



MILITARY INTERSTATE
CHILDREN'S COMPACT
COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

April 10, 2026

Utah State Council on Military Children

I. Welcome and Introductions

- Ben Rasmussen, Utah MIC3 Commissioner
- Cassie Hays, USBE Parent Liaison and Engagement Specialist
- Kirin McInnis, Utah State Board of Education Legal Assistant
- Andrew Miller, Colonel USAF AFMC
- Colleen Russell, Military Student & Family Advocate, Weber School District
- Erin Webster, Davis School District Military Support Team
- Francesca Suarez, Davis School District Military Support Team
- Jennie Taylor, Military family member and U of U doctoral student studying military children
- Julie Bernhard, Dugway Proving Ground School Liaison
- Kayle Smith, Department of Veterans and Military Affairs
- Larissa Archuleta, Weber School District
- Michael Miller, Utah Department of Veteran Military Affairs
- Brian Garrett, Deputy Director, Department of Veterans and Military Affairs
- Mathew Mason, USAF School Liaison
- Janet Seachris, USAF School Liaison
- Gary Harter, Director, Department of Veterans and Military Affairs
- Ammon Campbell, the Terra Academy

II. Purple Star Schools

- a) Review Applicants for New Cohort
 - Cassie Hays reported that for the 2026 school year there were 83 schools approved and 102 schools that reapplied, for a total of 185 Purple Star Schools. Cassie said this means we almost doubled our numbers. There are now a wide variety of Purple Star Schools, mostly from Alpine, Ogden, and Weber, but all across the state as well, including both district and charter schools. Ben Rasmussen confirmed that according to Utah State Board of Education rule and without objection, all applications meet eligibility criteria and are forwarded for approval.

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- b) Purple Star School Recognition Ceremony – June 2, 2026 – Adobe Facility – Lehi, Utah

For anyone who would like to attend, this year's Purple Star School Recognition Ceremony will be held at the Adobe Facility in Lehi, Utah on June 2, 2026.

- c) Feedback on the program


Cassie Hays mentioned that as the Purple Star Schools grow in number, there is an effort to make sure the focus is not just on quantity but quality. This effort will include an increase in school visits and individualized support, making sure that schools are adhering to their application criteria. There is also a 'Purple Star School Guide' that is being developed for distribution, that will have a list of military resources, Q&As and other facts. This 'Guide' can also be used as a resource and posted on a school's website.


III. Report on 2025 MIC3 ABM

- Ben Rasmussen reported on the October 2025 MIC3 Annual Business Meeting that was held in Indianapolis, Indiana. At the meeting, there was discussion regarding funding changes for the national organization. Ben said these changes should not make a substantial difference to Utah's budget, since we cover funding through our Utah State Board of Education budget, to make sure our dues are paid.
- At the MIC3 Annual Business Meeting there was also discussion regarding ways to improve educating people about the compact and sharing information about the program, such as the free training that is offered for schools as well as other ideas and 'best practices'.

Ben reported that he was invited to be a committee chairman this year, for the MIC3 Rules Committee and will soon be traveling to Lexington, Kentucky for an executive committee meeting. Ben said that one of the issues that the Rules Committee will be focusing on are rules to help clarify special education needs for military students.

IV. Report on 2026 Utah Legislative Session

- No new legislation resulting from the 2026 Utah Legislative Session was discussed, however there was a reminder that in last year's 2025 legislative session there was a Senate Bill that passed extending transition benefits to Department of Defense civilian families.
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A question was asked regarding the status of funding for systems that track information about MSTs, which may include incidents of bullying. Ben said that he is not aware of any cuts made this year. Brian Garrett confirmed that there is on-going funding for these systems already provided for in the budget.


V. Open Discussion on Military Impacted Student Issues


- a) Any issues with school's following interstate compact requirements?
- b) How can the state council help promote military student needs?
 - Colonel Miller stated that he has received a few concerns about Utah's math curriculum and related problems that occur when transitioning students, particularly the difficulty of a student receiving Utah credit for math courses previously taken in another state. It was confirmed that transferring credit can present problems, since Utah does in fact offer math courses in a different sequence than other states.
 - Ben Rasmussen asked meeting participants to provide examples of how Utah is celebrating this April's month of the military child.

Colleen Russell, Weber School District, explained how schools in the district are doing 'their own thing' this year such as hosting games, giveaways, etc. The district has a social media account and all of their military student information and events gets posted there. Colleen also mentioned that there will be an open house held for their graduating senior students on April 23rd, recognizing scholarship students as well as their district's Purple Star Schools.

Francesca Suarez reported that Davis District schools each have their own events planned for April. For example, Valley View Elementary is hosting a purple ribbon rotation event on April 15th where the National Guard will actually be landing one of their helicopters. Other schools have events including barbecues, parades, and every school is hosting a spirit week where students wear red, white, blue, and camo, and every Friday during the month schools wear purple ribbons. In March the district sent out envelopes with purple ribbons to distribute throughout the schools.

Janet Seachris and Mathew Mason, Hill Air Force Base School Liaison Program, said that there is a 'triple ribbon' event during April's Month of the Military Child which will also include Child Abuse Prevention and Sexual Assault Prevention awareness. There is a calendar of things that are happening every day and then there will also be





a culmination parade held at the end of the month on April 30th. In addition, an article written about the history of the Month of the Military Child was created, to help celebrate the 40th anniversary. The article should be published soon and will be made available online.

Julie Bernhard, Dugway Proving Ground, said that most of their kids are either dependents of military civilians or contractors. There was an Easter egg hunt and ceremony that was held at the beginning of the month to recognize them. Also, on April 16th there will be a 'wheels-up' event planned for the kids where military vehicles as well as fire and police vehicles will be on display. And, at the end of the month, on April 30th, there will be a closing ceremony with an ice cream social planned.

Mike Miller announced that there will be a 'mission ready' event on April 18th from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. with 79 vendors, to be held at the Hill Air Force Base Aerospace Museum.

VI. Adjournment

