

**MSLC/State Council for Military Children**  
**Joint Meeting**  
**November 30, 2023**  
**Meeting at Beacon Point Homes Community Center**  
**100 Tern Road, Groton, CT 06340**

## **MINUTES**

Attendees State Council: Captain Curtin, Terrell Hill, Jason Hartling, Val Nelson, Kristea Francolino, Rep. Holly Cheeseman, Bob Ross, Laura Anastasio, Miranda Chapman

Attendees MSLC: Groton-Susan Austin, Seth Danner, Val Nelson; Ledyard- Jay Hartling; North Stonington – Troy Hopkins; Navy CYP-Kayla Miner, Elizabeth Mosier; New London-Kristea Francolino; Norwich- Susan Lessard; US Navy-Captain Curtin, MCEC- Kathleen O.'Beirne; CT Office of Military Affairs- Bob Ross; National Guard- Carrie Joseph; Coast Guard Academy- Ana Johnson; Former military/educator- Robert Welt

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Review, amend and approve MSLC/MIC3 minutes from the May 2023 meeting. Motion to approve the minutes was seconded. The minutes from the May meeting were approved by unanimous vote.
3. MIC3 Legal Advisory: Tribal Nations  
Attorney Anastasio provided the group with copies of MIC3 Legal Advisory 1-2023. Since there are no public schools operating on tribal lands in Connecticut, there is no issue for the state.
4. Update on MIC3 ABM.  
Attorney Anastasio provided highlights of the MIC3 ABM. This year the most controversial issue was the budget for the upcoming fiscal year. After lengthy discussion and debate, the Finance Committee's recommendation to adopt their proposed budget was approved. Attorney Anastasio noted that MIC3 will be considering a dues increase. Given the low cost of CT's dues, she did not feel it was a problem for the SDE to allocate funds for membership. Currently there is no line item in the state budget because of the amount of the dues, which is approximately 4500 per year. Commission voted in Blue Star Families as a new ex-officio member. MIC3 is launching a training portal which will make access to MIC3 trainings more accessible to schools/families.
5. Next ABM is in Albuquerque, NM. MIC3 will be considering whether it is cost effective to hold a virtual meeting in lieu of the Albuquerque meeting, however, the cost of cancelling may be too high.
6. MIC3 Activities:  
NCOSEA training at NASBE: due to the apparent lack of understanding in certain states of their obligations to enforce the Compact, Attorney Anastasio made a presentation for the National Council of State Education Attorneys on the Interstate Compact in San Diego. The presentation was well received by participants.  
The National Association of Federally Impacted Schools: Attorney Anastasio attended the conference to award NAFIS with a commendation from MIC3 in celebration of its anniversary. MIC3 has published Spanish collaterals for Spanish speaking servicemembers.

7. State Council concerns, issues, other items

The group discussed the Military Spouse Licensing Relief Act, which amended the Servicemembers' Civil Relief Act. This Act requires state to recognize professional licenses of military spouses from other states to permit them to continue employment in a new state if (1) the change of residency is due to military orders, (2) the individual is in good standing in the issuing state, and (3) the individual subjects him or herself to the disciplinary and continuing education requirements in the receiving state. The group discussed the impact for the school districts.

8. Penn State Study of the Compact

When Congress reauthorized the National Defense Authorization Act, it required the Department of Defense to student the efficacy of the Interstate Compact. Part of the focus is on the obstacles military families face when relocating with a disabled child. Often the IEPs are not implemented in a timely manner, and the child is not offered the same or comparable services (often because some districts may not have the ability to provide such services.) Ms. Anastasio stated that she has not received any complaints about special education services for military families. Ms. Chapman noted that, for her knowledge, local schools implement the IEP and comparable services immediately; she has not had families contact her about challenges with transitioning their IEP to a new school in a timely manner. In addition to the effectiveness of the Compact, the SPEAK study is exploring the Military Student Identifier, advanced enrolment, and Purple Star schools.

The NDAA also requires DoD to make recommendations for changes to the Compact. Ms. Anastasio stated that it appeared that some members of Congress may have been under the mistaken belief that the Compact was a federally approved Compact, which it is not. She and the Executive Director of MIC3 met with Representative Courtney's office to ask for assistance in informing congressional delegates that the Compact cannot be changed without jeopardizing its existence. MIC3 representatives have also met with Hawaii delegates to discuss the same issue.

9. Local school/military updates - round table

A. Miranda Chapman- School Liaison- 1) The Defense State Liaison Office (DSLO) puts out a top ten issues to address each year and advocates for legislation. There are some that are directly education-related, but others that may impact other aspects of local policies. Miranda will email the top ten issues and the DSLO contact info for members to share feedback and/or inquire for more information. 2) We are still pursuing getting information on military enlistment as a positive post-secondary outcome. Mr. Ross will re-engage after the new year.

B. Troy Hopkins- North Stonington- NS Elementary hosted a successful Veterans' Day celebration with 65 people recognized. It was a great event.

C. Susan Austin- Groton- Groton remains an Alliance district for the time-being.

D. Kristea Francolino- New London Public Schools- NJROTC Pass and Review went well; High school construction complete, there will be some road re-construction required to address; Welcome Center will be opening at the new location in January; Thursday, December 7<sup>th</sup> they will be hosting a magnet school showcase for grades 6-12.

E. Carrie Joseph- National Guard- Operation Elf and Adopt-a-family for the holidays programs are coming up; they are not a large number of soldiers currently deployed, so many will be home for the holidays

F. Kathleen O'Beirne- MCEC- shared good personal news – her daughter will be working at the US Naval Academy supporting them with Wellness and Prevention

G. CAPT Curtin- SUBASE- only one submarine is planned to be away at Christmas, so most families will be united for the holidays

H. Susan Lessard- Norwich Public Schools- shared the VFW scholarship programs- Patriot's Pen and Voice of Democracy. These are open to all students, no military affiliation required.

Deadline Oct 31 yearly, info at <https://www.vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/youth-scholarships>

I. Kayla Miner- Navy Youth and Teen Coordinator- invited all to the Youth Center's Youth of the Year Competition on Friday, February 9<sup>th</sup>. The YOY competition is a scholarship program.

Students from Ledyard Middle, Groton middle, and Fitch will be competing.

J. Terrell Hill- Windsor Public Schools- first time attending, happy to be present and involved in the discussion

K. Rep. Holly Cheeseman- State of CT- upcoming legislative session is short; will continue to work with Bob Ross on military-related issues

10. Upcoming military-related programs, initiatives, or resources- NTR

11. Announcements- 2024 winter/spring meeting dates will be sent out later this month

12. Adjournment