

*MINUTES*

STATE COUNCIL ON EDUCATIONAL  
OPPORTUNITY FOR MILITARY CHILDREN

February 23, 2009

9:30 a.m.

U.S. Naval Submarine Base

Members present: Captain Mark Ginda, Christopher Clouet, Valerie Nelson, Paul Kadri, Senator Andrew Maynard, Doreen Fuller, Elizabeth Gianacoplos, Kevin Keefe (on behalf of Justin Bernier, Office of Military Affairs).

Non-voting members: Laura Anastasio, State Department of Education

Also in attendance: Marian Leverette, Mid-Atlantic Regional School Liaison Officer

1. Discussion and approval of the minutes of the November 20<sup>th</sup> meeting.
2. Military Family Education Liaison
  - Nomination and appointment of the State Military Family Education Liaison: Captain Ginda introduced Marian Leverette, Mid-Atlantic Regional School Liaison Officer for the Navy. The Groton Submarine Base is in the process of hiring a School Liaison Officer, whose duties shall include many of the functions of the Military Family Education Liaison. The Council appointed Marian Leverette to serve in the interim as the contact person for military families in Connecticut until the School Liaison Officer's position has been filled.
3. Outreach to school districts
  - Review of Circular Letter to Superintendents: members suggested various minor changes to the draft letter. The Circular Letter should be released by the end of March.
4. Review of Interstate Commission's Rules Committee meeting: the Interstate Commission's Rules Committee met on February 20<sup>th</sup> to discuss the promulgation of rules for the Compact. The Commission target is to have some rules ready for approval by May 31<sup>st</sup>. There were several areas for which the Commission wanted feedback from the state councils.
  - Absences related to deployment: the Compact language is vague concerning the amount of excused absences for children with family commitments due to the deployment of a parent. It would be helpful for states to have a standard with respect to the number of permissible absences, such as ten days.
  - Clarification of immunization rules for states. Can a school district enroll the child but not allow the child to attend until the parent can produce proof of immunization?

- **Data Collection:** The provision on coordinating data collection was unclear. States have different systems for tracking students. Sharing data could be hampered by privacy laws as well as technology. Before promulgating rules concerning data collection, it is important to understand what kind of data will be collected and the purpose for such collection. The State Council would like clarification on what questions the Compact Commission would like answered with such data.
- **Education Records:** The Commission wanted feedback concerning the cost of copying records for families. There did not appear to be a significant cost involved with copying records for the Groton and New London districts.
- **Transition issues:** could the Commission explore certain online credit recovery programs that the member states can agree to use to maintain some uniformity for these students? It might be helpful to districts if the Commission could provide a Compact Virtual High School to assist students in obtaining sufficient graduation credits.

5. **Operation of the Compact in Connecticut:** Admission to magnets and charters can be problematic for military families who move into a district after the lottery has been held. It would be helpful to find out what other states do to allow military families an opportunity to participate in such programs. Valerie Nelson noted that Groton holds ten slots for its full-day kindergarten class for families who move into the district after the lottery is held. The second lottery is held just prior to the school year. Other states set aside slots specifically for military families. Since Groton and New London have programs/schools that admit students based upon a lottery, it would be helpful to explore what other states are doing for these families.

The Department of Education has had some initial discussions with the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) regarding transfer students and eligibility rules. The CIAC indicated that it would be willing to waive its transfer rules for students as long as the child is not moving into the district for the purpose of playing on an interscholastic team, which should not be the case for students eligible under the Compact.

6. The next meeting will be held at the Naval Submarine Base—the time and date shall be determined at a later date.