



# WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF **Public Instruction**

## Wisconsin State Council of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunities for Military Children

Commissioner Shelley Joan Weiss

Minutes - August 22, 2023, 1:00 p.m.

1. Call to Order
  - a. Welcome
2. Roll Call (will be taken via the online meeting recording - see page 5)
  - a. Welcome to new Members
3. Comments from WI State Superintendent Jill Underly
  - a. Tom McCarthy, Executive Director of the State Superintendent's Office, represented the State Superintendent, Dr. Jill Underly. He thanked all for their service to our military families. Thomas thanked the members of the Council for their work on supporting the military families. The work of the Council is very important. Thomas had the opportunity to see some of the work the military does beyond their regular military responsibilities during some recent activities. The Wisconsin National Guard Challenge Academy is one example of how the military works with some of our most challenging and at-risk kids. Thank you to the members of the Military and the members of the State Council on behalf of Dr. Jill Underly
4. Sharing the 2023-24 WI State Council Member Listing
  - a. [2023-24 WI State Council Member Listing](#)
  - b. Please notify Shelley, [shelleyjoan.weiss1@gmail.com](mailto:shelleyjoan.weiss1@gmail.com), if there are any corrections.
5. Sharing End of Year Report to the Military Interstate Childrens' Compact Commission (MIC3).
  - a. [2023 End of Year Report](#). The report reflects all good news. We have met every requirement. MIC3 dues have been paid. The report highlights additional accomplishments. Report was due in June. If you have additional highlights throughout the year, please forward them to Shelley so she can share with the national MIC3 office.
6. All MIC3 requirements have been fulfilled.
7. No Compact Issues or Concerns to share.

- a. The only issue that came to Shelley was a non-compact issue. Thank you to Ben Jones, Legal Counsel, for his assistance. The family, who was moving to Wisconsin, wanted to keep their child in an online school as well as participate in some classes at the local school district. A good solution was found. Issues related to Military children who are home schooled is a national issue, as each state has its own rules and each homeschool organization has its own rules. Process needs to be more streamlined. The authority of the Interstate Compact for the Education of Military Children impacts only children attending public schools K-12. We provide information to non-public schools, and homeschool families, but have no authority with non-public schools. The National Military Family Association and the Military Child Education Association are both good resources and might be more helpful in the long-term. Tom McCarthy shared that in Wisconsin there are two main homeschool advocacy groups. Some homeschool advocates want more structure from the DPI, while other advocates want little or no state involvement. Reaching out to the Wisconsin Homeschool organizations may be helpful as they have some high school diploma resources.  
<https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/parental-education-options/pdf/home-faq-2020-12-final.pdf>. [Military One Source](#) assists the parents who are navigating homeschool options/activities as they move in state and from state-to-state, as every state is different. Parents may want to contact Military One Source. Military One Source's goal is to make issues such as these as easy as possible for everyone. The Council members were reminded of the number of issues that can occur for a military family within a state and between states. Possibly there is an opportunity for members of the Council to present at a large gathering of educators (e.g., State Superintendent's conference) to increase awareness. Thanks to Andrea and Stacy Eslick for getting information out regularly to school counselors. Thanks to Steve Schroeder and the folks at AWSA for their help in sharing information with administrators. The Wisconsin Association of School District Administrators (WASDA) conference was suggested as the venue for this. Tom McCarthy said he would work with Shelley on potential opportunities.
8. Update on April - Month of the Military Child Activities had numerous, wonderfully successful activities. Video was widely shared.
  - a. [DPI Website - Resources](#)
  - b. [Proclamation](#) - Dr. Jill Underly
  - c. [Proclamation](#) - Governor Tony Evers
  - d. [Video](#) - Fort McCoy and Surrounding Districts
  - e. Update from JD Engelhardt and Colonel Messenger on the Lambeau Field Activities. It was incredible. Aaron Jones of the Green Bay Packers, and his brother were the hosts. Their [AA All the Way Foundation](#) supports this activity. Their parents were Sergeant Majors in the Army. They invited 250 kids and their families to participate. Numerous activities and resources for families. Want to make a larger event in the future. JD may potentially arrange a similar event in Fort McCoy.

Families were given tours of Lambeau fields. Military parents were able to network with each other. Aaron Jones with a Q&A and autographs. Star Wars characters there. Interested in doing it again. Proposed theme: Coding Your Future. UW Madison heard about this and folks there are interested in doing similar activities with the Badgers.

- f. Update from JD Engelhardt on Camps and Capitol Tours. The students involved in the activities were Impressive. The 15 students on the teen panel were wonderful and demonstrated the best of children of military families. They met with Lt. Governor, Senator Hesselbein, and her husband, Bob Hesselbein (Colonel Retired) who had been in the armed forces. Met with students who were interested in going to an academy. Students advocated for more school counselors and more mental health support, not just for military children, but for all children. Students are very in tune with their mental health needs. JD organized online events and a variety of camps, including hosting eight camps over the summer. Over 1,000 students were involved. Students were provided resilience tools, and avenues for appropriate emotional expression. Trunk-or-treat event to be held in Madison in October. There are already 100 people registered. If anyone is interested in having a booth/trunk there let JD know.
9. Update on Civic and Educational Leader Flights/Tours - Fort McCoy, WI
  - a. Wonderful things happening at the Challenge Academy. They have been working with the helicopter units, transporting people and giving tours of the academy. The tours are given by the cadets. There is a waiting list of people who are interested. Trying to arrange for educational and civic leaders to go so they can learn about the Challenge Academy and Fort McCoy. The Challenge Academy is a great opportunity for some students. Many people are unaware of its existence, despite efforts to get the word out. Visiting and experiencing the Academy activities is the most effective. The Academy Cadets shared how the structure made a huge difference in their lives. The Challenge Academy staff and Cadets will go to high schools and speak to groups of students and staff. If you are interested, please contact Shelley and she will connect you.
  - b. Joni Matthews, Director, Wisconsin Challenge Academy is a member of our Council and is eager to share the success stories of the Academy with others.
10. School District websites - resources within districts If you have a website that supports military resources, please let Shelley know.
  - a. [Tomah Area School District](#)
  - b. [Sun Prairie Area School District](#)
  - c. [DeForest Area School District](#)
  - d. Input from Members on how to encourage districts to share information with military families.
11. November
  - a. November is coming up fast. A time to recognize military members. If you have activities plans, please share with Shelley so she can send it to others. One idea:

have students of all ages make and write cards and send them to Veterans/Military members at assisted living, skilled nursing, hospitals, and VA facilities. Please send Shelley activities taking place in your school district, so that she can share it with others. Ryan Retzka, legislative representative, offered to support activities if they can.

- b. [Military Family Appreciation Month - Department Of Defense Education Activity](#)
  - c. [Veterans Day](#)
  - d. Input from Members on local activities
12. [MIC3 Annual Business Meeting](#). Shelley is registered.
13. Updated Toolkits Please be aware of these, they are updated to be current, accurate, and relevant. Please feel free to share with a wider audience.
- a. [Parent Toolkit](#)
  - b. [School Toolkit](#)
  - c. [State Council Toolkit](#)
14. Input from Members
- a. You can reach out to Shelley anytime. She keeps the group up-dated in-between meetings. Potentially reach out to the CESA Professional Advisory Committee (PAC) meetings. Sam Russ will follow up with CESA 4 and WASDA.
15. Future Meeting - To Be Announced
- a. February 20, 2024 (potential date - to be determined)
  - b. August 20, 2024 (potential date - to be determined)
  - c. If you have agenda items, please send them to Shelley.
16. Other
- a. Legislative changes.
    - i. Minimal changes were needed in the Wisconsin legislation. The DPI legislative liaison, Kevyn Radcliffe, shared that the changes should be approved and finalized in the fall legislative session.
17. Adjournment

## Wisconsin Council Members Participants

### Required Representatives:

- Shelley Joan Weiss, Commissioner, Chair
- Samuel Russ - Superintendent of Sparta Area School District (Military Impacted Schools)
- Col Stephen Messenger - Military Representative, Appointed by DoD
- Col Matthew Eakins - Military Representative
- Rep. Shae Sortwell - Legislative Representative
- Rebecca Walley - Wisconsin School Liaison Officer for Military Families (based at Fort McCoy)

### Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction Representatives:

- Thomas McCarthy - Executive Director for the State Superintendent
- Benjamin Jones - DPI Legal Counsel
- Andrea Donegan - DPI Liaison, School Counseling Consultant
- Kelly Behling - DPI, Executive Staff Assistant, Office of the State Superintendent
- Elizabeth Pease - DPI, Office Operations Associate, Student Services, Prevention & Wellness Team

### Representatives from Stakeholder Groups:

- Rebecca Boehlke - Representative, Military One Source
- Stacy Eslick - Wisconsin School Counselor Association Executive Director
- Stephanie Hauser - Representative, Executive Director of the WIAA

Other Participants: LTC Jim Lavelle, Ryan Retza, and Rep. Zach.