

## New Jersey Interstate Compact Council Meeting Minutes

Date: August 13, 2024

Time: 1:00 PM

Location: via Zoom

- I. In attendance, via zoom:
  - Compact Commissioner Anthony Trongone
  - Military Installation Representative Peg Kinsell
  - Superintendent of School District w/ High Concentration of Military Children
  - Helen Payne
  - Andrew Zuckerman
  - State Superintendent of Education – V Marcheski
  - School Liaison Officer (Civilian)
    - Nikki Naida JB MDL
    - Angelica DeJesus JB MDL
- II. Call to order at 1:03 PM
- III. Review of Agenda
  - **Overall** - The conversation centered around initiatives and programs aimed at supporting military-connected students in New Jersey. Speakers discussed challenges in navigating interstate transfers, managing transcripts, and providing special education services for these students. They emphasized the need for increased funding and support, particularly for districts impacted by military families with disabilities. The group also discussed the importance of parent outreach and education, and the need for legal context in understanding the challenges faced by military schools.
  - **Military student support programs and events in New Jersey.**
    - Tony Trongone leads a group of educators and administrators in a meeting.
    - Nikalea highlights events for Military Children and Seniors, including proclamation signing and recognition ceremony.
  - **Military transitions and outreach for parents.**
    - Tony Trongone and Nikki discussed the importance of involving military spouses and parents in public schools.
    - Nikki highlighted the Month of the Military Child and shared resources with educators.
    - Tony Trongone highlights the need for parent outreach and education on transition issues, particularly in JB MDL area.
    - Trongone shares experiences with cases involving students leaving/entering NJ, including special ed and algebra course issues.
  - **Military student transfers, placement, and graduation requirements.**
    - Helen Payne and Andrew Zuckerman discussed challenges in transferring students from out-of-state schools, including misunderstandings about gifted and talented programs and course credits.
    - They emphasized the importance of educating guidance

- counselors and directors on the Interstate Compact and aligning standards to ensure smooth transitions for students.
- Helen Payne and Tony Trongone discuss the Military Interstate Compact, which helps students transition between states for education.
- Trongone shares a story about a student who was unable to enroll in a high school class due to a health and physical education requirement, and how the compact helped rectify the situation.
- Tony Trongone: NJ high schools follow state graduation requirements, not PA or FL standards.
- Andrew Zuckerman: NJ schools must ensure students fulfill graduation requirements, even if courses are taken elsewhere
- **Action Items**
  - Schedule outreach events for military parents on bases to educate them about the Interstate Compact.
  - Clarify policy on counting 8th grade algebra credits taken in other states as high school credits in New Jersey.
  - Advocate for increased specialized Impact Aid funding around students with significant disabilities.
  - Continue biannual meetings between military base liaisons and local school districts to discuss issues like special education.

#### IV. Adjournment

#### Notes

##### ***Transcript issues & special education services for military-connected students.***

- *Nikalea mentions that there have been some issues with transcripts being sent to the new school, with some taking longer than 10 days to arrive.*
- *Helen Payne, the legal counsel, was involved in a finding on a similar issue a few years ago.*
- *Helen Payne and Nikalea discuss transcripts and special education services.*

##### ***Challenges in providing special education services for military families.***

- *Angelica DeJesus and Nikki are working to address the issue of long wait times for special education services, including one-on-one nurses, in local schools.*
- *Advocates discuss challenges in providing specialized services to military-connected students.*

##### ***Special education funding and advocacy in New Jersey.***

- *Helen Payne highlights the issue of excessive special education staffing in her district.*
- *Tony Trongone and Peg Kinsell agree that the state school funding formula needs to be revised to better support special education students.*
- *Tony Trongone explains that a forthcoming education adequacy report may not change the census-based funding formula but could increase the dollar amount per student.*
- *Louisa Soto provides updates on Purple Star program, including application process and*

*website development.*

***Supporting military families in NJ schools, including collaboration and advocacy.***

- *Victoria Marcheski discusses the Military Student Support Specialist Program, which aims to collaborate with agencies to support military-connected families.*
- *Victoria will share information on the program with [mbarnes@njea.org](mailto:mbarnes@njea.org) for further distribution to families and spouses.*
- *Peg Kinsell shares updates on advocacy efforts for military-connected families.*
- *Peg Kinsell highlights the need for school funding reform for districts with high military populations and disabilities.*
- *Tony Trongone schedules a Zoom meeting for January to discuss algebra one transcript issues and other agenda items*