

New York Military Interstate Compact Council
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday September 17th, 2025
10:30 am – 2:00 pm

Members in attendance: Debra Jackson, Melissa Montague, Heather Evangelista,

Virtual participation: Stephen Todd, Troy Decker, Michael McElduff, Wendy O'Sullivan, Kyle Belokopitsky, Lisa Beatha, Sonja Draught, Robin Banks, Emily Miller, Kristen Jadin

Excused: Kevin Getnick, Marybeth Casey, Diana Pasterchick, Betsy Gilland,

1. Debra Jackson called the meeting to order at 10:35 AM
2. Jackson shared that Stephen Todd is retiring and this will be his last meeting with the Council as a voting member. She added he has served this council since it's inception 10 years ago. He was one of the original members. Asking Stephen to speak he shared his experience of being on the ground floor at the beginning. Adding that he will miss everyone, and he shared the exciting news is that his successor was named yesterday.

Mr. Christopher DiFulvio is currently the superintendent of Cazenovia Central School District, he has extensive BOCES experience, having been at OCM BOCES in the Syracuse area previously. He begins on November 1 and the Commissioner of Education, Dr. Betty Rosa will need to appoint a district superintendent with a military population. Currently O/U BOCES does not have a DS. Should Mr. DiFulvio be appointed Mr. Todd confirmed he will onboard him about the Council and its work.

3. Michael McElduff was asked to comment on the recent NAFIS conference he attended. By all accounts it was a very successful conference. The conference introduced Cherise Imai, who spoke well of New York's work with MIC3. A possible government shutdown was discussed as well as cuts of 26% to Title I aid. Michael was able to meet with Schumer's, Gillibrand's teams and Senator Ryan.
4. Jackson remarked on the upcoming MIC3 ABM. Sharing Cherise's move to NAFIS and Lindsey Dablow's move to Interim Director.
5. Plus/Delta from last meeting:
Heather Evangelista shared that the parent perspective appreciated the collaboration, such our ability to add modified sports for the West Point DODEA middle school. Also having so many experts to turn to when they have questions. So a shout out to NYS MIC3 for that support. The group thanked Kristen Jadin and Todd Nelson from NYSPHSAA for their efforts. Kristen Jadin commented that is why they are here, Robert's cell phone is on their website and please reach out at any time.

6. Jackson asked for a motion to accept the minutes from the previous meeting. Heather Evangelista made a motion and Lisa Beatha seconded, all ayes to accept the minutes. Reminding the minutes and agendas are always posted on the MIC3 website.

7. Jackson noted the year-end report is posted, and thanked all for sharing their photos and news events with the organization. Melissa Montague does a great job on the website and the newsletters, getting that information out to all. It was noted that the Compact 1 and the Compact 2 online training has been useful. It was noted that we still needed to fill the open seats on our Council. Todd offered to help and reach out to Senator Shelley Mayer, and to Commissioner Dr. Betty Rosa. Jackson added she spoke to Senator Mayer when in Utah at the National States Policy Conference. The suggestions provided to Governor Hochul's appointment office have not yet moved ahead in status. It was suggested we also offer the State Senate a suggested appointee. Possibly some previous members of our council who might want to return as a voting member. Also discussed was who would be back-up to Jackson now that Todd was retiring.

8. State Graduation Requirements were shared by Montague. The "graduation requirements" are the current diploma requirements; the "graduation measures" initiative is the state's plan to move to adopt the four transformations (also known as NY Inspires). In terms of our current diploma requirements, there aren't any updates from our last meeting, so the last regulation that impacts current requirements was the exemptions for major life events. But in terms of graduation measures, there are some updates. The New York State Portrait of a Graduate was approved by the Board of Regents in July. The Portrait is available on the [Grad Measures webpage](#). You can also view any of the most recent presentations to the board. The slide decks are there, and there are also recordings of those presentations if you want to go and watch. There are also need-to-know documents related to the Portrait of a Graduate; additional resources are also included, such as a link to the Department's resources to support culturally responsive - sustaining education which is included at the center of the Portrait.

In response to a question about the impact on MIC3 regulations it was said that our current system is twofold, so students have to meet the credit requirements and the assessment requirements. The plan is to decouple those assessment requirements, so it would have an impact for sure, because we wouldn't need that additional attestation or proof of an assessment.

How do you think it would affect students leaving New York, going to states who require an assessment? We will still have assessments that can be used if needed.

Troy Decker added, Again, I think the thing we're going to have to be most mindful about going forward isn't necessarily how New York adapts to MIC 3 there's enough flexibility built within our own system. Again, the students transferring within New York are going to be fine. I'm more concerned with students who are currently in New York, or will be in New York. As they transition out of New York to other locations, when we have some very sophisticated and robust

graduation measures. It may or may not fit the needs of the Compact in other states going forward.

It was agreed this is a watch item for us and that we need to be ready to discuss these changes in the future with other MIC3 state commissioners and SLOs.

9. Jackson again brought up the changes being voted on a the ABM, adding she will be making an official vote for NYS. The discussion has been to approve the dues changes. She asked as you have talked to your constituents outside of this group were there any new comments. Consensus again was to support the rule change for the dues. She added that NYS again has paid their current dues in a timely manner.

10. Jackson addressed the JCOPE ethic courses and requirements for the voting members. She asked that the members who take the ethics courses outside of NYS MIC3, such as BOCES, SED, CUNY, SUNY etc. that they let her know as they are not entered into our database. Therefore it looks as if only 4 of the 8 individuals have completed the requirements.

11. A discussion centered around the NYCDOE issues with transfers into NYC. Decker suggested we could add a NYCDOE contact to our group who might be able to help facilitate these transfers (a kinder and gentler approach). Montague will continue to reach out to her counterpart. Todd suggested reaching out to Dr. Rosa to see if she has someone to recommend that we liaison with. Kyle Belokopitsky shared that she works with the Chancellor's office and FACE which is the Family Community Engagement Office. She would be happy to make these connections for us when she have a transfer. She added there are three community PTA's in NYC that serve parents and families that we could reach out to. Her contacts are very much appreciated and needed.

Belokopitsky added the one struggle is that this is a very common problem for all New York City families, so it's not certainly military families that face this problem when school choice exists in some of our school districts and certainly in some of our big five areas, or New York City, in particular. So when our families, transfer in to these areas late, after school selection has occurred, this is a common problem, unfortunately.

Jackson added this is true, and fortunately in some areas such as Buffalo we have been able to make inroads for military transfers.

12. Another topic addressed was transfers to West Point. Placing non-military students in light of FAPE. We will continue to share these transfers with each other to find solutions, to date solutions have been found. The topic of a kindergartener moving from NYC to the Fort Drum area was resolved. NYCDOE has a different start date than NYS districts. It was decided by the receiving district it was in the best interest of the child to be admitted. It was mentioned that we did have another situation about 3 years ago with the Carthage School District, and they made

the same decision. They erred in the spirit of the compact to support that military student coming from New York City. Case studies and other state cutoffs were shared for the good of the group.

13. Jackson brought up the topic of grade weighting and class rank as it had been brought to her and she had reviewed a case study on this as well with her Tier 2 MIC3 group.

In response the question was raised. “Going back to remembering all the conversations we had in year one of the compact, and what the scope of our mission was, are we not charged with ensuring on-time graduation?”

And does the student's rank have an impact on an on-time graduation? Then it doesn't come under the realm of the compact, because our job is to make sure they get a long-time graduation, and they can participate in courses and classes. Also mentioned was the need for a comparable curriculum. A healthy discussion ensued with the understanding of parent concerns and the need for districts to unweight courses at times and to build understanding of what the colleges are looking for in a student transcript. In summary this was determined as an issue but not an MIC3 issue.

Another topic mentioned was the ongoing problem of families not identifying as military when if they did we could help more. There is a need to probe more on incoming transfers.

14. Looking ahead to what might be our next steps we discussed:

- The topic of a spreadsheet to track these cases was again considered.
- The portrait of a graduate in NYS as it addresses MIC3 students.
- Training as new individuals come into these roles so we have a NYS succession plan.
- Insuring information from MIC3 on the webinars to the counselor’s BOCES Network that hits all of our 18 school districts.

15. It was suggested we do more Zoom connections when we get a case before one of us rather than rely on email. This might help us share resources for families. Also shared was the Operation Homefront Hosts the Military Child of the Year Awards to recognize outstanding military children. It was noted that some members wish to nominate and will follow up.

16. Emily Miller mentioned there will be a change of Command on October 2 and she will share that with us when the information is public.

Plus/Delta: Beatha suggested we find a way to track our success stories or highlight the work we do. Such as the assistance to a family, or a placement. It was agreed this would be important and should be on our agendas/minutes as well as in our reports. For example the success of the West Point MS sports program being included in Section 9 Athletics. Also the ability to be remote was commented on for the extenuating circumstances.

10. Next meeting dates: March 26, 2026
September 16, 2026

Motion to adjourn by Lisa Beatha;
seconded by Melissa Montague.
Approved

WHEREAS, Stephen Todd, District Superintendent and Commissioner Appointee to the New York State Interstate Compact has indicated his intent to retire; and

WHEREAS, Stephen Todd has served the Interstate Council for Military Impacted Students with distinction for ten years, demonstrating outstanding service to the children of military parents, their educators, and leaders throughout New York State and has generously and professionally contributed to the Council's work as a founding member creating the principles for New York to follow; and

WHEREAS, Stephen Todd has enthusiastically advanced the advocacy needed for military youth who transition in and out of New York State by engaging the Board of Regents in amending Part 100.2 to establish a framework of support as a result of the frequent relocations by military impacted students as they transfer between school districts and states; and

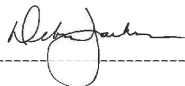
WHEREAS, Stephen Todd has diligently noted the challenges facing military families, the needed responses, and with the Council has created documents and promoted policies to build capacity, all while supporting educators in this work; and he was instrumental in creating a pathway for the "Transitional J Certificate," which made a significant impact in improving the well-being of military spouses and families; and

WHEREAS, Stephen Todd has demonstrated his ability to lead, build trust with his colleagues, communicate ethics, all while being a calming influence at our meetings;

NOW, THEREFORE, WE, Members of the New York State Council for Military Impacted Students extend to Stephen Todd, much gratitude for his leadership; and

FURTHER, THEREFORE, on behalf of the military community we wish Stephen Todd a well deserved retirement filled with time for family, and joy in all his future endeavors.

DATED THIS 31st day of October in the year 2025.



Debra Jackson, NYS Council Commissioner