

Alabama MIC3 End of the Year Report

Submitted by Dr. Douglas L. Ragland, Alabama Commissioner

There have been excellent accomplishments during the 2021-22 year in the state of Alabama in relation to MIC3 and Military Families in general, and they are as follows:

- The Alabama Legislature created the Purple Star Schools Program under the direction of the Purple Star Schools Committee, in Act 2021-7 during the 2021 Regular Session. This program in its creation automatically included the Alabama Commissioner as a Member. The first meeting for the Committee was on August 15, 2021, and included the Selection of Officers (Chair, Vice Chair), and approval of the Resolution of the Purple Star Schools Committee which outlines criteria for the Purple Star School Program. The Purple Star Committee selected Lieutenant Governor Will Ainsworth as Chair, and Mr. Terry Roller, Military Family Education Liaison as Vice Chair. The Committee also has Alabama Council Members Robert Richert, School Liaison Officer for Maxwell Air Force Base, and Kim Kozel, Department of Defense Representative, and School Liaison Officer for Fort Rucker, and Dr. Eric Mackey, Alabama State Superintendent of Education.
- The Alabama State Department of Education, led by State Superintendent Dr. Eric Mackey worked in partnership with the Purple Star School Committee in the selection of 56 schools that met the qualifications to become Purple Star Schools. These schools were approved as Purple Star Schools by the Alabama Purple Star Committee on April 12, 2022. The Department of Education has vowed to work diligently to not only get more schools qualified, but to have the most in the nation qualified.
- The Honorable Governor Kay Ivey, approved a Military Proclamation for Month of the Military Child on February 2, 2022. I have attached the proclamation to this email.
- Maxwell Air Force Base has added another School Liaison Officer and thus there are 2 School Liaison Offices for that location.
- A student from Steilacoom High School in Washington Quadarius Brown was transferred to Sumter County High School in Alabama during the second semester of the school year as a result of his mother's pending deployment to Eastern Europe. As a result of the collaborative efforts between the Superintendents in Washington and Alabama the student met graduation

requirements and was eligible to return to Steilacoom High School to walk with his 2022 peers and receive his Steilly Diploma. This is a success story and he was photographed for the MIC3 Program Publication.

- Kim Kozel has been so successful in resolving cases for families stationed at Ft. Rucker in Alabama, Ft. Benning in Georgia, and a Military Base In Italy. Also in her Community in Southeast Alabama, the following schools received the Purple Star Designation : Enterprise City Schools in Enterprise, Alabama Carroll High School and Ozark Middle School in Ozark, Alabama, and South Dale Middle School in Pinckard, Alabama.
- Erica Lewis, School Liaison Officer for Redstone Arsenal has displayed excellent leadership in her community for 2021-22 In addition to resolving successfully all, of her Compact Cases, On April 21st, she participated in Open House at the Youth Center and was able to share information with families about school transitions and resources that can help families deal with transitions. On May 9th, she presented to teachers at Williams Elementary School on "Connecting Military Youth During Transition- Social and Emotional Considerations School Response and Support." The staff was very receptive of the information presented. On May 18th, Erica held the annual Kindergarten Boot Camp for children in their Strong Beginnings Program. 25 students were able to rotate through stations to help them see what a day of kindergarten will be like once they start school. It was a fun event for all. The link to the article is below.
https://www.theredstonerocket.com/eedition/page_e8eb94ef-7f6f-562c-88b6-8428508f2acb.html.
- The following report from Maxwell Air Force Base submitted by Robert Richert, highlights MIC Issues, Non-MIC3 Issues, Legislative Actions, Purple Star Schools and Community Partnerships:

MIC3 Issues

- A Military student transferred to AL from AK with enough HS credits to graduate in AK but not in AL, thus AL school would not promote to 12th grade and allow on-time graduation. The School Liaison office connected the two districts and requested to invoke Compact rule SEC.4.103 Transfers during Senior Year. The student was successfully promoted to 12th grade and completed AK coursework in AL, received an AK diploma in AL this past May (2022).
- A military student transferred to AL from WY. Initially, the receiving school in AL would not accept JROTC coursework taken in WY, as a substitute for PE credit. SL office reviewed the AL graduation requirements and noted that per AL graduation requirement JROTC could substitute for PE. SL office contacted the local district and advised them of the issue, and requested they adhere to

SEC.5.101, of the compact. Receiving school, conceded that JROTC was an acceptable substitute for PE and allowed enrollment of the student in the appropriate grade.

- A military student who transferred from out of state was not allowed to enroll in AP classes in a new school (private). The sponsor reached out to the SL office for assistance. SL contacted School Headmaster, introduced himself and explained SL's role, requested assistance for family, and allow for enrollment in AP classes. SL informed that the school was not bound to the Compact but informed them of the section of Compact (SEC.5.101 & 5.104) that would apply and requested the school to comply with the spirit of the agreement we have with the public schools. Headmaster concurred and allowed the student to enroll in the desired AP classes.
- A local school (receiving) would not accept grades from an out-of-state (sending) school for a 1st-grade student. SL office contacted district POC for support and referenced SEC.3.101 (b) of Compact. District POC contacted the local school and advised them to accept grades from sending school.
- Military student residing in GA. The sponsor is assigned to an overseas location and slated for several moves (PCS) for the next several years. To provide a stable environment for his high school-aged son, the sponsor has assigned power of attorney (POA) to his brother in AL. The sponsor reached out to the SL office in regards to enrollment and extracurricular activity participation at a new high school. SL informed the member that per the compact SEC.6.101 and 6.102. the student is eligible for enrollment at the zoned school of his uncle (POA) and can participate in extracurricular activities per Alabama High School Athletic Association rules.

Non MIC3 Issues

- Air Force members assigned to Army Garrison requested an exception to policy to attend another school other than the assigned school. Member referenced that due to his deployment his spouse needed both children at the same school for ease of burden on time and resiliency of students to be at the same school. Superintendent denied the request. AF member/spouse appealed the decision to Asst. State Superintendent to intercede. The state did not and directed parents back to the newly hired Superintendent. The new Superintendent agreed to meet w/parent, but yet again upheld the decision of the previous superintendent.
- SL office assisted international officer's students with appropriate grade placement, transfer of immunization records to Alabama Health Certificate (Blue Card), and transitions to local area schools.
- Coordinated with Alabama High School Athletic Association (AHSAA) issues/challenges with military students' school transfers and participation in extra-curricular activities (sports, band, etc.)

- Prior AF member spouse submitted a complaint regarding local school issue of failing to provide a report of grades to parents and learning loss while attending school in Montgomery Public School District. Member's child had attended a local school the year prior but failed to receive a report card for the final reporting period. The member several attempts on their own to contact the school and receive a final report. The local school advised the parent that reports were made available through the district's online site (Schoology). Member indicated that they no longer had access to the online site since their PCS. SL office connected with the district office to assist members with the retrieval of the report card.

Legislation

- Senate Bill 116 by Sen. Tom Whatley (R - Auburn) allows children of military families relocating to Alabama to enroll in public school before arrival without having to first provide proof of residency.
- Senate Bill 119 by Sen. Will Barfoot (R - Pike Road) expands scholarships provided under the Alabama G.I. and Dependents' Educational Benefit Act to include private colleges and universities and adds the U.S. Space Command to qualifying branches.

Purple Star Schools

- SL office informed local schools and districts of the Alabama inaugural Purple Star Schools initiative. Eight local schools were designated as being among the first of fifty-three Purple Schools in the State.

Community Events/Partnerships

- SL office coordinated guest speakers/service members to present at three local schools for Bullying Prevention, Drug Awareness, and Veteran's Day.
- SL office coordinated the delivery of over 200+ thank you cards for Veterans at area Veterans Homes (Alex City) and Hospital (Tuskegee/Montgomery).
- Coordinated three resiliency events with School Liaison Office, Military Family Life Counselor, and local high school students. More than 100 students served.
- Partnered with MCEC Parent Support Programs and offered several "Tell Me a Story" programs for school-age children. Lt Gen Hecker, Air University Commander was our most recent featured guest reader.
- Along with Operation Homefront, coordinated a base event featuring information booths from eighteen community partners and provided 300 backpacks filled with school supplies to students.

- SL office coordinated with Retirement Systems of Alabama (RSA) to light Montgomery's RSA tower in Purple to honor and recognize Purple UP! Day for Month of the Military Child.
- SL Office in conjunction with Air University K-12 Working Group coordinated a Proclamation from Governor Kay Ivey, for April's Month of the Military Child .
- SL Office collaborated with MIC3 National Office to offer four MIC3 101 training sessions for parents and school/district office personnel.

In closing, As the Alabama Commissioner for MIC3, I am very proud of my Military Education Family Liaison, Department of Defense Military Representative, and School Liaison Officers, for their excellent work and leadership in resolving all cases related to the Compact, assisting those individuals with concerns out of the jurisdiction of the Compact, serving their respective communities with a Spirit of Excellence in creating partnerships benefiting military families via schools, government, and community organizations, and helping to bring awareness to the Compact, and other Military Interests.

MIC3 State Council Membership

- **Dr. Douglas L. Ragland**, Alabama Commissioner for Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission and Retired School Superintendent.
- **Dr. Eric Mackey**, Alabama State Superintendent of Education
- **Mr. Terry Roller**, Assistant Superintendent, Support Services Alabama State Department of Education and Military Education Family Liaison
- **Mr. Pat Mantell**, Communication Specialist and Military Advisor, Alabama State Department of Education and Alabama Military Education Family Liaison
- **Mr. Dave Pope**, Supervisor of Security in the Information Technology Department at the Alabama State Department of Education.
- **Kimberly Kozel**, Department of Defense Military Representative and School Liaison Officer, Soldiers Services Center, Fort Rucker US Army
- **Robert Richert**, Child & Youth Education Services, School Liaison, 42nd Force Support Squadron, Maxwell AFB, AL
- **Katheryn Ganster**, Child & Youth Education Services, School Liaison, 42nd Force Support Squadron, Maxwell AFB, AL
- **Major General Sheryl Gordon**, Alabama National Guard
- **Dr. Diane C. Flournoy**, School and Community Stakeholder Leader
of Daleville City Schools
- **Mr. Nick Moore**, Education Policy Advisor Executive Office of the Governor
- **Ms. Kim Vickers**, Associate Director for the Alabama High School Athletic Association

- **Erica Lewis**, School Resource Officer, CYS, Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation, Redstone Arsenal, Alabama

The Alabama MIC3 State Council held their annual meeting on August 16, 2021. The meeting agenda and minutes are available on [Alabama's page on mic3.net](#).

Secondary Point of Contact

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