



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EXCOM) MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, November 18, 2020

PRESENT	John "Don" Kaminar	Arkansas Commissioner	Chair
	Laura Anastasio	Connecticut Commissioner	Vice Chair
	Mary Gable	Maryland Commissioner	Rules
	Brian Henry	Missouri Commissioner	Comm & Outreach
	Daron Korte	Minnesota Commissioner	Compliance
	Craig Neuenswander	Kansas Commissioner	Treasurer & Finance
	Ernise Singleton	Louisiana Commissioner	Training
EXCUSED	Chuck Clymer	DoD Representative	Ex-Officio
	Rosemarie Kraeger	Rhode Island Commissioner	Past Chair and LNC
STAFF	Cherise Imai	Executive Director	Secretary
	Lindsey Dablow	Training and Operations Assoc.	
	Mary Pendleton	Administrative Assistant	

ITEM 1 – WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

1. Chair Don Kaminar (AR) called the meeting to order on Wednesday, November 18, 2020 at 12:02 PM EST. Roll Call was conducted by Cherise Imai, Executive Director. A quorum was established.

ITEM 2 – WELCOME, MARY PENDLETON, NEW ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

2. ED Imai introduced Mary Pendleton, Administrative Assistant for MIC3. Ms. Pendleton introduced herself and said she looks forward to supporting the team at MIC3. Chair Kaminar stated that hopefully the Commission will meet in person at the 2021 ABM so everyone can introduce themselves.

ITEM 3 – AGENDA AND MINUTES

3. Commissioner Ernise Singleton (LA) motioned to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mary Gable (MD). Motion carried.

4. Vice Chair Laura Anastasio (CT) motioned to approve the meeting minutes for September 17, 2020, seconded by Commissioner Gable. Motion carried.

ITEM 4 – REPORTS

5. **Chair – Executive Statement of the Commission** – Chair Kaminar stated that several seasoned members, in addition to some that have either retired/moved on and expressed concern

that the original intent and purpose of the compact has been lost. It was suggested the Commission develop a statement that succinctly clarifies the purpose of the Compact and what the Commission does and doesn't cover. There surmised there was a misunderstanding or interpretation on the purpose of the organization. An example was the Purple Star Schools Program which is outside the mission and scope of the Compact. Because it is not a Commission program, mandating member states to adopt it is not permissible under our statute – even though Arkansas has adopted the program on their own.

6. Members supported the effort and noted that turnover was common for the organization. They noted the statement could be provided to new members as part of the onboarding process and made available on the website. Chair Kaminar clarified that the Compact was specifically designed to address specific education transition issues while other topics were purposely left out. He provided an example of a community member who is active in legislation for issues affecting military families that has interest in the Commission doing more beyond the scope of the Compact. Members expressed concern regarding redundancy as the role and responsibilities of Commissioners are provided to them and posted on the website.

7. Members directed staff to work with General Counsel Rick Masters and draft a legal overview of the purpose of the Commission and the Compact, including its limitations; and update the legal FAQ for Committee review in February. (OPEN ITEM)

8. **Strategic Plan** – The document detailing the Executive Committee's Strategic Plan was reviewed. Chair Kaminar referenced the tactic "Developing a mechanism for evaluating the impact of the Compact." He said it may be worth pulling together a small group from the EXCOM to develop some ideas on how to approach this. He said it's an elusive target and not easy to quantify on how effective the Compact is. His idea for a starting point would be to do an operational definition of what is effectiveness. In closing, Chair Kaminar stated how successful the virtual Annual Business Meeting (ABM) was and thanked the National Office and the EXCOM for their contributions.

9. **Vice Chair** – Vice Chair Anastasio thanked ED Imai and Ms. Lindsey Dablow, Training and Operations Associate, for their hard work and contributions that resulted in a successful ABM. She hoped to hold two Ex-officio virtual meetings in the upcoming year. She will conduct a training for the Groton School District in Connecticut, for new teachers and administrators, to address issues regarding the Compact.

10. **Executive Director – Ransomware Attack** – ED Imai thanked Vice Chair Anastasio for her comments and gave credit to Ms. Dablow for her efforts. Due to the ransomware attack on the Council of State Government Headquarters on September 30, the day prior to the ABM, which shut down the internet and Council of State Government system. In addition, the three IT staff assigned to the ABM were not able to support ABM as they were dealing with the impact of the attack. This resulted in staff conducting the event at Ms. Dablow's personal residence with just herself, Ms. Dablow, and Ms. Dablow's husband left to manage the meeting with little knowledge of the platform. Overall, the team resolved the issues as they arose, and attendees did not seem to notice a difference.

11. ED Imai reported CSG continues to work on resolving the ransomware issues with the state and FBI authorities. Staff was recently provided access to the shared drive which was not accessible since September 30 and will reconcile the files and data to report any losses to CSG IT. Staff computers were wiped and reinstalled, along with new security software and processes in place. CSG Accounting recently regained access the financial software that manages the accounting system and is trying to reconcile the paperwork and functions done manually while the site was down. For this reason, budget reports are projected to be available within the next two weeks. Despite these challenges, staff provided the same level of customer service and support, and customers do not seem to notice any difference in services.

12. **COVID Office Closure** – ED Imai announced CSG has closed the office until July 2021. Employees may go in occasionally to conduct business as needed, however there is a mask and social distancing mandate. In addition, staff must inform maintenance of their presence so cleaning protocols may be completed once they exit the building.

13. **CSG/MIC3 Employee Benefits Increase** – ED Imai reported affiliates were informed the final negotiated benefits increase was 17% over the previous year. CSG also determined the increase, effective in January, would be covered by employers to alleviate any additional impacts on employees.

14. **Weekly COVID Update** – ED Imai reported positive feedback was received by Members regarding the updates published by the National Office. She noted the frequency was moved from weekly to every other week.

15. **New Commissioners Onboarding** – ED Imai reported the onboarding of the Commissioners for Iowa and Michigan was completed.

16. **State Council Meeting Support provided by National Office** – ED Imai stated the National Office provided support to five states for their state council meetings between August and November: California, New Mexico, Missouri, Alabama, and Florida, providing the virtual hosting platform, drafting minutes, and answering questions for their members.

17. **Trainings/Briefings** – Ms. Dablow has briefed two Montana School Districts on the Compact. ED Imai and Ms. Dablow both participated in November's Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) Educational Summit and chat session. The STOMP Training will be rescheduled.

18. **Resolution for National Office Staff** – Chair Kaminar thanked ED Imai and Ms. Dablow for their hard work and how much they contribute to the MIC3 organization. Commissioner Gable echoed his compliments and said the National Office is incredibly responsive and helpful. She stated she would like to offer a Resolution of Outstanding Performance to recognize both ED Imai and Ms. Dablow for the work they have done for the organization. Commissioner Goble motioned for a resolution to recognize the dedication,

commitment, and hard work of ED Imai and Ms. Dablow. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Anastasio. Motion carried.

19. **Communications and Outreach** – Commissioner Brian Henry (MO) stated the Committee has not met since the ABM and will begin meeting in January. He said they are experiencing a lot of COVID fatigue in Missouri and it's hard to pull people together. He commented there's a group in his state that is looking at the Purple Star Schools Program, being supported by MCEC, and noted the program would be separate from his state council. Vice Chair Anastasio asked which group would be doing the Purple Star Schools Program in his state. Commissioner Henry said Missouri has the Office of the Military Advocate. He said it would be worked on by another group including military and education representatives overseen by the Department of Education.

20. In reference to the Strategic Plan, Commissioner Henry stated the Committee spent the past year working on the Successful Compact Transitions Video program, Month of the Military Child and Purple Up!. The next big thing they're working on is the Ambassador Program, to utilize those organizations to help spread information on the Compact. ED Imai added the Committee approved the Communications Plan as well.

21. **Finance** – Treasurer Craig Neuenswander (KS) reported the Committee adopted policies for Investment and Operating Reserve in 2020. He stated an audit of the operations and programs of the Commission and the National Office will be conducted this year to determine where changes need to be made improve efficiency and effectiveness. He said the audit will be very helpful for the organization.

22. **Compliance** – Commissioner Daron Korte (MN) said it was an interesting year for Compliance. Ultimately, many things slowed down in light of the pandemic. He said the majority of the states have Commissioners in place and are holding state council meetings. He said there are a few states that are lagging behind and they need to assess how aggressive the Compliance Committee needs to be to assist them and bring them back in compliance under the Compact. He reported Indiana has had a Commissioner vacancy for a very long time and action may need to be taken to secure an appointment.

23. **Texas Language on MIC3 State Council** – Regarding the Strategic Plan, Commissioner Korte reported the Compliance Committee needs to define and communicate what the minimum expectations are for Commissioners. He referenced the military parent who spoke during the public comment section of the ABM ED Imai reported the Texas Military Representative submitted new statutory language which reinserts the requirement for a State Council to the Commission for review. General Counsel Masters approved the language, and a formal response was provided. Also, ED Imai mentioned that the military representative was going to meet with the Texas Commissioner Shelly Ramos to review the document to ensure concurrence and awareness.

24. **State Council Meeting Report** – Commissioner Korte referenced the State Council Report and said with the pandemic, it has been tough for some states to meet. He stated some states did not hold meetings and it would need to be a decision with the EXCOM if action was to

be taken on these states. ED Imai analyzed the data, and in 2019, 93% of states held a State Council Meeting while in 2020, 90% of states held a State Council meeting. She mentioned that significant progress has been made and praised the Compliance Committee for tracking this information. Commissioner Korte thanked ED Imai and Ms. Dablow for putting the reminders out there for states to submit the necessary information.

25. **Rules** – Commissioner Gable said the Rules Committee completed the Promulgation of Rules in 2019 and then the Policy Development and Approval document this year. They also created some documents to aid Commissioners in their understanding of rules and policy development and changes. She said they are still collecting unique cases or examples that demonstrate implementation of the rules of the Compact. She mentioned if anyone had any examples to forward to Ms. Dablow who edits and completes the submittals.

26. **Training** – Commissioner Singleton welcomed Ms. Pendleton and said she looks forward to working with her. She said the Training Committee had a lot of successes over the past year. They developed and implemented a new Commissioner Training and Mentoring Program. They are continuing to expand training for states both in person and online in the upcoming year. They have been focused on tools to make trainings more efficient and said their focus is making sure people know how to utilize the tools available to them.

27. **Leadership Nomination** – ED Imai gave the update for Commissioner Kraeger who was unable to attend today's meeting. The Committee held a debrief meeting in late October. They discussed what worked well and what didn't work well in the election process and identified areas of improvement. A robust discussion was held on why the votes were not made public, as the Commission is a public entity. In the end, the Committee approved the information for release to the Commissioners. The Committee contacted the candidates prior to inform that the information would be made public. Their next meeting is scheduled for March 22, 2021.

28. Chair Kaminar noted voting used to be done in public on the floor and asked ED Imai why this changed. She recalled some individuals wanted voting to be secret ballot. She stated the Committee would revisit the elections process next year. She noted the current process requires a significant number of staff hours, especially with the virtual balloting process which was open until 12 midnight ET. Staff followed up personally with Commissioners to ensure ballots were received. In addition, discussion at the ABM took much longer than anticipated. She it is important to review the process for impact and value of the process as elections does not directly support military kids. Vice Chair Anastasio stated part of it was that in prior years, all the candidates ran unopposed, and people were uncomfortable to vote publicly when there were other candidates involved. Chair Kaminar said in the ABM, they spent three hours, more time than any other agenda items, on the election. He said if there was a better way to hold the elections, he was in favor of finding that solution. Members concurred.

ITEM 5 – OLD BUSINESS

29. **2020 ABM** – ED Imai referenced the ABM Post-Event Summary. Overall, the feedback was positive and very helpful. The overall structure of the meeting was appreciated, and they found the panels and meeting materials very helpful. The Ad Hoc Report: NGRTF was voted as

the most beneficial sessions at the 2020 ABM. ED Imai reported staff drafted a guidance for Commissioners regarding the NGRTF shortly after the ABM which will assist with discussion with state councils. She was pleased with Commissioner Singleton's panel discussion on Modern Issues Impacting Military Families which received very high value marks. She said the responses indicated an overwhelming majority (84%) indicated the ABM was helpful in increasing their understanding or ability to assist with implementing the Compact.

30. ED Imai stated the importance to emphasize the purpose of the ABM going forward. Commission members want to be updated and informed at the ABM and understand other states' best practices on implementing the Compact. One suggestion was to hold a Compact 101 session refresher at the ABM to help members be updated on the rules and various cases encountered. She was surprised some of the more seasoned Commissioners expressed a desire for updated Compact training. Understandably, attendees stated they missed the networking component of the ABM, which is challenging to do in a virtual environment. Conversely, she noted one of the positives of the virtual platform was a wider network of people, such as school liaisons, were able to attend.

31. For next year's ABM, ED Imai recommended a Compact 101 session, and possibly a 201 session on the recent cases studies. The sessions could be held the day prior to the General Session meeting. She also recommended utilizing webinars, scheduled throughout the year, to address topics normally held in breakout sessions. This would provide a wider audience, and the opportunity to address a multitude of topics such as compact administration, effective state councils, and best practices under the compact.

32. On the virtual platform, there was a sole suggestion the Commission hire a vendor to manage the virtual meeting. While this can be done, she recalled staff research on vendors this past year. Initial estimates for services ranged from \$20,000 and upwards of \$75,000. She was concerned about cost and value. She recommended EXCOM determine the purpose and role of the ABM – is it a business meeting or a conference. If a vendor was needed, time was required to select the company and ensure the deliverables. She stated while it may too soon to make a decision, it would be ideal for a decision on the ABM 2021 format be made by the February-March timeframe. Commissioner Korte asked the National Office provide information regarding the hotel in Little Rock and whether funds would be lost if postponed or the Commission chose not to hold the meeting in-person. Vice Chair Anastasio commented it would be difficult to determine in February whether they would be able to have an in-person meeting versus a virtual meeting.

33. **Webinar Series** – Ms. Dablow said that last week ED Imai and Davis Whitfield with the National Federation of High School Associations (NFHS) recorded a 50-minute webinar on NFHS and what their role is on supporting the Commission and military connected students. She said a focus would be made on webinars this year even though the Communications Associate role is still vacant. With everyone being virtual, it is a comfortable way for people to get information on their own time. This webinar will be promoted and will be available in December. She said they are also looking forward to rescheduling the Military Impacted Schools Association Keith Mispagel's presentation that he was scheduled to give at the ABM.

34. **Commissioner Recognition Program** – Chair Kaminar noted tone of the tasks assigned to the EXCOM as part of the Strategic Plan was to develop a plan to recognize outstanding Commissioners. He noted the challenge in developing a program that truly recognizes Commissioners without it becoming a popularity contest. He directed attendees to look at the draft of the Outstanding Commissioner (State) Recognition Program and asked for feedback. Vice Chair Anastasio asked for clarification on the number of years requirement as part of each level. Chair Kaminar said this program would be more of a public acknowledgement for the Commission. Commissioner Korte suggested coming up with a graphic a state could put on their State Council page or website so they can display the recognition (an example of this is a Blue-Ribbon School in education). Commissioner Neuenswander agreed with this suggestion and said it is easier than having a physical plaque that has to move from office to office with an individual. Commissioner Korte and Commissioner Neuenswander volunteered to help Chair Kaminar flesh out the details of this concept into one that could be reviewed by the EXCOM.

35. **Utilization of Tier Groups** – ED Imai referenced the Tier Group Proposal and stated in previous EXCOM discussions, some members had expressed concern about balance of time and value since most Commissioners have full-time jobs and the Commission has numerous meetings. Another concern was how the Tier Groups would be implemented and led. The proposal was modified based on feedback. The Tier Group Facilitator would be appointed by the Chair of the Commission for the first year for a one-year term. She stated the meetings would need to be held on the GoToMeeting platform to make sure the agendas and minutes were consistent. Meeting once a year at the ABM would be fine, but the group could meet an additional time mid-year if desired.

36. Members indicated the revised draft responded to their previous concerns. Commissioner Korte mentioned it was important to note that the second (optional) meeting would be conducted virtually. Members asked ED Imai to finalize the document and tabled further discussion at the next meeting.

MEETING RECESS

37. Commissioner Korte moved for a ten-minute recess and Commissioner Singleton seconded the motion. The motion carried.

MEETING RECONVENES

38. Chair Kaminar reconvened the meeting.

ITEM 6 – NEW BUSINESS

39. **Committee Meeting Schedule** – ED Imai referenced the 2020-2021 Standing Committee Meeting Dates and requested approval from the EXCOM. Treasurer Neuenswander moved to approve the Committee Meeting Dates and seconded by Vice Chair Anastasio. Motion carried.

40. **Legal Advisory** – Chair Kaminar said the question came up as to whether families of the U.S. Space Force members are covered by the Compact. ED Imai explained the legal advisory that Mr. Masters wrote stated that because the Space Force is part of the Air Force, no additional accommodation is needed because they are already covered by the Compact. Commissioner Neuenswander moved to accept the Legal Advisory on the U.S. Space Force and the motion was seconded by Vice Chair Anastasio. Motion carried.

41. **MIC3 Awards** – ED Imai discussed the three awards requested. One for State Service, Jacie Ragland, who served as the interim California State Commissioner and Chair of the California State Council. The Community Award for Missouri State Representative Steven Lynch. ED Imai also requested a Special Recognition for Dr. David Splittek from the Military Child Education Commission (MCEC) who will be retiring on December 21. She noted he has been a great participant and supporter of the Commission and was the original MCEC appointee since the Commission began in 2009. Commissioner Henry moved to approve the three awards and the motion was seconded by Treasurer Neuenswander. Motion carried.

42. **National Guard and Reserve Task Force** – ED Imai reviewed the Task Force recommendation and draft guidance for commissioners to assist with state council discussions.

43. General concerns:

- Commissioner Henry said a concern he has is that once you open up a law in states it can become a big issue and the intent of the original document can be shifted. He stated that his opinion is that it needs to be handled as a state issue. Chair Kaminar noted that it has been a concern that has been expressed in the past about opening the Compact up to revision.
- Vice Chair Anastasio said she was under the impression that they were to just let their State Councils know this was coming and that there really is only one option since modifying the Compact isn't really an option.
- Commissioner Korte stated concerns over submitting a report by end August on behalf of his state. He was unsure if he could speak on behalf of the state or form an opinion. ED Imai stated this was included to provide a formal opportunity for states to submit questions or concerns regarding the inclusion and the how. It would also provide time for the EXCOM to review, research and respond to any concerns or provide clarity prior to the ABM meeting.
Vice Chair Anastasio said she doesn't think there are two options because modifying the Compact isn't an option. If a state is interested, they will go through the legislative process, so the role of the Commissioners is to make sure the language is in compliance with the Compact.

44. Chair Kaminar stated he and ED Imai would revise the document for further discussion at the December meeting. **(OPEN ITEM)**

45. **New Communication Policy** – ED Imai noted some Commissioners recently utilized the Commissioner distribution list to disseminate non-Commission business information. Several

Commissioners expressed concern regarding the emails and calls by colleagues promoting personal interests, especially as we are a quasi-government entity. Due to these concerns, she recommended a communication policy be drafted. Members concurred and directed staff to develop a draft by the February meeting for review. **(OPEN ITEM)**

46. **Requiring Committees to Conduct an Impact Assessment** – With the new Strategic Plan, ED Imai asked the EXCOM to require Committees to conduct a cost and operational impact assessment for any new programs or initiatives adopted by the Commission. A good practice for any organization, this will help maintain awareness and transparency. Members concurred.

ITEM 7 – OTHER BUSINESS

47. **Executive Session** – The discussion was tabled to the December meeting.

48. **Announcements** – ED Imai reported staff would schedule calls with committee chairs to plan for the first meetings of the year. Chair Kaminar noted as the Committee's agenda was completed, the Committee would not meet the following day.

ITEM 8 – ADJOURNMENT

49. With no further business to conduct, Commissioner Neuenswander motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Korte. Motion carried. Chair Kaminar adjourned the meeting at 2:57 PM ET.

Submitted by,
Cherise Imai
Secretary