



Tier Group 4 Meeting Notes
Wednesday, July 29, 2026
4:00 – 5:00 PM ET

PRESENT	Ann Pettit	South Dakota Commissioner	Tier Group 4 Facilitator
	Daron Korte	Minnesota Commissioner	Commission Chair
	Jennifer Belanger	Maine Commissioner	
	Chad Delbridge	Wyoming Commissioner	
	Michael Essien	Oregon Commissioner	
	Lisa Helme	Vermont Commissioner	
	Joseph Hood	District of Columbia Commissioner	
	Laura Kacer	Iowa Commissioner	
	Eileen Huck	Nat. Military Family Assoc.	Ex-officio Representative
	Davis Whitfield	Nat. Fed. of State High School Assocs.	Ex-officio Representative
EXCUSED	Spencer Barzee	Idaho Commissioner	
	Jennifer Davis	Delaware Commissioner	
	Nick Lambruno	West Virginia Commissioner	
	William Niemeyer	Rhode Island Commissioner	
	Kyle Repucci	New Hampshire Commissioner	
	Ray Shaw	Montana Commissioner	
	Shelley Joan Weiss	Wisconsin Commissioner	
STAFF	Lindsey Dablow	Executive Director	
	Trevin Stevens	Communications Associate	
	Allie Thomas	Operations Coordinator	

ITEM 1 – CALL TO ORDER

1. The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM ET by Tier Group 4 Facilitator and South Dakota Commissioner Ann Pettit.

ITEM 2 – ROLL CALL

2. Operations Coordinator Allie Thomas conducted roll call. Per Robert's Rules, a quorum was not necessary as the tier groups are not formal voting committees of the Commission. The meeting was attended by eight Compact Commissioners and two ex-officio representatives. Commissioner Pettit welcomed Commissioners Michael Essien (OR) and Jennifer Belanger (ME) to the group.

ITEM 3 – AGENDA

3. Commissioner Pettit reviewed the agenda with the group.

ITEM 4 – COMMISSION INFORMATION

4. Executive Director Lindsey Dablow provided information on the Commission, including the announcement of Tier Group 2 as the winner of the Race to the Finish after successfully completing all fiscal year (FY) 2026 compliance items by the June 30 deadline, an overview of the FY2026 *State Compliance and* July 29, 2026

Coordination infographic and outstanding compliance items, and reminders regarding registration and hotel reservations for the 2026 Annual Business Meeting (ABM).

ITEM 5 – NEW BUSINESS

5. **Proposed Rule Amendments to SEC 1.101 and 4.103** – Commissioner Pettit provided an overview of the Rules amendments proposed by the state of Virginia regarding graduation requirements and diplomas of “equivalent stature.” No questions or further comments were received from the Tier 4 states. Ms. Dablow noted that the proposed Rules amendments were referred to the Executive Committee (EXCOM) for review before the ABM.

6. **Highlighting State Best Practices** – Commissioner Pettit reviewed updates made to the *Highlighting State Best Practices* document, formerly known as the *Good, Better, Best: State Best Practices on Implementing the Compact*. Commissioner Joseph Hood (DC) recommended labeling the foundational levels as “required” or “mandatory” to clearly distinguish legal obligations from optional practices. Commissioner Essien suggested using growth-oriented terminology such as “emerging, developing, and practicing” to frame the document as a self-assessment tool to support commissioner development. The members agreed that revised terminology would better reflect varying state structures and commissioner responsibilities.

7. **Case: Course Credit** – Ms. Dablow provided an overview of a case regarding course credit when transitioning between a 4x4 block schedule and a semester schedule and its applicability to *Article V Course Placement and Attendance*. The members were asked whether the Compact addressed awarding credits based on “mastery of the subject or content.” The states discussed placement flexibility provisions and waiving course requirements. Commission Chair Daron Korte (MN) noted that the Minnesota Department of Education emphasizes local control and school districts could award credit based on demonstrated mastery of content if local policy allowed it. The members agreed that the Compact provides flexibility but does not compel schools to grant waivers or award credit.

8. The members were asked if their state’s Department of Education had a formal appeals process that families could access. Chair Korte stated that Minnesota had a localized appeals structure. Commissioner Belanger noted that Maine had an alternative diploma pathway for students who attended multiple high schools and experienced educational disruption.

9. **Commissioner Role and Responsibilities Guidance for Appointing Authorities** – Commissioner Pettit reviewed the *Commissioner Role and Responsibilities Guidance for Appointing Authorities* document, highlighting the Commissioner Role and Responsibilities and the Commissioner Responsibilities Checklist. Commissioner Hood recommended clearly stating that states are responsible for paying their annual dues and identifying their payment authority. Commissioner Chad Delbridge (WY) emphasized the importance of establishing relationships with partners such as School Liaisons, military-connected school districts, and key stakeholders before issues arise in the state.

10. **Tier-Focused Discussion** – Commissioner Pettit opened the floor for discussion on topics related to the Tier 4 states. Commissioner Hood shared information regarding ongoing National Guard deployments and encouraged the commissioners to reach out if military-connected families in their states encountered challenges when relocating to the District of Columbia. Ms. Dablow reported that the Department of War Education Activity leadership reported families previously located in Bahrain that returned stateside during the evacuation in March would not be returning to Bahrain for the fall 2026 semester. Those families may establish permanent residence and enroll their children at their new locations. She also noted that the National Office was receiving more questions regarding transitions from homeschool to public school.

ITEM 6 – OTHER BUSINESS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

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11. Commissioner Pettit reminded the members that the June 30, 2026, deadline to submit state compliance requirements had passed and encouraged states with any outstanding items to request extensions if they had not already done so.

ITEM 7 – ADJOURNMENT

12. The meeting was adjourned at 4:54 PM ET.

Respectfully submitted by,
Lindsey Dablow
Secretary