

State Council on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

Annual Meeting

Nebraska Department of Education
State Office Building, 6th floor, State Board Meeting Room
301 Centennial Mall South
Lincoln, Nebraska

September 15, 2015
1:00 p.m.

Minutes

The Nebraska State Council on Educational Opportunity for Military Children held its annual meeting on September 15, 2015. Publicized notice of the meeting was given by posting notice on the Department's website on the Internet, which gave the date, time and location of the meeting.

1. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Dr. Scott Swisher, Deputy Commissioner of the Nebraska Department of Education and Council Commissioner of the State Council on Educational Opportunity for Military Children, called the meeting to order at approximately 1:00 p.m. The following members were present: Frank Harwood, Superintendent, Bellevue Public Schools; Colonel Matthew Joganich, U.S.A.F., 55th Wing Mission Support Group Commander, Offutt Air Force Base; and, Margaret Worth, General Counsel and Military Family Education Liaison, NDE. Dr. Matthew L. Blomstedt, Commissioner of Education and Senator Kate Sullivan were absent. (NOTE: Sen. Sullivan's Legal Counsel, LaMont Rainey, did arrive after the meeting and was given the 2015 notebook that everyone else at the meeting had received.)

Dr. Swisher announced the placement of the Open Meetings Act.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

No public comment.

3. APPROVAL OF 2014 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

Motion by Frank Harwood, second by Margaret Worth: To approve the minutes of the September 22, 2014, State Council on Educational Opportunity for Military Children meeting.

Voting Yes: Swisher, Harwood, Joganich and Worth
The motion passed.

4. REPORTS BY MEMBERS ON ACTIVITY OR ISSUES

Dr. Swisher stated that he attended last year's annual meeting in Tennessee. With Legislation now passed in New York and New Hampshire and with Oregon becoming effective in January 2015, all 50 states and the District of Columbia have adopted the Compact.

Dr. Swisher indicated that he plans to attend the 8th Annual Meeting of the Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission (MIC3) this year in Seattle, Washington November 5 and 6, 2015. He will offer a report at the next meeting.

Frank Harwood reported that the National Association of Federally Impacted Schools (NAFIS), which the Military Impacted School Association (MISA) is a part of, will hold their fall conference in Washington, D.C. in a couple of weeks. Mr. Harwood plans to attend this conference and at this time neither he nor Dr. Swisher see any concerns to be addressed at that meeting.

Margaret Worth reported that she has not received any phone calls or correspondence in regard to the Compact since the last meeting. Ms. Worth thanked Mr. Harwood and Offutt AFB for all of their excellent work in helping the schools and students comply with the Compact.

Frank Harwood gave an update of a Bellevue Public School military student that transferred to a school in Texas and did not have the required credits to graduate. The Bellevue Public Schools worked with the other high school following the Compact's requirements and the student was able to graduate on time.

5. DISCUSSION OF NEBRASKA'S PARTICIPATION IN AND COMPLIANCE WITH THE INTERSTATE COMPACT ON EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FOR MILITARY CHILDREN

For the benefit of Col. Joganich, who is new to the Offutt AFB, Frank Harwood and Dr. Swisher reiterated the goal of the Compact is to have policies in effect for transitioning military students. The Compact addresses key educational transition issues encountered by military families including enrollment, placement, attendance, eligibility and graduation. Mr. Harwood stated that Bellevue Public Schools tries to apply the policies to all students for consistency.

Children of active duty members of the uniformed services, National Guard and Reserve on active duty orders and members or veterans who are medically discharged or retired for one year are eligible for assistance under the Compact.

Dr. Swisher stated that the Compact overrules Nebraska state law (statutes). One example is the kindergarten age. Nebraska state law says reaching age five on or before July 31 before starting kindergarten, while another state may have August 30. According to the Compact, if that military student transferred into Nebraska and turned five on or before August 15, then the Nebraska school shall admit the military student.

Another common issue that Mr. Harwood mentioned was the transfer of credits from one school to another. For instance, Nebraska does not consider marching band a physical education credit, but another state may and that student is transferring into Nebraska, Nebraska would have to accept that credit for PE or waive the requirement.

Col. Joganich stated that Offutt AFB has not been any specific concerns from any military families.

Dr. Swisher indicated that the State of Nebraska is in total compliance with the Compact.

Margaret Worth reiterated that during the last legislative session, state statute now allows this Council to meet annually via videoconferencing. If everyone is in agreement, the next annual meeting will be held by videoconference. Mr. Harwood agreed that Col. Joganich could come to Bellevue Public Schools and a videoconference could be held there.

There being no further business to come before the Council, Dr. Swisher adjourned the meeting at 1:34 p.m.

****Support Materials for this meeting are available for inspection in the NDE's General Counsel's Office**