

**KENTUCKY STATE COUNCIL
MILITARY INTERSTATE CHILDREN'S COMPACT COMMISSION**

Minutes

January 30, 2024 1:00PM EST

MS Teams, hosted from the Kentucky State Capitol

1. CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Steven P. Bullard, Commissioner, Kentucky State Council
Called to order at 1:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of January 24, 2023 meeting were shared by email immediately following last year's meeting and prior to this year's meeting. Meeting contributors included Commissioner Bullard, Military MIC3 Representative Colonel Chris Ricci (Fort Knox Garrison Commander), Hardin County Schools Superintendent Teresa Morgan, Tracy Leath representing Christian County Public Schools Superintendent Chris Bentzel, State Senator Mike Wilson, State Representative Myron Dossett, Kentucky Department of Education Director of Government Relations Brian Perry, Fort Knox School Liaison Officer Brenda Weatherington, Fort Campbell School Liaison Officer Laquvia Garrett, Lindsey Dablow of the national MIC3 office staff, and Stacey Shane (KCMA).

3. NATIONAL OVERVIEW OF MIC3

Lindsey Dablow, National MIC3 Training and Operations Associate, presented an overview of current national MIC3 programs and reviewed the 2023 Annual Business Meeting (ABM) held in November in Richmond, Virginia. Dablow praised the MIC3 team's outstanding relationship with the Kentucky council and school liaison officers, noting that Fort Campbell School Liaison Officer Laquvia Garrett attended the annual meeting in Richmond.

Developed in 2006 by the U.S. Department of Defense and the Council of State Governments, by 2015 it was adopted by all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The Compact eases educational challenges that military-connected students encounter and supports easing transfers between public school districts and U.S. Department of Defense schools. Issues covered by the compact include enrollment, placement and attendance, and graduation.

Keynote speakers included Dr. Lisa Coons, State Superintendent of Education, and retired Army Major General Craig Crenshaw, Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs who underscored the importance of taking care of our military servicemen, women, and their families. Business items included business reports, briefs from the U.S. Departments of Defense and Education, and Blue Star Families was approved as an advisory member. Military school district superintendents from Kansas and New Jersey spoke to the challenges students encounter in a post-pandemic environment, and how their schools provide innovative

mental health and academic support. A panel highlighted Project SEARCH, which connects high school students with intellectual and developmental disabilities to internships and on-the-job training at Naval Air Station (NAS) Oceana in Virginia Beach.

Newly elected officers include Louisiana Commissioner Ernise Singleton as chair after serving two terms as vice chair; Minnesota Commissioner, Daron Korte, as vice chair; and Washington Commissioner, Greg Lynch, as treasurer. The Executive Committee also includes Connecticut Commissioner, Laura Anastasio, as past chair and one non-voting member, Dianna Ganote, from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Military Community and Family Policy Office of Children, Youth and Families.

The following commissioners were appointed by Chair Singleton to the Executive Committee:

- Communication and Outreach Committee – Chad Delbridge, Wyoming Commissioner
- Compliance Committee Chair – Steven Bullard, Kentucky Commissioner
- Training Committee Chair – Shelly Ramos, Texas Commissioner

Dablow noted that MIC3's primary challenge is building awareness, so they have focused on developing resources to educate parents and schools. Available resources include free guides and brochures; monthly Compact 101 training; webinars in Spanish and American sign language; and training on request. The commission also launched a free online, on-demand training portal at mic3training.net.

She also discussed providing support to Fort Campbell for their internal staff training, through Laquvia Garrett, scheduled for February 8, 2024. Garrett has clarified that, due to the internal nature of the training, there is no request for MIC3 staff support, either on the state or national level. Training will be handled by the Fort Campbell School Liaison team.

4. STATE OVERVIEW OF MIC3

Commissioner Bullard was appointed by the Governor on August 20, 2019 to serve as the state commissioner for this national program as an additional duty for the Kentucky Commission on Military Affairs. The Kentucky MIC3 State Council was created by the Kentucky General Assembly during their 2008 session, through Senate Bill 68, sponsored by the late Senator Tom Buford.

Commissioner Bullard said Kentucky submitted our 2023 MIC3 Annual Report on June 30, 2023 and paid our annual dues on May 11, 2023. The MIC3 year runs July through June annually and dues payments are due by September 30. They are paid through the Department of Military Affairs, as KCMA has no budget function. This year's amount was \$10,355, based on K-12 dependents of military personnel assigned. Bullard submitted his mandatory annual Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest forms for 2024 at the ABM in November 2023.

Commissioner Bullard said that MIC3, which ensures smooth transfer to new school districts, is very effective here in Kentucky. We have a great partnership with Kentucky Department of Education and our DODEA school liaisons at Fort Knox and Fort Campbell. All elements continue to go well, he briefed. Our MIC3 State Council membership is full, and cases are at a

minimum, with one case thus far this current fiscal year. That case involved a Fort Campbell High School Senior who did not receive credit for French language course taken in New York State. It was successfully (and rapidly) resolved through Ms. Garrett. No further issues are anticipated.

Commissioner Bullard said we have omnibus military legislation filed by State Rep. Steve Bratcher, House Bill 200, which includes the MIC3 Compact Statute Correction for KRS 156.730 and the addition of the National Guard and Reserve to the protections of KRS 156.735. He expects it to pass easily. Last year this same legislation passed the Kentucky House unanimously and Senate committee unanimously; however, it got caught up in a logjam of bills at the end of the session and time ran out before it could receive a floor vote in the Senate. He said he has been assured by leadership that will not happen again this year. HB 200 was approved by the House Veterans, Military Affairs and Public Protection Committee this morning (and later in the week passed the House by a 91-0 vote).

5. OLD BUSINESS

Commissioner Bullard noted they are working with the Christian County Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Committee to publicize in the counties around Fort Campbell the availability in Kentucky of the new Military Child Care in Your Neighborhood-PLUS (MCCYN-PLUS) program, adopted last January. Child care providers must be certified through the Cabinet for Health and Family Services in order to qualify for the monthly stipend of up to \$1,500 for the children of military service members.

6. NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Bullard briefed the just released Penn State University's Department of Defense funded study on State Support for Military Connected Children. Kentucky fared quite well, Bullard said, with minor shortfalls in Advance Enrollment (as were the majority of states). The Kentucky General Assembly passed Advance Enrollment legislation for military children in 2019, sponsored by Rep. Chris Freeland, passing unanimously through the legislature. Where the Penn State study rated Kentucky "Red" is that the enrollment requirements established in Kentucky Revised Statute (KRS) 159.075 did not include two elements:

- A specification that orders may be used to establish residency for enrollment, and
- A specification that families do not need to appear in person to enroll.

The statute does specify the following requirements:

- Residence in a temporary on-post billeting facility,
- Residence in a purchased or leased home or apartment,
- Residence in any federal government housing or off-post military housing, including off-post military housing that may be provided through a public-private venture.

Commissioner Bullard said Rep. Freeland is interested in sponsoring legislation to fix these two areas, and said he had reached to inform the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) of the need. In the discussion that followed, state council member Brian Perry of the Department of Education said they have assessed this potential legislation and stressed that KDE already voluntarily complies with both of the unspecified areas. Perry said they are not opposed to legislation; however, it's technically not necessary. Bullard said it's still a good idea to amend

the law so that DOD has visibility on Kentucky's action. They are able to easily assess law, he noted; however, it's far more challenging to track internal processes. The council agreed with that assessment and supported the legislation, with both Sen. Wilson and Rep. Dossett noting this is a good way ahead.

(NOTE: Shortly after the meeting, Commissioner Bullard met with Rep. Freeland, who then introduced House Bill 471 to meet this goal.)

7. OPEN DISCUSSION

Commissioner Bullard said we are working through Rep. Chris Fugate to file Kentucky Purple Star Schools enabling legislation (later filed as HB 469). The official Kentucky Purple Star Schools website is at <https://www.facebook.com/KYPurpleStarAward>. Bullard also noted that Kentucky First Lady Britany Beshear plans to visit Fort Knox schools on April 19 for Purple Up! Day.

8. NEXT MEETING

January 2025, actual date to be determined.

9. ADJOURN

1:40 p.m.