

First Name: Daniel  
Last Name: Dunham

I am the Compact  
Commissioner for: Virginia

The membership  
of the state's MIC3  
council consists of  
the following::

Dr. Lisa Coons, Compact Commissioner, Council Chairman, Virginia Superintendent of Public Instruction  
Senator Mamie Locke, Virginia Senator District 2, Hampton District, Senate Representative  
Delegate Jackie Hope Glass, House of Delegates Representative, Delegate 93rd District  
Dr. Victor Shandor Brown, Superintendent, York County Public Schools  
Rear Admiral Wesley R. McCall, USN, Commander, Navy Regional Mis-Atlantic, (Military Installation Representative Member)  
Mrs. Tian Olson, Military Spouse, Attorney, Education Advocate, Parent of a Military Child (Military Child Member)  
Mrs. Michelle Norman, Executive Director and Founder, Partners in PROMISE, (Military Student Support Process Action Team Military Spouse Member)  
Mr. Raul Vargas, President, VARCom Solutions; Founder, CEO, and Chairman, American Latino Veterans Association, (Citizen Member)

Two points of  
contact for issues  
related to the  
Compact in my  
state are::

Daniel Lee Dunham, Virginia Department of Education, Commissioner Designee, Military Student and Families Specialist Office Phone: (804) 923-0958 Email: [dan.dunham@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:dan.dunham@doe.virginia.gov) Mr.

Joseph Wharff, Virginia Department of Education, Director, Office of Behavioral Health and Wellness, Office Phone: (804) 750-8077  
Email: [joseph.wharff@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:joseph.wharff@doe.virginia.gov)

Accomplishments: In October 2023, the Council and the VDOE announced that one 110 schools across Virginia were honored with Purple Star Designations. To qualify for a Purple Star in Virginia, schools must have a staff point of contact (POC) for military students and families. The POC serves as the primary link between the military family and the school. In addition, schools must meet four measures that help to build awareness within the school community and foster peer transition support.

There were 29 schools honored this year as second-time recipients of the distinction. This is the fifth year the VDOE has designated Purple Star schools. Since 2018, the VDOE and the Council have selected 569 schools across Virginia for the award of which 360 have maintained the award and 185 have been twice honored.

The Ambassador Training held on June 21, 2023, at GMU was a tremendous success. It was attended by over 100 Fairfax County high school student ambassadors and their sponsors who took time away from their summer for the purpose of strengthening their school's peer-led support programming. The training focused on equipping the students to be better equipped to run a program aimed at welcoming new students to their school and assisting others who may be self-isolating in connecting with their peers.

These students and their sponsors will be followed throughout the coming year to check on their progress and implementation of what was learned during the training, in addition to continued analysis of the following:

- Social Emotional Learning Screener;
- Fairfax County Youth Survey;
- Youth Surveys and Focus Groups; and
- Safe and Supportive Schools Survey.

Activities:

The Virginia Council held its first meeting since December 12, 2021 on October 26, 2023. This Council's diversity of experiences and expertise is well positioned to continue the good work of improving transitional support for our military families. VDOE, on behalf of the Virginia Council, has provided training on the Compact and the Virginia Council to thousands of educators, military families, and other interested stakeholders since its creation in 2009. The SLOs throughout Virginia frequently provide training on the Interstate Compact to educators in their region as well. In February 2023, The Virginia Military Student and Families Specialist and the VDOE's Department of Special Populations Office of Family Engagement held a SLO and EFMP training to review the process of dispute resolution and how to improve communication and collaboration with families of students with disabilities.

In May, the VDOE's Military Student and Families Specialist presented at the Military Families Symposium for military families with students in special education. This training was funded with grants from the VDOE and conducted by the Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center (PEATC). The in-person symposium provided attendees with an opportunity to learn more about state-level support, self-advocacy, due process, the I'm Determined program, PEATC, and Virginia Commonwealth University's (VCU) Center for Parent Involvement.

The annual Connect for Success Conference was held in September 2023 and included a presentation by the Navy Regional Mid-Atlantic's Special Education Specialist Ms. Erica Swenson, who discussed the unique challenges that military-connected students, and others who are highly mobile, often face and strategies to support them. The VDOE's Office of Special Education Family Support and Special Facilities provides this professional development opportunity to those who work in Parent Resource Centers. This opportunity helps to foster collaboration between the school divisions and military partners.

The Military Student and Families Specialist was requested to present on Purple Star programming and the Compact at three State and National level trainings. These included the following;

- Served as a panelist at the Military Child Education Coalition's (MCEC) Purple Star Convening held at Boeing HQ to share qualifiers for Virginia Purple Star Designation with are school personnel;
- Served as a panelist at the MCEC National Convening held in Washington D.C. providing guidance and direction to attendees on Purple Star programming and provisions under the Compact;
- Presented on the strength of peer-led support programming as a preventative measure for school violence and self-harm at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration's (SAMHSA) Service Veterans Virtual training; and
- Presented at the National Purple Star Schools virtual convening.

Presentations:

George Mason University / Fairfax County Public Schools Student Ambassador Highlight