



## NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF VETERANS PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS

Suite 1975 • 2020 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W. • Washington, D.C. 20006-1846

**June 22, 2012**

### **To: NAVPA Membership**

As many of you are aware, the VA recently asked State Approving Agencies to forward a May 31, 2012 letter to education institutions approved for VA education benefits addressing the “Principles of Excellence for Educational Institutions Serving Service Members, Veterans, Spouses and Other Family Members” set forth in Executive Order 13607. It asks each institution to send an e-mail to VA by June 30, 2012 with notice of the institution’s intent to comply with the Principles by the end of academic year 2012-2013. VA will then post a list of the schools that have responded affirmatively on the GI Bill website.

The National Association of Veterans Program Administrators (NAVPA) understands that some institutions may not have received the May 31 letter, or that the letter may not have been received by the appropriate official at each institution. We urge you to confirm that the appropriate administrators at your institution are considering the May 31 letter. It is also our understanding that an email from the SAA or your ELR containing this letter as an attachment is in fact the only copy of this correspondence your school will receive. If your school did not receive this letter, we suggest you contact your SAA or ELR for a copy.

In the past weeks there were three webinars offered by the Agencies discussing the Executive Order and the VA’s request for response from schools. If you were unable to view one of those, there is an archived version available at [www.MilitaryOneSource.mil](http://www.MilitaryOneSource.mil). Click on the Community tab, then on Webinars. Scroll to the bottom of the page to find the archives.

We recently joined several other organizations to provide comments on the Principles and the VA request through a letter to the Secretaries of the three agencies involved, VA, DOD and ED. That letter, which is attached, re-affirms our commitment to supporting service members and veterans on our campuses and requests clarification of many aspects of the Principles.

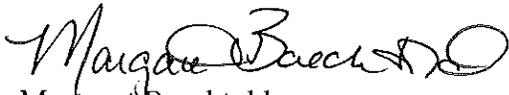
Several institutions have indicated that they have individually submitted questions to VA for clarification. VA has responded to these schools that they are working on a question and answer document that will address questions and concerns and that guidance regarding compliance with the Principles is being drafted. The response further states that updates will be posted on their website at <http://www.gibill.va.gov>. There is no indication, however, when this additional information will be available.

The May 31 letter includes form responses, but they are described as “examples” only. VA has indicated orally on numerous occasions that they are requesting a statement of an institution’s “intent,” not its current compliance or ability to comply. An institution may want to consider whether to provide a statement to the effect that the institution intends to undertake good faith compliance with the Principles, pending clarifying guidance from the Agencies. VA has not made

clear, though, the types of statements it will or will not accept for purposes of the GI Bill website list described above. An institution may decide not to respond or to respond at a later date, perhaps when more is known about the meaning of the Principles. VA has not ruled out the possibility of adding schools to the website list even after the June 30 deadline. At this time the government has identified no legal consequences for failing to respond by June 30.

We encourage institutions to involve all relevant campus administrators in discussions about how to respond to VA's May 31 letter. NAVPA suggests that each institution take all these issues into consideration as they determine whether they are prepared to state their intent to adhere to the Principles at this time.

Thank you for all you do to support the veterans and military members on your campus.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Margaret Baechtold". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and a stylized "B".

Margaret Baechtold  
Legislative Director