Kay Ivey's office was working to resolve licensing and reciprocity issues to ensure military families could participate in new school choice options. A new Education Savings Account program was developed under the Choose Act and would be available next year, prioritizing military families and families that are 300% under the state poverty level. The application and rules for the program were in development and would be promulgated by the Alabama Department of Revenue in the fall. Mr. Moore reported six consecutive increases in the Education Trust Fund have occurred throughout Governor Ivey's six years in office. The base pay for teachers in Alabama increased 24% in seven years to \$47,000, which is now the highest base pay for new teachers in the southeastern states.

9. **Alabama National Guard Update** – BG Pritchett introduced a new Executive Overview report, which outlined the mission, number of deployments, budget, and operations for the Alabama National Guard (ALNG.) He was proud to report that almost \$9 million of the ALNG budget was going towards the Education Trust Fund to assist military personnel and families seeking education opportunities. BG Pritchett highlighted that the number of assigned soldiers was higher than the number of ALNG open positions, indicating Alabama's Army and Air Force recruitment strength was steady.

10. **Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Dues** – Chair Ragland reported the fiscal year dues for FY2024 were \$11,330.00. Due to an invoicing error from the national office, the ALSDE paid \$11,300 of the dues on May 7, 2024. Chair Ragland announced a revised invoice for the remaining balance of \$30 was forwarded to the ALSDE for remittal and will be paid as soon as possible.

11. **Supporting Documents** – Chair Ragland shared the End-of-Year Report for 2023-2024 with the members, along with the Governor's Month of the Military Proclamation and the Governor's Alabama Council Commendation. Chair Ragland introduced the Citation Correction memorandum requesting a correction to the model language of the Compact in Article II(A) and Article III(A)(1), where "10 U.S.C. Section 1209 and 1211" is written instead of "10 U.S.C. Chapters 1209 and 1211." A state can correct the statute language by making a technical update or proposing a formal amendment, with caution to not change any other language of the statute other than the required correction. Chair Ragland advised a technical update would be the best method to correct the statute language for Alabama and stated he would be in touch with Dr. Jeter to determine the course of action.

ITEM 7 - REPORTS

12. **National Commission** – Executive Director (ED) Cherise Imai reviewed the FY2024 Case and Inquiry Report at the national level. She noted the data has been collected by the Commission for the past 5 years. The national office received 54 cases in FY2024, which was less than the average of 70 cases per year seen in the past, but not unexpected due to the large number of new Commissioners who joined this year. Most of the inquiries were received by parents and were not compacted related, however Commissioners and schools assisted families with information and referrals in these cases. These topics included school choice, early withdrawal and final grades, and pre-k program entrance ages. She reported many of the compact related inquiries were regarding Placement and Attendance. Most of the cases were from Tier 1 or the highest impacted states, such as Virginia, California, and Texas – which is expected. Alabama had the third most cases of the year as a Tier 2 state. The national office received 12 cases since FY2025 began in July.

13. ED Imai notified Members that registration for the 2024 Annual Business Meeting was open and invited them to attend if they were interested. The event will be held at Hotel Albuquerque at Old Town in Albuquerque, New Mexico on October 16-17, 2024.

14. ED Imai introduced the Penn State Study regarding the Compact and other Department of Defense (DOD) initiatives passed through the Defense State Liaison Office (DSLO). The DOD had made requests to add subjects for the compact to cover that were not feasible or possible to accommodate due to the compact language and promulgation process. The study compared the ways each state implemented the compact, but more clarification needed to be provided because the research was not thorough. The first two phases are complete and published, and the third phase will be released in 2025.

15. **School Liaison Officers & Military Representatives Reports**

- a. **Maxwell AFB** – Robert Richert and Katheryn Ganster – Mr. Richert reported the School Liaisons at Maxwell AFB received multiple inquiries that were not compact related and were handled at the local level. Most of the inquiries regarded program and course placement along with questions about Pre-K enrollment and enrollment in magnet

schools. Mr. Richert reported that there were 250 Purple Star designated schools in the district.

- b. **Redstone Arsenal** – Erica Lewis – Ms. Erica Lewis reported Redstone Arsenal welcomed a new Garrison Commander and held an Impact Aid kickoff. The Arsenal was proud to have held an in-person Junior Reserve Officer's Training Club (JROTC) event this year, which was the first since 2019, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) partnered with district superintendents to host a visit at the Arsenal. Ms. Lewis stated that many compact cases she had received were resolved at the local level.
- c. **Fort Novosel** – Kim Kozel – Ms. Kozel reported many Purple Star schools in the district were completing professional development with the Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) to complete second-term designations. An MOU was signed with Enterprise City Schools that provides transportation to pick up kids from elementary schools and bring them over to after-school program facilities.

ITEM 8 – OTHER

16. Chair Ragland announced the passing of Dr. Diane Flournoy in February 2024. Dr. Flournoy was an inaugural member of the Alabama State Council since 2017 and an educator with Daleville City Schools for 42 years. A posthumous MIC3 Community Award would be mailed to Dr. Flournoy's family to honor her compassion and service to the Commission and military children in Alabama.

ITEM 9 – ADJOURNMENT

17. With no further business before the council, **Mr. Robertson motioned to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Vickers seconded the motion. The motion carried.** Commissioner Ragland adjourned the meeting at 11:26 AM CT.