



**MEETING/PROJECT NAME:**

Montana Council on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

DATE OF MEETING: July 21, 2021

TIME: 1:00 PM – 1:55 PM

LOCATION: Zoom/Phone Conference

MEETING OBJECTIVE: Business Meeting

PRESIDER: Elsie Arntzen Superintendent, Montana Office of Public Instruction, and BG (R) Hal Stearns, Montana Compact Commissioner

MINUTES PREPARED BY: Jessica Flint, Communications Program Specialist, Montana Office of Public Instruction, [Jessica.flint@mt.gov](mailto:Jessica.flint@mt.gov) or 406-438-3400

**ATTENDEES**

**PRESENT COUNCIL MEMBERS**

BG (R) Hal Stearns, Compact Commissioner  
Tom Moore, Great Falls Public Schools Superintendent  
Lisa Sapp, Malmstrom Air Force Base  
Mark Beckman, Montana High School Association  
Representative Ed Buttrey, Montana State Legislature  
Elsie Arntzen, OPI Superintendent  
Colonel Paul Fowler, Montana Army National Guard

**PRESENT INVITED GUESTS**

Representative Marta Bertoglio, Montana State Legislature  
Sergeant Major Pettis, Montana Army National Guard Recruiting and Retention Operations



## **AGENDA AND NOTES, DISCUSSIONS, ISSUES (OPEN PRESENTATIONS)**

### **TOPICS AND DISCUSSIONS**

Meeting Begins: 1:00 pm

Pledge of Allegiance

Guest Welcome and Presentations

Representative Marta Bertoglio

- Representative Bertoglio, a military veteran, summarized a bill she sponsored during the 2021 legislative session, HB 68
- This bill requires school trustees to allow children of military families that are relocating to Montana under military orders to preliminarily enroll in classes in their school district prior to arrival and establishing residency
- The bill passed both legislative houses 100%
- 19 other states have passed this law
- 5 other states (including Montana) had introduced this law during the 2021 legislature
- 4,135 children in Montana belong to military families

SGM Pettis

- ASVAB utilization decreased due to limited access to students closing of schools during the pandemic
- ASVAB is more than a military entry vehicle, the test is also used for career aptitude and can provide resources for students on career pathways based on their skillset, desired job, education level, and salary
- Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE), Rocky Mountain College have recently given tuition waivers to National Guard Members and Carroll College is looking at tuition waivers as well for up to 8 students that are National Guard Members
- MTARNG also gives sources for grants that can applied for outside of becoming military

Approval of April 6, 2021 Minutes

- Motion to Approve minutes from April 6, 2021 meeting made by Mark Beckman
- 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Hal Stearns
- Minutes approved - All in favor

MIC3 Updates – Commissioner Hal Stearns

- Commissioner Stearns is planning to attend the 2021 MIC3 National Annual Business Meeting in person on November 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> in Little Rock, Arkansas
- Commissioner Stearns plans to report the success Montana had on Purple Up Day



#### 2021 Legislative Update – Representative Ed Buttrey

- The legislature met for 80 days this session.
- 1313 bills were introduced compared to 1309 bills introduced in 2019 and
- 596 bills passed compared to 597 in 2019
- There were 53 resolutions and 75 confirmations
- 17 Bills were vetoed compared to 36 vetoes in 2019; 56 in 2017; and 58 in 2015
- \$13 Billion budget and \$3 Billion in ARPA funding with potentially additional funds
- January 1, 2024 is the deadline for spending the funds
- Two military education bills were passed
  - Early Enrollment bill
  - Any MTARNG member qualifies for in-state tuition

#### Purple Star Program Growth – Superintendent Elsie Arntzen

- Purple Star came out of one of the National meetings
- Montana has 5 total Purple Star Schools
- OPI Legal reviewed some issues with Purple Star that National MIC3 addressed
- There are no funds that flow through MIC3 for the Purple Star Awards and the program has been funded through OPI for under \$1,000
- Purple Star Applications need to be marketed and opened up soon to celebrate our school's successes
- Jessica will work on a press release and other avenues to increase public communications to increase Purple Star School applications
- Lisa presented the Purple Star Educator Award
- The Award is meant to be inclusive and honoring of any school related staff that has gone above and beyond for our military connected students
- Jessica and Lisa were encouraged to spearhead the Purple Star Educator Awards by Pete Lupiba as a model for National MIC3 to present to other states
- Superintendent Arntzen - to make the program inclusive, it would be better to call it something other than an "Educator Award" as well as creating a subcommittee to start this program in the 2021-2022 school year
- Commissioner Stearns – sharing this program with superintendents and teachers during their annual meetings would be a good way to sell the program
- Superintendent Tom Moore – School Administrators meet this coming Monday and Tuesday. Getting on next year's agenda would be great. The Superintendents and Trustees meet in October for MCEL so that would be a good time to highlight but may not work if nominations happen before that.
- Representative Ed Buttrey – I don't want to overlook other people by only recognizing one person. I will be happy to sit on the subcommittee



- Mark Beckman – at the high school association we have categories. We could create categories so that they aren't competing against each other and that way we have someone in each category.
- Superintendent Arntzen – It would be nice to include this program with Purple Star Schools during this school year but the timeline states August 1. It might be difficult to vote on this by the August 1 time frame.
- Lisa Moore – please send emails with suggestions to Jessica and we will work on developing the subcommittee
- Superintendent Moore – What about the idea of calling it Purple Star Champion? There are people that promote schools and the values that fall under MIC3
- Jessica Flint – we will redraft the rules to be more inclusive and begin development of the subcommittee
- Superintendent Arntzen – Can we have a convening to put more about this. If we could entertain a motion to look at this deeper that would secure our moving forward on this. There is no budget around this and very minimal required at this point. I think we could create a subcommittee to move this along in a more efficient and timely manner to pair the Purple Star Schools with this award.
- Motion made by Representative Ed Buttrey made a motion to move forward with the program and create subcommittee and schedule future meetings to put the program in place.
- 2nd by Superintendent Tom Moore
- Motion approved. All in favor

#### MIC3 Report on Inclusion of Guard and Reserve – Jessica Flint

- The National MIC3 is asking each state to report their Guard and Reserve member and children numbers to add to the discussion of including Guard and Reserve dependents under MIC3
- They are anticipating additional legislation to partner this in each state
- Many states are not able to collect data as it is not readily available
- Commissioner Stearns and Lisa Sapp has sent me numbers that we are working to verify.
- Superintendent Arntzen – Before the report gets sent it will need to be reviewed by the commission and distributed by Commissioner Stearns
- Superintendent Arntzen – stepping back would anybody want to participate in the subcommittee? Representative Buttrey and Mark Beckman volunteered. Could we meet at this same time early August to have a quick discussion

#### Other Business

- Superintendent Arntzen – Is there any legislation that might be happening from other MIC3 states or at the federal level that we might discuss or want to bring forward in the interim?



- Lisa Sapp – If any school districts need guidance on HB 68 I encourage them to contact Great Falls Schools. SB 157 regarding home schooling and allowing those students to participate in public school extracurricular activities is a big win for homeschool families living on base at Malmstrom because now these students can participate in JROTC and sports. Thank you to those who worked so hard on passing these bills
- Lisa Sapp – I am working on scheduling an MIC3 meeting on base here. Due to some difficulties it may not happen until next year. We are working on holding an education symposium as well if anybody wants to share their thoughts. We want to be comparable for families moving between other installations like Minot is open enrollment between districts. We have families that are having to PCS (permanent change of station) but due to limited housing have to move outside of Great Falls but want to attend Great Falls public schools. If we are able to hold an MIC3 meeting on base, we could hold a gathering to hear the needs of the families.
- Commissioner Stearns – perhaps the Helena command center would be a good place and have a meeting at both installations with Adjutant General, other commanders and TAG come in.
- Superintendent Moore – we met with General Funk in Helena who oversees training TRIDOC to meet the new Superintendent from Helena and discuss an Army JROTC unit in Helena Public Schools. We were able to share with them how we were able to assist and develop the JROTC in Great Falls. It has been a slow climb to build and sustain but it is a benefit to our military families. I was glad to hear the Army in Helena that they are interested in doing that.

End of Meeting: 1:55 pm