

**COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE MINUTES**  
**Wednesday, May 6, 2020**

PRESENT	Brian Henry Darcy Benway Steven Bullard Felicia Gonzales Will Hardin Pete LuPiba Keith Owen Shelly Ramos Davis Whitfield	Missouri Commissioner Illinois Commissioner Kentucky Commissioner Nevada Commissioner Georgia Commissioner Ohio Commissioner Colorado Commissioner Texas Commissioner National Federation of High School Assns	Chair           Ex-Officio
STAFF	Cherise Imai Lindsey Dablow	Executive Director Training and Operations Associate	Secretary
EXCUSED	Chris Cmiel Tony Trongone	West Virginia Commissioner New Jersey Commissioner	

**ITEM 1 – CALL TO ORDER**

1. The meeting was called to order at 2:04 PM ET by Brian Henry, Missouri Commissioner and Committee Chair, and roll call was taken by Cherise Imai, Executive Director.
2. Chair Henry stated he appreciated members taking the time to participate in today's call, as everyone is busy. Working in education during the pandemic has been a challenge, as many members are heavily involved in schools and dealing with different and new issues in education.

**ITEM 2 – AGENDA AND MINUTES**

3. The agenda was motioned for approval by Commissioner Steve Bullard (KY) and seconded by Commissioner Darcy Benway (IL). Motion carried. The minutes from March 4, 2020 was motioned for approval by Commissioner Benway, seconded by Commissioner Felicia Gonzales (NV). Motion carried.

**ITEM 3 – REPORTS**

4. **Executive Committee** – Chair Henry provided an Executive Committee (EXCOM) update from the February meeting. He reported the committee discussed the Month of the Military Child, and Purple Up! which many members tried to implement virtually as schools were closed due to the pandemic. The EXCOM discussed solicitation emails received by the Commission. He noted the Commission tries to remain mission focused and avoid solicitation and/or advocating for political or secular ideas or products which are beyond the compact mission of transitioning military children.
5. Chair Henry reported the Rules Committee is working on the Policy Development Policy, and a rules proposal by Tennessee Commissioner Deanna McLaughlin was received to develop grade point averages (GPA) and weighting systems for military kids. The proposal did not pass out of committee.

He mentioned a Legal Advisory was published last fall by Legal Advisor, Rick Masters which determined a rule on GPA was beyond the commission's scope and legal authority. Chair Henry reported the EXCOM discussed sharing Best Practices of States on compact implementation, effective utilization of Tier Groups, and developing the Mid-Year survey questions. In addition, the EXCOM discussed the pandemic and how it impacts transitioning students.

6. **Strategic Plan Progress** – Chair Henry reported in Years 1 and 2, the committee is on track and approved the Communication Plan and the new PSA video program. He advised continuing discussion on the Ambassador Program, which is targeted for finalization in Year 2. He stated the third goal regarding “utilizing state education conferences to promote the compact” may need to be revised a later date due to pandemic due to social distancing and safety restrictions. Regarding awareness of the compact, he noted a question on the mid-year survey was added to collect data on “how member states educate stakeholders on the compact” which will assist the committee in identifying or developing new resources for states. Finally, he highlighted several resources currently available on the website and from the national office to assist members increase awareness in their state.

#### ITEM 4 – OLD BUSINESS

7. **2020 Purple Up! Month Reminder (Toolkit)** – Chair Henry reported the Purple Up! and Month of the Military Child toolkit and information was posted on the MIC3 website. However, due to the pandemic, many school campuses were closed. He reported schools and districts organized virtual events and celebrations, it was less than years prior. He further highlighted the activities in his school district which included a virtual poster and photo contest and sidewalk chalk art utilizing words such as “resilience”. He stated the Commissioner of Education and districts had prepared press releases however this was deferred due to the pandemic. He hoped in the fall that an alternative can be done, depending how schools are in session.

8. Commissioner Pete LuPiba (OH) reported they celebrated on April 17<sup>th</sup>, and obviously, what helps us is not just him, the state council or the school liaison at Wright Patterson, but having nearly 300 Purple Star school liaisons across the state, so they don't have to create original content or fresh content on their own, between the state council, himself, or the school liaison. He stated it was awesome to be part of the effort and to see everything from Lake Erie down to the Ohio River across the school districts doing virtual and other ways of celebration.

9. Commissioner Bullard reported Kentucky has planned a huge event at Fort Knox with the Governor, First Lady, Secretary of Education, and schools, however the event was cancelled due to COVID-19, which was a huge disappointment.

10. Commissioner Gonzales stated Nevada had a lot planned, including the Governor signing a proclamation with students - though unfortunately they had to cancel their event as well.

11. Commissioner Benway added their date was April 20<sup>th</sup> and they encouraged military students to post messages on social media with the hashtag, however there was a limited response.

12. Chair Henry concluded with the pandemic, celebrations during this period was a challenge and appreciated the effort by the commission to support military kids despite the challenges during this time.

13. **PSA: Successful Compact Transitions Video Program** – Chair Henry reported the program release was delayed and proposed if the committee should continue with the release despite the fact that schools are not in session, or if the program should be launched at the Annual Business Meeting (ABM) instead when schools are perhaps back in session.

14. Commissioner Gonzales stated she has not received any submittals to date, and perhaps students are limited to technology, devices and wi-fi at home, where normally they would have access to these in school. She stated would like the date extended as students are struggling to figure out the current situation with virtual school and she didn't think this would be on their radar.

15. The committee considered other options such as a soft launch during summer, however Commissioner Shelly Ramos (TX) reported the Texas Education Agency was instructed to limit communication from the state department to school districts to allow them to focus on remote instruction – which will be the case into the summer months.

16. The committee discussed current constraints and the requirement of video submittal through the appropriate state commissioner, that perhaps a launch at the ABM may be more effective to ensure Commissioner awareness of their role, responsibilities and overall program requirements. It was agreed once launched, to encourage members to reach out to their state council and partners to promote the program through their channels. Members concurred to defer a final decision to the July 1 meeting to assess where states were regarding the pandemic. (OPEN ITEM)

17. **My Navy Family App** – ED Imai reported this opportunity was referred by Mr. Chuck Clymer, lead on the Navy School Liaison Officer program and the Military Representative to the Commission. an agreement was recently signed by the Commission to include MIC3 as a resource in the application for families. The developer informed the Commission was added to the application however ED Imai reported the current website interface of the MUSE platform is not compatible with mobile phones. She added while both the former Communication Associates worked on moving the platform to WordPress, the current staff vacancy has further delayed the project. (OPEN ITEM)

## ITEM 5 – NEW BUSINESS

18. **Ambassador Program** – ED Imai reported the Ambassador program was proposed to provide a mechanism on building partnerships with organizations that may advocate for particular or issues that may be controversial, however are supportive of the commission's efforts. She reviewed the timeline and process of the proposal and noted areas which required committee guidance and feedback. She noted the program is targeted for completion in Year 2 of the strategic plan and rollout at the 2021 ABM. She encouraged a thorough discussion on how the program builds on current efforts and will benefit the commission.

19. Commissioner LuPiba asked if the Ambassador is defined as an individual or a representative from an organization. Ed Imai replied the intent was for an organization to apply with a person serving as the Ambassador between the Commission and their organization. She stated this will be clarified in the next version of the document. The committee concurred to examine the draft in the interim and defer further discussion to the July 1 meeting. (OPEN ITEM)

20. **Website Analytics and Migration to the New Platform** – ED Imai referred to the report provided which is reflective for January through December 2019. There were over 27,000 total users,

with 18,000 new to the website, with 62% on desktop or laptops, 30% were on mobile cell phones. Due to this ensuring the website is mobile friendly is paramount. On average users use 2 ½ pages with returning users visiting 4 pages.

21. ED Imai attributed the increase traffic to the increased training efforts by commissioners, the national office, and by partners; which emphasized the need for the website to be current and updated. She added Ms. Dablow updates the site daily. ED Imai will propose hiring a vendor to assist in completing the website migration from MUSE to WordPress, as well as website upgrades, to the EXCOM. If approved, the website relaunch is targeted for the fall ABM.

## ITEM 7 – OTHER BUSINESS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

22. **Items for Executive Committee** – No comments were presented.

23. **Impact of the Pandemic** – Chair Henry reported it has been a time-consuming and difficult ten weeks under the pandemic as his teachers have transitioned to a virtual teaching format within 48 hours. He communicates with other military impacted school superintendents and they experienced a similar situation – which has been a disruption for the entire country and world. We've heard family transitions are halted until June 30.

24. Mr. Davis Whitfield of the National Federation of High School Associations asked if any states were preparing to return to school buildings in this current school year? Chair Henry replied, they were planning to go back, and until a waiver is provided by authorities and district superintendents approved a return, school activities are on hold and social distancing regulations are in place. Mr. Whitfield reported a couple of states, such as Montana, were going back to school today. Commissioner Bullard stated heard the University of Kentucky would have physical classes in the fall, however he felt this year was done. ED Imai reported the national office tracks this information and 43 states have reported they are closed for the rest of the school year, while seven have not released information.

25. ED Imai asked Mr. Whitfield if there was an update on fall sports. He replied guidelines are in discussion with the Sports Medicine Advisory Committee which includes medical professionals across the country. The guidelines will outline considerations when returning to participate in activities and will be released once approved, however the final decision-making rests with individual states and officials.

26. Chair Henry expressed appreciation for the committee's time and great feedback, as well as efforts to support schools and kids. It's a difficult time we are in, and it may be the only stability that people have during this time.

27. **Adjournment** – With no further business to conduct, Chair Henry adjourned the meeting at 2:57 PM ET.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Cherise Imai  
Secretary