

North Dakota

Military Interstate Children's Compact Council (MIC3)

Wednesday, 01 Apr 2026 | 1530 - 1630 | Microsoft Teams

Attendance (voting members – NDCC 15.1-04.1-02)

☒	Levi Bachmeier (State Supt) – 1a	☒	Col Reynaldo Champion (319 th MSG) – 1c	☒	Mitchell Johnson (NDNG) – 1e
☐	Scott Faul (Minot Supt) – 1b	☒	Rep. Karen Karls (State Legislator) – 1d	☒	LtC. Jay Sheldon (NDNG) – 1f

Attendance (non-voting members)

☒	Mark Vollmer (Commissioner)- 2a	☒	Jennifer Schroeder (GF SLO) – 2b	☒	Alyssa Kelly (Minot SLO) – 2b
☐		☒	CMSgt Marcus Cook Perry (319 th MSG)	☐	Col Richard Zeigler (5 th MSG)
☐		☐		☐	Lt Dalton Gaither (5 th MSG)
☐		☐		☐	
☐	Terry Brenner (Grand Forks Supt)	☐	Jennifer Odell (DPI Comms)	☒	Steve Snow (NDDPI)
☒	Katie Wald (NDDPI)	☐		☐	

Approval of Minutes

Old Business

none

References

[Military State Policy: Personnel Administrative Policy Resource](#)

[State Implementation of Four Initiatives to Support Military-Connected Students](#)

New Business

Meeting notes:

- **Updates and Challenges at Minot Air Force Base:** Alyssa provided a comprehensive update on Minot Air Force Base, detailing three negative trends—pre-K availability, lack of school-based military and family life counselor support, and uncertain Department of War funding—and described ongoing initiatives and partnerships to address these issues, with support and follow-up from Steve and other participants.
 - **Pre-K Availability Issues:** Alyssa reported that Minot Public School Board District #1 voted to discontinue pre-K Head Start on the installation for the 2026-2027 school year due to income guideline issues, and that while there was interest in a four-year-old pre-K program grant, the application was not completed in time; efforts are underway to submit for the 2027-2028 school year and to provide alternative pre-kindergarten supports such as resource packets and professional development.
 - **Military Family Life Counselor Support:** Alyssa explained that the school-based military and family life counselor (MFLC) position was vacated following a contract change, but she has provided training and resources to all Minot public school counselors and leads monthly MFLC meetings with guest speakers;

two center-based MFLCs continue to support students, and updates are regularly provided to Colonel Ziegler.

- **Department of War Funding Uncertainty:** Alyssa described how the government shutdown in late 2025 delayed on-base busing and increased food scarcity, leading to the implementation of the Backpack Buddy's program and expanded Operation Homefront events; Starbase North Dakota's program funding was delayed but ultimately received, allowing for continued STEAM training for 650 students, and partnerships provided increased support for students with disabilities and vision screenings.
- **Interstate Compact Enrollment and Readiness:** Alyssa noted that the Interstate Compact allows kindergarten enrollment for students not meeting the age requirement, but some exhibit readiness issues; she has notified district staff to request recent orders for such enrollments to ensure compliance and prevent abuse of the compact provisions due to pre-K shortages.
- **Collaborative Actions and Support:** Steve offered to reach out to the Department of Health and Human Services to support the pre-K grant application process, and Alyssa welcomed any assistance, highlighting the need for improved familiarity with grant requirements and ongoing collaboration to address these challenges.
- **Positive Trends and Initiatives at Minot Air Force Base:** Alyssa outlined five positive trends at Minot Air Force Base, focusing on increased awareness of the Military Interstate Compact (MIC3), educator trainings, resource guides, and improved processes for supporting military-connected students, including the expansion of the Purple Star Award program and enhanced outreach to homeschool families.
 - **MIC3 Awareness Efforts:** Alyssa conducts monthly briefings for incoming base members to raise awareness of the Military Interstate Compact, noting that most attendees are unfamiliar with it; she also provides education binder workshops for families, emphasizing the importance of obtaining unofficial records and including MIC3 information.
 - **Educator Trainings:** Alyssa delivered MIC3-focused trainings to 100 educators and counselors across multiple schools, highlighting deployment-related excused absences and ensuring staff are informed about compact provisions relevant to military families.
 - **Resource Distribution and Guides:** Alyssa distributed 480 'Legendary Learners' books to support early literacy and created a digital and soon-to-be print resource guide for families, which includes MIC3 information; she also maintains a school liaison calendar promoting MIC3 training and encourages parents to access compact resources.
 - **Homeschool and Community Outreach:** Minot Air Force Base increased opportunities for homeschool involvement, including eligibility for purple graduation cords, civic engagement sessions, and dedicated liaison events, reaching over 150 homeschool families; resources are provided in welcome emails to ensure inclusion.
 - **Purple Star Award Expansion:** Alyssa reported that Glenburn Public School and Erik Ramstad Middle School became the first off-installation schools in North Dakota to receive the Purple Star Award, benefiting 833 students, and ongoing efforts aim to expand the program to additional schools, with monthly meetings and educator trainings supporting application submissions.
- **Grand Forks Air Force Base School District Updates:** Jennifer shared updates from Grand Forks Air Force Base, highlighting differences from Minot, including the addition of a pre-K room in a new school, ongoing challenges with special needs preschool, deployment support, MIC3 briefings, homeschool numbers, and issues with military student identifier reporting, with collaborative problem-solving involving Steve and other participants.
 - **Pre-K and Special Needs Programs:** Jennifer reported that Grand Forks Public Schools do not currently offer pre-K or Head Start on base, but a new school will include a pre-K room for the first time, pending teacher recruitment; special needs preschool is no longer available due to low numbers.
 - **Deployment and Counselor Support:** Jennifer praised the school-based MFLC for providing deployment clubs and support to students at Twining School, with outreach extending beyond the base as needed; communication efforts included sending a letter to all districts to raise awareness of deployment impacts on students.

- **MIC3 Briefings and Casework:** Jennifer regularly briefs principals and teacher groups on MIC3, primarily addressing high school credit transfer issues; direct calls from principals are handled as needed, and most inquiries relate to older students.
 - **Homeschool and Peer Programs:** Homeschool numbers are lower at Grand Forks compared to Minot, with 33 reported families; efforts to implement peer-to-peer programs like Anchored for Life are ongoing, and discussions about becoming a Purple Star School have begun.
 - **Military Student Identifier Reporting:** Jennifer described challenges with a public school district (Larimore) refusing to report military student identifier data, despite state-level interventions; Steve provided data from the state system and offered continued support to resolve reporting issues.
 - **Cross-State Enrollment Challenges:** Jennifer and Steve discussed the issue of military families living in East Grand Forks, Minnesota, being unable to enroll in Grand Forks base schools due to state border and funding constraints; possible solutions such as limited geographical agreements were considered for future legislative action.
- **State-Level Initiatives and Legislative Updates:** Steve, Jay, and Mark discussed ongoing and proposed state-level initiatives to enhance support for military-connected students, including website improvements, legislative clarifications for advanced enrollment and special education transitions, and efforts to expand the Purple Star program and clarify homeschool student participation.
 - **Website Enhancement Plans:** Steve proposed improving the Department of Public Instruction's website to centralize military-friendly resources, including references to programs like Purple Star and training materials, with input from Katie and Alyssa to ensure ADA compliance and inclusion of homeschool resources.
 - **Advanced Enrollment and Virtual Attendance:** Recent legislative changes allow military-connected students to enroll and attend classes virtually when moving to or from bases; Steve and Michelle plan to draft further clarifications to ensure explicit support for military students in state law.
 - **Special Education Transition Support:** Steve highlighted the complexity of federal rules governing special education transitions for military students and the need for clearer state-level processes to ease responsibility handoffs between sending and receiving schools.
 - **Purple Star Program Expansion:** Efforts are underway to clarify the criteria and renewal process for Purple Star schools, with a focus on expanding eligibility to any school with military-connected students, including those in Bismarck and Mandan, and updating resources on the military page.
 - **Homeschool Student Participation:** Steve intends to review state code to ensure homeschool military students have equal access to extracurricular and after-school activities and will consult with Michelle Ricard to confirm compliance with military student requirements.
 - **Historical Context and Legislative Background of the Military Interstate Compact:** Karen and Mark provided historical context on the adoption of the Military Interstate Compact in North Dakota, recounting legislative challenges and the eventual passage of the bill, with ongoing involvement in the commission and recognition of foundational efforts.
 - **Legislative Adoption Story:** Karen described the initial failure and subsequent revival of the Military Interstate Compact bill in the North Dakota legislature, including chairing the conference committee that secured its passage as a full class bill in 2010, and ongoing participation in the commission.

Follow-up tasks:

- **Pre-K Grant Application Support:** Contact DHS counterparts to explore support options for the Minot Public School's future Best in Class grant application for pre-K on base and follow up with Alyssa for necessary details. (Steve)

- ☐ **Military Student Cross-State Enrollment Issue:** Review and discuss the East Grand Forks cross-state enrollment and tuition issue with Superintendent Bachmeier and Mark, gathering details from Jennifer to explore possible solutions or legislative approaches. (Steve, Mark, Jennifer)
- ☐ **Military Student Identifier Data Reporting:** Work with Larimore Public School to ensure accurate reporting and sharing of military student identifier data and provide Jennifer with the reported numbers as needed. (Steve, Jennifer)
Follow-Up – Steve did reach out Larimore and provided Jennifer with the state-reported number of military connected students at Larimore
- ☐ **Military-Friendly Website Enhancement:** Enhance the Department of Public Instruction's website to include centralized, easily accessible military-friendly resources, including information for homeschoolers and ensure all documents are ADA compliant, with input from Alyssa and Katie. (Steve, Alyssa, Katie)
- ☐ **Purple Star Program Clarification:** Clarify and update the Purple Star program guidelines, including renewal processes, eligibility, and available resources, and move relevant information under the military page on the DPI website. (Steve, Katie)
- ☐ **Legislative Drafting for Military Education Policies:** Meet with Michelle Ricard in Grand Forks to draft possible legislation for advanced enrollment, special education transitions, and explicit language supporting military-connected students, and seek bill sponsors. (Steve, Michelle Ricard)

Next Meeting

Quick Reference Guide: State Priority Assessments

Education Policy Implementation and Information Enhancements Priority

Key Message

States have a valuable opportunity to facilitate improved local implementation of policies designed to support military-connected children and ensure families are empowered with the knowledge they need by clarifying requirements, enhancing communication efforts and streamlining access to information on state and local education websites.

Overview

- In order for a state to fully meet the criteria identified by the Defense-State Liaison Office (DSLO) for this priority, all sub-issues (Advance Enrollment, the Education Compact, the Military Student Identifier and the Purple Star Schools Program) must be fully met.
- For a state to fully meet the criteria for Advance Enrollment, the Education Compact, and the Purple Star Schools Program sub-issues of this priority, it must provide both Information Accessibility and Policy Implementation enhancements to existing policies. If only one area of enhancement is met for a given sub-issue, the state will be identified as “partially met” for the sub-issue and the priority.
 - **Information Accessibility Enhancements:** For Advance Enrollment, the Education Compact, and the Purple Star Schools Program, the state must have detailed information on the policy/program that is easily accessible on a *dedicated state web page* for military families to receive “credit” for meeting the information accessibility enhancements objectives for each.
 - **Policy Implementation Enhancements:** Evaluating a state’s progress towards meeting the policy implementation enhancements objectives for Advance Enrollment, the Education Compact, and the Purple Star Schools Program is more complex and nuanced. Bottom line, we are looking for the state to have adopted one or more of the *enhancements* that we recommend in the DSLO Best Practices (BP) document. The information provided below is intended to support the work of DSLO Regional Liaisons in assessing their respective states’ progress towards meeting our criteria for the policy implementation enhancements component of this priority.
- Note: We are taking a tailored approach to evaluating state’s progress on implementation and information accessibility of the Military Student Identifier, which is detailed at the bottom of this guide.

Sub-Issue Assessments: Policy Implementation Enhancements

1. Advance Enrollment: In order to meet the policy implementation enhancements component of this sub-issue, the state needs to *outline clear procedural guidance and use of standardized enrollment applications to operationalize the state’s provisions* by doing one or more of the following:
 - Make clear that **proof of residency isn’t required** for school enrollment, course registration and program application (i.e., electronic copies of military orders shall substitute in-person and proof-of-residency requirements until a specified period upon arrival).
 - **Explicitly include military-connected students with special education needs in Advance Enrollment provisions.** Upon notification of their pending arrival, require that local education agencies facilitate the timely exchange of information and records, leveraging requirements under the Military Interstate Children’s Compact Commission, or MIC3.
 - Require **regular training for school administrators and enrollment personnel** on military-specific policies, including Advance Enrollment.
 - Designate a **state point-of-contact**, or POC, who can educate enrollment personnel on Advance Enrollment requirements, work with military school liaisons and liaise with local school agencies on behalf of military families.

2. Education Compact: In order to meet the policy implementation enhancements component of this sub-issue, the state has adopted *one or more of our recommended enhancements to clarify requirements and procedures* to improve implementation of the Education Compact.
- Outline data collection and reporting protocols, define clear accountability measures, establish dispute resolution pathways — particularly for special education — and standardize credit transfer procedures to ensure smooth transitions for military-connected students.
 - Clarify the role of the state Education Compact council (or equivalent) in educating school districts and military families about the protections and rights afforded by the Education Compact and relevant state and federal laws.
 - Mandate recurring training for school administrators and enrollment staff to ensure consistent, informed implementation of the Education Compact and other military-specific education policies at the school level.
 - Institute annual training for state Education Compact council members to equip them with the knowledge and tools needed to fulfill their responsibilities and engage effectively.
3. Purple Star Schools Program: In order to meet the policy implementation enhancements component of this sub-issue, a state must have the following:
- Written law or policy that includes all specified requirements of the model policy:
 - Targeted professional development and training for school staff to build understanding of military family needs and transitions;
 - A student-led transition initiative that pairs incoming military-connected students with peer ambassadors;
 - A dedicated webpage on the school's website providing information and resources for military families; and
 - A clearly identified point of contact for military-connected families, serving as a liaison between the school and military community; AND
 - Established rules or policy to implement a recertification process requiring schools to reapply for designation within a specified time frame (recommend 3 years or less).

Sub-Issue Assessment: Military Student Identifier

The DSLO is taking a tailored approach to assessing states' progress towards meeting the objectives of the Military Student Identifier sub-issue under this priority. While we are not providing "partial" credit to states for meeting either the information accessibility or policy implementation enhancement components of this sub-issue (both need to be met to receive credit), at this time, the recommended "enhancements" in the DSLO BP document are not required to meet the priority criteria given the need for clarification in federal law. However, we encourage states to consider these enhancements as potential best practice examples. We recommend that policymakers and other stakeholders review the Penn State University [SPEAK Military state reports](#) for more info on the criteria we have identified regarding implementation and information accessibility of the MSI.

- In order to meet the objectives of the MSI sub-issue, a state should have comprehensive data available at all levels (school, district, state). This data should cover both enrollment and achievement and information for families and school staff on the MSI that is easily accessible on each state's education agency website.
- Ease of accessibility is measured by:
 - Number of clicks from education department homepages to the academic-achievement data system (2 or less);
 - Clearly labeled data fields and locations;
 - Level of effort for a layperson to find the data on military-connected students; and
 - Data located in the main academic-achievement data system.

Solutions for Military Homeschool Students:

- **Full inclusion in interscholastic activities:** Allow homeschooled students to participate in public school extracurricular activities and sports.
- **Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps access:** Clarify that pursuant to federal law, homeschool children are required to have access to JROTC programs. Ensure local education agencies provide clear and accessible guidance to schools and information for parents.
- **Compliance grace periods for relocating families:** When applicable, provide a compliance grace period for relocating military families that provides reasonable time for them to meet new state homeschool requirements without disrupting their children's education. A 30-day window prevents families from falling into immediate noncompliance during a Permanent Change of Station (PCS) move. *Note – some states don't have regulations that would require a 30-day grace period in the first place, which also works for our purposes as there is no barrier for our military families.*

DPI Website Enhancements

- Establish a **single page on DPI website with info for military connected students and their family** (including links to other resources)
- Examples
 - South Dakota - <https://doe.sd.gov/military/>
 - Ohio (not specifically DoE) - <https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Other-Resources/Military-Resources/Schools>