



MEETING MINUTES

ARKANSAS COUNCIL FOR MILITARY CHILDREN

Thursday, November 10, 2022

10:00 A.M.

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

The Arkansas Council for Military Children (Council) met Thursday, November 10, 2022. Chair John Kaminar called the meeting to order at 10:14 A.M.

PRESENT:

Mr. John Kaminar, Chair
Ms. Jody Bergstrom
Rep. Karilyn Brown (proxy for Rep. Bruze Cozart)
Ms. Melissa Butler (Proxy for Ms. Bilenda Harris-Ritter)
Ms. Loreena Hegenbart
Ms. Bobbie Olles (MFEL)
Dr. Kerry Schneider
Ms. Emily Taylor (proxy for Dr. Tony Thurman)
Col. Bern Smith (DOD Liaison, non-voting)
Ms. Terri Williams

ABSENT:

Ms. Amy Arnone
Mr. Shawn Cook
Ms. Tanya Sharp (proxy for Dr. Debbie Jones)
Mr. Brian Melton
Ms. LaShawnda Noel
Mr. Lance Taylor
Mr. Ricker Porter (Special Education Liaison, non-voting)

EXCUSED:

Ms. Andelyn Wright, Vice Chair
Sen. Jane English (proxy for Sen. Missy Irvin)
Ms. Jessica Saum (Special Advisor, non-voting)
Dr. Janice Walker (proxy for Dr. Jeremy Owoh, representing the Awards Committee)

A quorum was not established. (Administrative note: Mr. James Hopkins, proxy for Mr. Melton, arrived at the meeting late. He did not report his arrival and the Chair did not know he had arrived; therefore, the meeting proceeded as though no quorum had been established.)

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Emily Taylor led the Council members in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Recognition of Host School District

Chair Kaminar thanked the Cabot School District for hosting the meeting. He pointed out that Cabot had the first

Purple Star School in the state of Arkansas and was the first Purple Star School District in the State of Arkansas. He stated that the Cabot School District had been taking care of children of military families long before Arkansas joined MIC3. Cabot has the most military connected students in the state of Arkansas, due to their proximity to the Air Force Base. Chair Kaminar introduced Emily Taylor, Director of Counseling, from the Cabot School District. Ms. Taylor presented a slide show of the Purple Star activities for the district. She highlighted the district's activities for Month of the Military Child in April, Purple Up Day, and in 2021 on Fridays started wearing purple to recognize and celebrate military connected families. Cabot has also created the Purple Star School District to award a student a \$4,000 scholarship. The Cabot SD also has a Military Family Life Counseling Program at four elementary schools. Veteran's Day is the biggest military event for the district. When military students transfer into the district, they work with them to make sure their goals are being met and they don't lose credits. They participate in a new student lunch to help get connected.

IV. Introduction of Guests

Chair Kaminar introduced Aaron Randolph, Assistant Superintendent for the Cabot School District, Jordan Boris Family Engagement and Col. Don Berry. Chair Kaminar recognized and welcomed Ms. Shelly Ramos, Senior Director of Curriculum Standards and Student Support at the Texas Education Agency and Compact Commissioner for the state of Texas.

V. Approval of Agenda

There being no quorum, the agenda could not be approved.

VI. Approval of Minutes (September 8, 2022)

There being no quorum, the minutes could not be approved.

VII. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

VIII. Chair's Report (J. Kaminar)

Chair Kaminar reported that both he and Ms. Williams have been holding training for district military education coordinators and school military liaisons. They have held three sessions: September 27th, October 13th, and November 2nd, all virtual meetings with approximately 15 people in attendance at each. Chair Kaminar stated that they were scheduled to hold another session in the afternoon following this meeting for all principals in the Pulaski County Special School District.

Chair Kaminar reported that on September 14th, he and Ms. Jessica Saum participated in training for Air Force School Liaison Program Managers in San Antonio, Texas.

On October 19-20th Ms. Williams and Chair Kaminar attended the MIC3 Annual Business Meeting in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The keynote speaker was Ms. Sharene Brown, wife of Chief of Staff of the Air Force General Charles Brown. She talked at some length about best practices for a successful council and a successful school liaison relationship. A handout with her talking points is included in the meeting packet. Chair Kaminar stated that most of her talking points were drawn from what the Arkansas Council and school liaison are already doing. The commission voted that the best way to provide protection for children of Guard and Reserve service members was through independent legislative action by each state outside of the Compact. During one of the small group sessions, they discussed the problems of identifying military families when they enter a school district. Chair Kaminar reported that there was general agreement that and requirement for military families to self-identify should come from the federal government and not from the states.

Per the Council's wishes, Vice Chair Wright and Chair Kaminar had sent a letter inviting Dr. Jill Biden to attend the Arkansas Month of the Military Child in April 2023. Chair Kaminar stated that before sending the letter, he had discussed this with Erin Franks, government affairs liaison for ADE.

Finally, Chair Kaminar pointed out that the White House had submitted a report, included in the packet, titled "Strengthening America's Military Families".

There were no questions.

IX. Vice Chair's Report (A. Wright)

No report.

X. Reports by Committees, Task Forces, or Liaisons

A. Awards Committee (Dr. J. Walker)

Ms. Williams reported on the Award Committee in Dr. Walker's absence. She stated that the Awards Committee was still working on the Outstanding Military Scholar Award and that the next meeting would take place on December 20th. There were no questions.

B. Military Family Forum Committee (A. Wright)

Chair Kaminar reported on the MFF Committee in Ms. Wright's absence. He stated that the Committee had decided that the lunch and learn session scheduled for October would be rescheduled for a future date. There were no questions.

C. Outreach Committee (T. Williams)

Ms. Williams reported there are two additional schools in the Jacksonville-North Pulaski School District, Bayou Meto Elementary and Bobby G. Lester Elementary that were now Anchored4Life! Schools. She stated that the Anchored4Life! program is a contracted program through the Department of Defense, a peer-to-peer type program that provides support for new students in school districts. The program provides opportunities for peers to enhance social skills, learn leadership skills, build character, improve self-esteem, and integrate into their community. Ms. Williams stated she has met with 4H and selected April 21, 2023, as Purple Up! Day for Arkansas. She also requested that Council members and DMECs email her if they would like her help to promote their school district's activities on social media. There were no questions.

D. Strategic Planning Committee (J. Bergstrom)

Ms. Bergstrom reported the Strategic Planning Committee had met on September 26th but had no quorum. A guest speaker had discussed challenges with the Purple Star School program. The committee members had agreed that it was important to avoid any appearance of devaluing they were devaluing the Military Order of the Purple Heart. Ms. Bergstrom stated that the Committee had received a grant for \$2,500 to provide Purple Star School banners. Ms. Williams said she would work with Ms. Bergstrom on finding a new banner company due to rising costs. There were no questions.

E. Military Family Education Liaison (B. Olles)

Ms. Olles reported that a Commissioner's Memo on the Project Lead the Way Grant has been released. There were no questions.

F. Department of Defense (Col. Smith)

Col. Smith thanked the Cabot School District for hosting the meeting and the wonderful facilities. Col. Smith commented on the impact that Chair Kaminar and Ms. Williams have had at the Air Force level and commended Ms. Williams for her work on the STARBASE program. There were no questions.

G. Special Education Liaison (R. Porter)

No report.

H. Special Advisor (J. Saum)

Ms. Saum was attending the State Board of Education meeting, so Chair Kaminar reported on her behalf. He directed the members' attention to an e-mail report Ms. Saum had provided. He stated that Ms. Saum was presenting a resolution supporting Military Family Appreciation Month to the State Board. A draft of the resolution was included in the meeting packet. Chair Kaminar reported that Ms. Saum has had the opportunity to be in classrooms across Arkansas, with many more scheduled for November and December. Since the last meeting Ms. Saum wanted to share a few highlights, with pictures included in packet. These included that the Senior Leader Spouse course at LRAFB, The school liaison manager training in San Antonio with Chair Kaminar and Ms. Williams, and the Air Force Ball. Also included were pictures from recent Arkansas conferences, novice teacher trainings, future educator seminars at multiple universities, and school visits. One exciting connection was made at Har-Ber High School in Springdale. The expansive aviation program and working to support those students with deeper connections to the air base. Lastly, Ms. Saum had the chance to speak about presuming competence in all students at the CCSSO Impact and Influence Conference in Princeton, New Jersey, where she spoke in front of three National Teachers of the Year. There were no questions.

XI. Old Business

A. Military Family Appreciation Month

Chair Kaminar thanked everyone for promoting and participating in Military Family Appreciation Month.

XII. New Business

A. School District Survey

Chair Kaminar stated that at the national level the Commission has struggled with the notion of how they can measure the effectiveness of the Compact. He reported that at the annual business meeting the Compact Commissioner from the state of Washington shared a survey used in that state to gather information on the productiveness of the interstate compact in Washington State. Chair Kaminar provided the Washington State survey and asked the Council to study the survey and see if that could be a starting point for developing a tool for the state of Arkansas. This would be a mission of the Outreach Committee.

XIII. Date/Time/Place for Next Meeting

Chair Kaminar stated that the next meeting would be January 12, 2023 at 10am at the Camp Pike Armed Forces Reserve Complex in North Little Rock, Building Number One, in the command conference room. There will be a zoom link available.

XI. Adjournment

Chair Kaminar congratulated the Beebe and Hackett School Districts on achieving Purple Star School District status. A formal announcement will be sent to the superintendents of those districts.

There being no further business to discuss, Chair Kaminar adjourned the meeting without objection at 10:54AM.