

**MISSISSIPPI STATE COUNCIL MINUTES**  
**Tuesday, August 20, 2024**

**PRESENT**

Kristen Windham	Compact Commissioner and Council Chair
Marcus Boudreaux	Superintendent, Biloxi School District
Sen. Dennis DeBar, Jr.	Legislative Representative, Senate Education Chair
Dr. Lance Evans	State Superintendent, Mississippi Dept. of Education
Rep. Kevin Felsher	Legislative Representative
Linda Gates	Civilian

**NOT PRESENT**

Rep. Richard Bennet	Legislative Representative
Capt. Jeffrey Powell	Commander, NCBC Gulfport and USDOD Military Representative
Rep. Rob Roberson	Legislative Representative, House Education Chair
Allen Williams	Bureau Director, Mississippi Dept. of Education, and JROTC

**MIC3 STAFF**

Cherise Imai	Executive Director
Lindsey Dablow	Operations and Training Associate
Allie Thomas	Operations Coordinator

**GENERAL ATTENDEES**

Gerry Cross	School Liaison, Kessler Air Force Base
Larry Mullins	School Liaison, Meridian Naval Air Station
Mona Odom	School Liaison, Gulfport Naval Air Station

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**ITEM 1 – CALL TO ORDER**

MIC3 Compact Commissioner and Council Chair Kristen Windham called the meeting to order at 9:05 AM CT. She welcomed members and attendees to the meeting.

**ITEM 2 – ROLL CALL**

MIC3 Operations Coordinator Allie Thomas conducted the roll call. A quorum was established.

**ITEM 3 – MISSISSIPPI STATE UPDATES**

Chair Windham introduced Mr. Jace Ponder, Director for the Governor's Office of Military Affairs. Mr. Ponder provided an update on the items that the Governor's Office was working on for the year regarding military-connected children and education. Chair Windham thanked the council members for attending the Governor's signing event of House Bill (HB) 1341 on August 9, 2024, and stated many of them were included in a group picture that was taken at the event.

**ITEM 4 – NATIONAL OFFICE UPDATES**

Chair Windham yielded the floor to Executive Director (ED) Cherise Imai. ED Imai reported Mississippi's dues payment of \$5,622 for fiscal year (FY) 2025 was received on May 14, 2024. The 2024 Annual Business Meeting (ABM) would be held in Albuquerque, New Mexico in October. One of the key discussions this year would be the Finance Committee's introduction of

a dues increase plan and five-year budget draft for the Commissioners to take back to their State Council members for review. The Commission would then vote on the items at the 2025 ABM to implement them in FY2027. ED Imai reported the Rules Committee released the legal advisory *1-2024 SEC 5.104 Scope of Placement Flexibility* in response to a proposed Rule amendment from the Nevada Commissioner regarding missed seat time and misalignment of semesters. The Rules Committee tabled the rule amendment for one year to evaluate the effectiveness of the legal advisory.

#### **ITEM 5 – SCHOOL LIAISON REPORTS**

Mr. Larry Mullins, School Liaison for Meridian Naval Air Station, reported he was working to implement the School Choice bill and did not anticipate having any problems with it. He stated a majority of the military-connected children living off-base chose to stay in their current district or were attending private schools. Mr. Marcus Boudreaux stated the Biloxi School District was able to place 42 students using HB 1341. Three students were denied their first-choice schools due to capacity limits but were able to enroll at their second choices.

Mr. Gerald Cross, School Liaison for Kessler Air Force Base, stated he had no current issues or matters to report.

Due to technical issues, Ms. Mona Odom, Gulfport Naval Air Station, was unable to provide a report.

#### **ITEM 6 – OTHER BUSINESS**

Chair Windham yielded the floor to Representative Kevin Felsher to provide an update on HB 1341. Representative Felsher reported that edits to the language of HB 1341 were underway to remove ambiguity and clarify terms used in the bill. Mr. Boudreaux commented that these edits would be very beneficial to help translate the bill when he acts as a layperson between military personnel and educators.

ED Imai reported Mississippi needed to comply with the Compact's citation correction to fix the state statute language in Articles II and III, where the word "Section" was used instead of "Chapter." Chair Windham agreed that a new bill to address the correction would need to be introduced during the next legislative session. She stated that she would work with the national office and Mississippi state legislature to begin the amendment process.

Chair Windham announced she had received requests from multiple council members to host a State Council meeting in person. She stated she would work with the members to schedule a meeting in Jackson, Mississippi for the spring of 2025.

#### **ITEM 7 – ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Windham adjourned the meeting at 9:34 AM CT.