

Military Recruitment in Western Massachusetts High Schools

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Andrea McCarron and Jeff Napolitano

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The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) is a Quaker organization that includes people of various faiths who are committed to social justice, peace, and humanitarian service. Our work is based on the principles of the Religious Society of Friends: the belief in the worth of every person, and faith in the power of love to overcome violence and injustice. AFSC was founded in 1917 by Quakers to provide conscientious objectors with an opportunity to aid civilian war victims. The Western Massachusetts program of AFSC was established in 1968.

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Military Recruitment in Western Massachusetts Schools

Executive Summary

“There are public health reasons to be concerned about military recruitment in public elementary and secondary schools. Adolescent recruitment targets are at a vulnerable stage of brain development and may experience adverse health consequences from stress. Given their limitations in judging risk at this stage in life, they are also unable to fully evaluate the consequences of making a choice to enter the military.”

American Public Health Association (2013)¹

You recruit children in their own schools? Children? Even Saddam [Hussein] did not do that.

Faiza Al-Araji (Iraqi author, blogger, and activist)

Within the last 15 years, the American Friends Service Committee of Western Massachusetts (AFSC) has visited local high schools to engage students in conversation about, and to provide materials regarding, alternatives to military service after graduation, including (but not limited to) colleges, community colleges, volunteer opportunities, and labor apprenticeships. This work comes out of a nearly century-old tradition by AFSC and is informed by the desire to move our society towards peace and justice. That begins with raising healthy children with as many advantages as we can provide.

This report is the first of its kind in the state. From the recent years of visiting a handful of high schools, we realized that (1) we did not have comprehensive data about military recruitment in high schools across all of Western Massachusetts, and (2) we needed to bring this information to light, so that parents, school committee members, and others were more aware of the environment in which our children are being raised. The recruitment of high school youth by the military is not new, but since the “No Child Left Behind” (NCLB) act of 2001, solicitation of students and access by the military have greatly increased. We have found that many (if not most) parents are not aware of the level of interaction with and the extent of disclosed information to the military by their children.

We started several years ago by sending requests to public high schools for information about the frequency of visits by military recruiters, but these were largely ignored by most schools. We then put our inquiries in the form of Massachusetts Public Records Act requests, and this report is the result of those responses.

¹American Public Health Association. (2012, October 30). *Cessation of Military Recruiting in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools*. Retrieved November 13, 2013, from <http://www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/public-health-policy-statements/policy-database/2014/07/23/11/19/cessation-of-military-recruiting-in-public-elementary-and-secondary-schools>

The most striking observation of sending these requests and collecting responses has been the lack of basic records kept, and the inconsistent reporting by schools. It often took multiple formal requests over the course of the past couple of years to get complete responses from schools. Responses were often incomplete and/or illegible. And in some cases, the data we were provided seemed like dubious outliers. We realize that while public schools are not operating with an abundance of resources and that the additional burdens of federal government legislation like NCLB are not necessarily compensated, nevertheless the interaction of school youth and the most advanced and financed military institution in the world merits monitoring.

We have therefore decided to make this report an annual publication, in order to not only provide the Western Massachusetts community with the most accurate information regarding military recruitment in public high schools, but also to propel schools to track, disclose, and make this process more transparent. Because responses were inconsistent, and because this is the first report of its kind, we are aware that there might be discrepancies and inaccuracies in this report; however, with each iteration, we hope that the response from schools becomes more accurate and expect our reporting of this data becomes more comprehensive. We hope this report will spark a conversation to change the practices of schools so they can better protect their students, and so that parents are more aware of the totality of their children's school environment.

Methodology

From July 2012 to the winter of 2013 we submitted public records requests to all public high schools within the four counties of Western Massachusetts: Hampshire, Hampden, Franklin, and Berkshire. The public records requests were crafted by the American Friends Service Committee of Western Massachusetts (AFSC) and sent via US Mail. If a response was not received after two weeks, another request was sent to the school, and this pattern was repeated for up to three occurrences. The following is the list of questions each school received:

1. Exactly how frequently do military recruiters visit the school?
2. In which room(s) do the recruiters work/set-up?
3. Which representative of the school supervises these visits?
4. What kinds of materials are brought (handouts, applications)?
5. Is the ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery) administered? If so, what is the number of test takers?
6. Does the school distribute military opt-out forms? If so, how?
7. When are opt-out forms distributed?
8. What is the date for the deadline for returning military opt-out forms?
9. How many of the opt-out forms were returned in the 2010-2011 school year? The 2011-2012 school year?

10. Which representative of the school are opt-out forms returned to?

The report was compiled throughout 2013 up until the summer of 2014 by program staff. In the final stages of the report, schools who returned the requests with answers left blank were called with an attempt to clarify their answers.

Assumptions

In this report we are operating under several assumptions in regards to the information presented. First, we assume that all information provided to us by the schools is true and accurate to the best of their ability. Second, when a school states that there has been some number of visits, we assume this refers to the number of visits from one branch, not all branches in total. We assume that a response of “N/A” to the question of the administering of ASVAB or existence of JROTC means that there are none.

Future Steps

AFSC will be repeating this study for the 2014-2015 school year. There are a number of questions and concerns we have developed from this first experience. For the future, we will be working to enact a method wherein we can verify the data the schools give us. In addition, we will use legal channels to ensure public records requests – as required by law – are answered in a timely manner. For future requests we will also include questions on:

- When is information requested by Department of Defense sent by the high schools?
- Do schools and/or school districts select option 8 – to not release any data to the military – when administering the ASVAB? If not, what option do they choose?
- If schools do not provide opt-out forms, how else do they notify parents of the right to opt-out as required in Section 9528 of the No Child Left Behind Act.
- Ask for a copy of the opt-out form the school distributes to parents, guardians, and students.

Terms

ASVAB: The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery is a standardized test distributed by the military to those who decide to take it. In order to take the test, students are required to sign a privacy agreement releasing both their results and personal information to the military (even if they are underage); in effect, this negates the opt-out forms of those students. This exam is marketed as career inventory test – both by the military and schools – however, the US Army Recruiting Commands School Recruiting Program states the test is, “a source of leads of high school seniors and juniors qualified... for enlistment.”²

²“CODEPINK : Military Recruiting FAQ.” *CODEPINK : Military Recruiting FAQ*. Code Pink, 2014. Web. 03 Mar. 2015.

Schools and school districts have eight options in terms of releasing students' test results and personal data from the ASVAB. Option 8 disallows the military from receiving any information without active consent of the student/parent.³

OPTION 8: This is for students who take the ASVAB. If they select option 8 their name and contact will not be added to the recruiting list. This information is not usually given by recruiters.⁴

JROTC: The Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps is a curriculum of classes offered to high school students by schools who invite the armed services to teach the program. The Department of Defense clearly outlines in Memorandum 50 (a document providing guidance for recruitment efforts) how JROTC can be used as a recruitment tool. The document states that JROTC officials should "facilitate recruiter access to cadets in JROTC program and to the entire student body." In addition, it states employees should "work closely with high school guidance counselors to sell the Army story. Encourage them to display RPIs [Recruiting Publicity Items] and advertising material and make sure they know how to obtain information on Army opportunities, including SROTC scholarships."⁵ JROTC is also criticized for militarizing young members of society, influencing their understanding of history, and shaping their thoughts in a manner acceptable to the US government.

Opt-out forms: These are forms that parents or students of age are offered to disallow the military from obtaining the personal information of the student.

Grading Criteria:

In this report, AFSC used a traditional grading system to rate each school:

"A" grade marks a school that minimizes the military's interaction with their students.

"B" grade marks a school that is doing a fairly decent job, albeit with room to improve in some areas.

"C" grade marks a school with significant need for improvement.

"D" grade marks a school that, while having some policies that are seriously worrisome, is still following the law. Schools who do not distribute opt-out forms earn an automatic D.

"F" grade marks a school that is in violation of the law. A failure to alerting parents and of age students as their right to opt-out, in violation with federal law, merits an automatic "F". A failure to respond to our request merits an automatic "F" unless clarification was obtained through other means.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Policy Memorandum 50 – US Army Recruiting Command (USAREC) Partnership Initiatives. March 30, 1999. Retrieved June 2014. http://www.projectyano.org/pdf/JROTC_military_recruiting_memo.pdf

The primary concerns, to which AFSC gave the most weight when we assigned grades, were whether opt-out forms were distributed, the number of military recruiter visits per year, if the ASVAB is administered, and the presence of a JROTC program. Schools may have received a lesser grade due to lack of transparency, lack of record keeping, and/or difficulty it was to obtain information. For schools that violated public records law and did not respond to multiple requests, we gave a failing grade and are pursuing the matter through legal channels.

Lawmakers and the Effects of the Policy

During a meeting with the Western Massachusetts American Friend Service Committee staff, former Congressman John Olver asked about the work AFSC does in Western Massachusetts. When he was informed that we regularly visited schools to talk to students about alternatives to military service, he was puzzled. “Why would you want to talk about that?” After being told that military recruiters are allowed to maintain a regular presence in local high schools by law, he said, “What law allows them into high schools?” Congressman Olver hadn’t realize that when he voted in favor of No Child Left Behind in 2001, he voted to allow nearly unfettered access by the military to the children of all public high schools in his district (and the country).

While military recruiters had solicited the enlistment of young people before 2001, the passage of No Child Left Behind vastly expanded the access they had to high school students. Additionally, the need for recruits increased once the United States expanded military intervention. All of these factors have resulted in an escalation of the targeting of school-aged children for military service.

Section 9528 of the No Child Left Behind Act states:

Notwithstanding section 444(a)(5)(B) of the General Education Provisions Act and except as provided in paragraph (2), each local educational agency receiving assistance under this Act shall provide, on a request made by military recruiters or an institution of higher education, access to secondary school students names, addresses, and telephone listings.⁶

However, this section also provides the right for parents and students of age to prohibit this same information from being shared with recruiters by the schools without prior parental approval. The effect of Section 9528 is that the burden of responsibility to keep the students information private is on the family. Families are largely unaware not only of this fact, but also what of this means for their child.

Every public high school in the United States that receives any form of federal funding is subject to being an active or a potential site for military enlistment. Our schools are no longer merely

⁶ No Child Left Behind. *U.S Dept.of Education*. Ret. October 8, 2014.
<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg112.html#sec9528>

about education - once meant to be sites of learning, they are now also sites of exploitation by the Pentagon. In addition to providing military access to students' data, Section 9528 allows recruiters unlimited access to all schools receiving federal funds as well as penalties for not allowing recruiters to visit.

Regardless of one's view of military service, the intrusion of military recruiters into high schools raises important issues: (a) the appropriateness of the promotion of military service in regards to our children, (b) the lack of military recruiter accountability and oversight, (c) the breakdown of student and family privacy, and (d) the lack of understanding or even awareness by the parents who send their children to school.

Mental Health Risks and Disability

The effect of military enlistment on our schoolchildren is often overlooked. Military service is cited as a way for schoolchildren to 'see the world' or help pay for college. But the actual effect of military service upon late adolescents is harmful at best and exploitative at worst. From the American Public Health Association (APHA):

*"Although adults in the active military service are reported to experience increased mental health risks, including stress, substance abuse, and suicide, there is evidence that military service for the youngest soldiers is consistently associated with health effects far worse than for those who are older. This suggests that military service is associated with disproportionately poor health for those in late adolescence. These negative outcomes for teen soldiers, coupled with significant evidence that the adolescent brain is not equipped to make accurate risk calculations, leads APHA to conclude entry into the military should be delayed until full adulthood."*⁷ [emphasis added]

*"When examining specific mental health challenges within the armed forces – alcohol abuse, anxiety disorders, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder – the rates for the youngest members (up to age 24) were the highest."*⁸

Post-traumatic stress disorder and major depressive disorder are the three most common psychological injuries of veterans. The Department of Veterans Affairs estimates that 20% of Iraq War veterans and 11% of Afghanistan veterans suffer from PTSD. There has been continuous evidence pointing to the dearth of both any and adequate treatment resources for veterans who are diagnosed. In addition, there are scores of active and inactive service members who are never diagnosed, yet still suffer from PTSD and depression.⁹ This fact is made

⁷American Public Health Association. (2012, October 30). *Cessation of Military Recruiting in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools*. Retrieved November 13, 2013, from <http://www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/public-health-policy-statements/policy-database/2014/07/23/11/19/cessation-of-military-recruiting-in-public-elementary-and-secondary-schools>

⁸ Riddle JR, Smith TC, Smith B, et al. Millennium cohort: the 2001–2003 baseline prevalence of mental disorders in the U.S. military. *J Clin Epidemiol*. 2007;60(2):192–201.

⁹ Williamson, Vanessa; Mulhall, Erin. *Invisible Wounds: Psychological and Neurological Injuries Confront a New Generation of Veteran*. Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America. January 2009. Ret: 25 July 2014.

extremely poignant when looking at the number of suicides in the military ranks. The suicide rate for those serving in the army was double that of the general population in 2011. Suicide is a leading and continuously growing cause of death in the US military. In conjunction, family members of those in the military are also at an increase risk for developing symptoms of psychological disorders.¹⁰

In 2012, around 45% of veterans from the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars were seeking compensation for service related disabilities. The average number of injuries (both mental and physical) per person reported is eight to nine. The Department of Veterans Affairs disburses disability payments based on what they decide is a person's level of disability. The range for this runs from \$127 a month for a 10% disability and \$2,769 for a full disability -- this only comes out to \$33,238 a year.¹¹

Job Insecurity

According to the Department of Labor, the youngest veterans returning to the work force (aged 18-24) there was a 30.4% jobless rate in October 2011, a jump of 18.4% from 2010. For non-veterans of the same age, the unemployment rate decreased, to 15.3% from 16.9% of 2010. However, the unemployment for young black veterans was the most egregious at 48%.¹²

More recently, the unemployment rate for veterans of all age groups who have served since 2001 was at 9% in 2013, and 9.9% in 2012. For those service members aged 18-24, the rate has decreased from four years ago, but is still incredibly high at 21.4% as of 2013.¹³

The high rate of joblessness is in part contributed to the difficulties many returning veterans have when transitioning back to civilian life in America. "I don't know who in their right mind would want to hire me when I got back from Afghanistan, because I was a disaster," said Jeff Mancino, 24, "I was 22 and I had to go to rehab — what kind of 22-year-old does that?" The many mental health challenges that can result from service often hinder veterans from reentering the workplace. This is partly due to the perception and worry of employers that veterans may have one of these challenges. However the overall transition – with or without diagnosable health issues – is incredibly difficult for veterans. Veterans spend years in a combat setting and mastering a military mindset of violence and dehumanization. Once they get home they have

¹⁰ Denning, Laura Aiuppa, Marc Meisnere, and Kenneth E. Warner, eds. *Preventing Psychological Disorders in Service Members and Their Families. an Assessment of Programs*. Washington, D.C.: National Academies, 2014. National Academy of Sciences. <http://www.sprc.org/sites/sprc.org/files/library/Preventing%20Psychological%20Disorders%20in%20Service%20Members%20and%20Their%20Families%20An%20Assessment%20of%20Programs.pdf>.

¹¹ Marchione, Marilyn. *US Vets' Disability Filings Reach Historic Rate*. The Associate Press. 28 May 2012. Ret 29 July 2014. <http://www.veteransresources.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Bulletin-120601-Website-Edition.docx>.

¹² Beucke, Dan. "Unemployment for Young Vets: 30%, and Rising." *Bloomberg Business Week*. Bloomberg, 11 Nov. 2011. Web. 03 Mar. 2015. http://www.businessweek.com/finance/occupy-wall-street/archives/2011/11/the_vets_job_crisis_is_worse_than_you_think.html.

¹³ Raum, Tom. "Unemployment Rate among Veterans Drops, but Remains High." *PBS NewsHour*. PBS, 20 Mar. 2014. <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/rundown/unemployment-rate-among-veterans-drops-remains-high/>. 3 Mar. 2015.

little support and are expected to just forget their experience and be a civilian again. Many of the youngest veterans – up to age 24 – do not have prior work experience and must learn basic skills such as how to write a resume or what to wear to interview. Without college, many are also at a disadvantage; however, it is important to note that veterans without college degrees have a much higher rate of joblessness than non-veterans who do not have degrees.¹⁴

The unemployment rate is illustrated as an even greater problem when juxtaposed to the rampant homeless rate among veterans. On any given night in the US, 154,000 veterans may be sleeping on the street, 45% of whom have mental health challenges, and 70% of whom have substance abuse problems.¹⁵ It is estimated that nearly 50,000 veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan were either homeless or at high risk of homelessness in 2013.¹⁶

Military Sexual Trauma

MST (Military Sexual Trauma) is a term used by the VA and defined through Federal law (Title 38 U.S. Code 1720D) as:

“psychological trauma, which in the judgment of a VA mental health professional, resulted from a physical assault of a sexual nature, battery of a sexual nature, or sexual harassment which occurred while the Veteran was serving on active duty or active duty for training.”¹⁷

The Department of Defense continues to be in the news for the extraordinarily high rate of sexual assault in the military. Service Women’s Action Network, an organization dedicated to promoting justice and civil rights for women in the military, in a revealing comment stated that, “victim-blaming, lack of accountability and misogynistic climates are pervasive throughout the U.S. Armed Forces.”¹⁸ An example of how bad the rape culture is can be illustrated in an interview with the daily news program Democracy Now producer Amy Goodman. She talks to three women, two of which are U.S war veterans and the third a professor who has specialized in sexual assault and rape of women.

The following is a part of the interview and a piece of Spc. Mickiela Montoya’s experience in Iraq:

AMY GOODMAN: Can you talk about your own experience in Iraq?

¹⁴ Dewan, Shaila. *As Wars End, Young Veterans Return to Scant Jobs*. The New York Times. 17 December 2011. Ret; 29 July 2014. http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/18/business/for-youngest-veterans-the-bleakest-of-job-prospects.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0

¹⁵ Williamson, Vanessa; Mulhall, Erin. *Invisible Wounds: Psychological and Neurological Injuries Confront a New Generation of Veteran*. Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America. January 2009. Ret: 25 July 2014.

¹⁶ Keyes, Scott. "Nearly 50,000 Afghanistan And Iraq Veterans Are At Risk Of Homelessness." *Think Progressive*. Center for American Progress, 22 Jan. 2014. Web. <http://thinkprogress.org/economy/2014/01/22/3190461/50000-homeless-vets/>. Ret: 31 July 2014.

¹⁷ PTSD: National Center for PTSD. "Military Sexual Trauma -". U.S Department of Veteran Affairs. Web. 3 Mar. 2015. <<http://www.ptsd.va.gov/public/types/violence/military-sexual-trauma-general.asp>>. Retrieved November 13, 2013.

¹⁸ Military Sexual Violence. "Service Womens Action Network. SWAN, 12 Sept. 2014. Web. 3 Mar. 2015. <http://servicewomen.org/military-sexual-violence/>.

SPC. MICKIELA MONTOYA: Well, it sounded really familiar to, similar to the experiences that you explained. I didn't know that it was that climate at the time. I kind of just got used to it and dealt with it and tried to figure out a way around the restroom issue.

AMY GOODMAN: How did you figure out your way around going to the bathroom?

SPC. MICKIELA MONTOYA: I would still drink the three liters of water usually every day, but I would — a lot of the females were, like, cutting off the tops of the bottles and in the middle of the night peeing in that and waiting 'til the morning to dump it out, so that we would prevent having to wake up in the middle of the night and go out in the dark, because it's so dark at night.

AMY GOODMAN: You carried a knife with you?

SPC. MICKIELA MONTOYA: Yeah, and I would carry a knife with me later on.

AMY GOODMAN: For what purpose?

SPC. MICKIELA MONTOYA: Just to feel safe, because, I mean, you can't — I don't know. I don't know, I just felt safer that way.

AMY GOODMAN: Safe from the Iraqis?

SPC. MICKIELA MONTOYA: No, safe from the other soldiers. I never intended on using the knife for an Iraqi. I had my M-16 for that. But my knife, I always just kept it for another soldier, because any time I would have any type of strong sexual harassment words spoken, I just mainly felt a little bit more secure, and it was visible, too, to the other soldiers.

AMY GOODMAN: Did anything specifically happen to you?

SPC. MICKIELA MONTOYA: Yeah. That's why I would carry the knife. I remember it was really late, and over there they don't have electricity, so we run off generators, and if you scream or if you were to yell for help or anything like that, nobody could hear you, because you're not going to shoot a comrade, because these are your supposed battle buddies. So I would just use the knife as, I guess, a scare tactic, and it worked for me, because after that I never really had a problem.¹⁹

¹⁹ "The Private War of Women Soldiers: Female Vet, Soldier Speak Out on Rising Sexual Assault Within US Military". *Democracy Now*. March 8, 2007.

Sexual harassment is further defined as "repeated, unsolicited verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature which is threatening in character."²⁰ National data from this program reveal that about 1 in 5 women and 1 in 100 men respond "yes," that they experienced MST, when screened by their VA provider. However, this number only accounts for those veterans who choose to admit their experiences. During the fiscal year 2012, 69% of survivors in completed investigations of unrestricted reports were between the ages of 18-24 and 88% were female²¹.

The VA rejected two out of three claims of MST from 2008-2010. Women were the majority making claims for treatment and there has been reporting of a second wave of victimization while under VA care. For those who utilized care for MST external of the VA, a higher rate of satisfaction and improvement was reported than by those who utilized VA services²²

Lack of Standards and Oversight of Recruiters in Schools

While allowing recruiters in schools free rein was an abrupt change in longstanding practice and policy, we found that many schools do not consistently monitor the presence of recruiters, or the content brought by visiting recruiters. There do not appear to be standards for what recruiters are allowed to do, say, or distribute. Of the thirty-eight schools in Western Massachusetts, most schools (twenty-two) required more than one request for AFSC to receive public information on recruiter policies. Five did not respond until the request was made via certified mail. Even then, three did not respond or rejected our request.

Communities and families are often not aware of the predatory nature of military recruitment. There is a documented history of recruiters abusing their position or outright lying to students to enhance their persuasion.

According to a *New York Times* article:

*Interviews with more than two dozen recruiters in 10 states hint at the extent of their concern, if not the exact scope of the transgressions. Several spoke of concealing mental-health histories and police records. They described falsified documents, wallet-size cheat sheets slipped to applicants before the military's aptitude test and commanding officers who look the other way. And they voiced doubts about the quality of some troops destined for the front lines.*²³

The article also explains the recruiter's superiors encourage these tactics. However there have been reprimands. The most common forms of reprimand tend to be adverse administrative action

²⁰PTSD: National Center for PTSD. "Military Sexual Trauma". U.S Department of Veteran Affairs. Web. 3 Mar. 2015. <<http://www.ptsd.va.gov/public/types/violence/military-sexual-trauma-general.asp>>. Retrieved November 13, 2013.

²¹Annual Report on Sexual Assault. (2012, May 3). *Sexual Assault Prevention and Response*. Retrieved November 13, 2013, from http://www.sapr.mil/public/docs/reports/FY12_DoD_SAPRO_Annual_Report_on_Sexual_Assault-VOLUME_ONE.pdf

²² Rape, Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment in the Military. Service Women Action Network. July 2012. Ret: August 2014. <http://servicewomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Final-RSASH-10.8.2012.pdf>

²³ Cave, Damien. "Army Recruiters Say They Feel Pressure to Bend Rules." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, 2 May 2005. Web. 3 Mar. 2015. <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/03/national/03recruit.html>.

such as receiving an angry letter from your commanding officer or a commanding officer will use the offense as an example. In much rarer cases recruiters will be removed from their position²⁴.

Recruiters are also encouraged to circumvent the law. The United States Army Recruiting Command school recruiting program handbook, also known as the USAREC Pamphlet, sums up how the Defense Department views privacy among our teenagers:

“Lead generation is what makes prospecting possible. Asking a school official for a student directory is one example of lead generation. Be creative if the school doesn’t release a list. Consider, for example, contacting the company that produces senior photos. If necessary, have your Future Soldiers review your school’s yearbook(s). Have them identify their friends and acquaintances with a phone number, an e-mail address, or any other information they can provide. Use the phone book to identify phone numbers. Think! This kind of information gathering can establish contact with an otherwise hard to find lead. Establishing strong relationships with COIs [centers of influence]—such as yearbook photographers, school officials, and Future Soldiers—ensures you have a constant, reliable source of leads.”²⁵

This report is not a comprehensive guide to every aspect of military recruitment in Western Massachusetts. Given the omnipresence of recruiters and the lack of oversight and records kept by public high schools, such a guide would not even be possible. But those two factors have impressed upon us the need to make this inquiry and report an annual occurrence, if only to encourage schools to follow federal law regarding student privacy and constitutional law regarding access by recruiters and organizations promoting alternatives to military service.

Recommendations

Though we believe a military presence is not appropriate in an educational setting – much less so one for minors – current law appears to allow for at least one visit by the military throughout the school year. Despite this, a school should do their best to limit this interaction as much as possible. Schools should:

- Not offer a JROTC program.
- Not administer militarized standardized exam such as the ASVAB.
- Inform students that taking the ASVAB negates the opt-out form.
- Select Option 8 in regards to the ASVAB; this bars all data collected from the test to be sent from the military, and makes it only accessible to the administration.

²⁴"GAO-11-579, Military Justice: Oversight and Better Collaboration Needed for Sexual Assault Investigations and Adjudications." *GAO-11-579, Military Justice: Oversight and Better Collaboration Needed for Sexual Assault Investigations and Adjudications*. US Government of Accountability Office. Web. 3 Mar. 2015. <<http://www.gao.gov/assets/320/319966.html>>.

²⁵American Public Health Association. (2012, October 30). *Cessation of Military Recruiting in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools*. Retrieved November 13, 2013, from <http://www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/public-health-policy-statements/policy-database/2014/07/23/11/19/cessation-of-military-recruiting-in-public-elementary-and-secondary-schools>

- Require faculty or staff supervision during visits by military recruiters.
- Keep records of the frequency and duration of visits by military recruiters, as well as their names, ranks, office addresses and supervisor's contact information.
- Have a written policy regarding military recruiter visits which is also sent home to parents.
- Seek out alternative viewpoints if recruiters visit the school, and aim to equalize the numbers of visits these organizations have.
- Distributed and collected opt-out forms by homeroom teachers or at a school-wide assembly with an explanation of what they mean.
- Make the due date for opt-out forms clear to parents and guardians.
- Notify parents if the school distributes their child's information to the military, and when this will occur.
- Include in the student handbook the Opt-Out forms and the policy surrounding them.
- Includes mental health warnings when recommending armed service as an alternative after graduation.
- Make certain that opt-out forms need to be clear for **all** to understand, and be accommodating to families where English is a second language.
- Make the option to not have a student's information shared with the military includes other entities such as including newspapers, colleges, and other groups.
- Have the time allotted to return opt-out forms are not less than a month or two.

Responses from Schools

Hampshire County



Amherst Regional High School

21 Matoon Street, Amherst, MA 01002

Correspondence: The first request to Amherst Regional High School was sent out to Principal Mark Jackson on July 12, 2012. A response was received via email on July 16, 2012. However, the information was not complete. A second request was sent out on October 18, 2012. A response was received on October 23, 2012 via phone from Connie Cappelli, the secretary of Guidance for Amherst Regional High School. A phone call on August 7, 2014, to the main office clarified their answers on the disbursement of opt-out forms.

Response:

- Each branch of the service is allowed one visit per year for recruitment. They also note that the school also allows a visit from college representatives. Students are free to sign up and are assigned an office in their guidance suite.
- The high school staff does not attend any of the recruiting visits, and there is no monitoring of what materials the recruiters bring, even though the school counselors and secretaries do occupy the same suite where the recruiters set up.
- AFSC presumes that there could be pamphlets and other materials being handed out without anyone's supervision.
- The ASVAB is not administered.

- There is no JROTC program.
- On August 7, 2014, an AFSC staff member called Amherst Regional High School and spoke to Theresa Ominsky, Secretary to the Principal. She reported that opt-out forms are given to students annually on the first day of school and go home with parents. She said around two thirds to three fourths of forms are received and they have been closer to the three fourths line in recent years.

Grade: B



Belchertown High School

142 Old Springfield Road, Belchertown, MA 01007

Correspondence: A first request was sent out on October 31, 2012. A second request was sent out via mail on March 27, 2013. A third request was sent out via certified mail on April 9, 2013. A response to our third request was received on April 24, 2013, from the superintendent. However, the response was a letter which said they were unable respond to our request, unless we wanted to pay \$7.75 to cover the cost of copying and mailing. This response cost them \$6.11. Finally, a completed response was picked up from Belchertown high school by our staff, Jeff Napolitano, on May 6, 2013 with an opt-out form attached.

Response:

- Military recruiters are allowed to visit once to twice a year.
- These recruiters usually set up in the guidance office.
- Recruiters are supervised by the guidance counselor.
- Materials brought by recruiters include calendars.
- ASVAB test is administered, the school stated about 15-20 students take it.
- The school claims that they mail out opt-out forms in the summer mailing in August.
- There is no deadline for returning the forms.
- In the school year of 2010-2011 241 opt-out forms were returned. In 2011-2012 252 opt-out forms were returned.
- The opt-out forms are stated to be returned to the main office.
- There is no JROTC program.

Grade: B



Easthampton High School

70 Williston Avenue, Easthampton MA 01027

Correspondence: The first request was sent out on July 12, 2012, and a response was received on July 23, 2012.

Response:

- Military recruiters visit school twice a year, once in the fall and once again in the spring.
- Recruiters set up outside the cafeteria, and are supervised by the teachers and administrators who are on lunch duty.
- Handouts and applications are brought by recruiters.
- The ASVAB test is not administered.
- In September of each year, students and parents are provided opt-out forms, which the school reports are mailed home to them in their summer mailing.
- Deadline for returning military opt-out forms is sometime around 3-4 weeks after the start of the school year.
- Opt-out forms were returned in the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school years. The school claimed that 80% of forms were returned for both academic years.
- The forms were stated to be returned to the principal's office.
- There is no JROTC program.

Grade: A



Granby High School

385 East State Street, Granby, MA 01033

Correspondence: The first request was sent out on October 31, 2012. A response from the principal was received on November 14, 2012 stated they need some time to gather the information that we requested. We called the school on February 27, 2013 to inquire about the status of their response. This would be five months after our request. On March 2, 2013, we received a completed response with all the questions answered.

Response:

- No records are kept about how many military recruiters visit the school each year, but estimated six visits annually.
- Recruiters are stated to set up outside the cafeteria during lunch periods and are under the supervision of either the principal or the deans.
- Recruiters generally bring handouts and an information presentation board when they visit.
- ASVAB is not administered.
- Opt-out forms are distributed to every student and parent/guardian.
- The deadline for returning opt-out forms is a week after the start of the school year.
- The forms are stated to be returned to the administrative assistant in the main and guidance offices, after they have been collected in homeroom by the teachers.
- Opt-out forms were returned in 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school years and the number of returns "varied by school years." They claimed that 27-30 opt-out forms are expected to be

(Granby High School, continued)

- returned annually. With this ambiguity, we are not exactly sure how many opt-out forms were returned.
- There is no JROTC program.

Grade: C



Hopkins Academy

131 Russell Street, Hadley, MA 01035

Correspondence: The first request was sent on October 31, 2012, and a response was received on November 14, 2012 with all the questions answered as well as an attached opt-out form.

Response:

- Military recruiters visit the school once annually.
- Recruiters set up in the cafeteria or conference room, where they are supervised by the principal.
- Recruiters bring pamphlets and pencils with them when they visit.
- ASVAB was administered last year to approximately 45-50 students. However Hopkins Academy stated that they do not plan on continuing it.
- Opt-out forms are stated to be distributed to all students on the first day of school.
- That deadline of returning opt-out forms is in the first month after the start of school and forms go to the main office.
- Opt-out forms returned in 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school years, was given an answer of 90%.
- The answer given about the JROTC program was N/A.

Grade: B



Smith Academy

34 School Street, Hatfield, MA 01038

Correspondence: The first request was sent on October 2, 2012, the second request was sent on October 16, 2012, the third request was sent on November 1, 2012, the fourth request was sent on March 27, 2013. On April 2, 2013, AFSC finally received a completed response from Smith Academy.

Response:

(Smith Academy, continued)

- Recruiters visit about three times per year, bringing handouts, info packets, and “etc.”
- Recruiters are stated to set up in the cafeteria or guidance office.
- Recruiters are supervised by either the school counselors or the principal.
- ASVAB is administered every other year and about 65 students from grades sophomore and junior attend.
- Opt-out forms are distributed through the main office at the beginning of the school year, but they are not sure about the deadline.
- In 2011-2012, the school reports that 6 opt-out forms were returned, and 2012-2013 in 7 forms were returned.
- The forms are stated to be returned to the main office.
- The answer given about the JROTC program was N/A.

Grade: C



Gateway Regional High School

12 Littleville Road, Huntington, MA 01050

Correspondence: The first request was sent on October 2, 2012, and a response was received on October 4, 2012. All information was complete.

Response:

- Recruiters visit twice or three times a year.
- Recruiters are claimed to set up in the cafeteria, where they are supervised by guidance counselors.
- Recruiters bring business cards and handouts.
- ASVAB is stated to be administered every April. In 2011-2012 there were 11 test takers.
- Opt-out forms are distributed on the first day of school in student info packets.
- Opt-out form deadline for returning is September 13th.
- In 2010-2011, 137 opt-out forms were returned. In 2012-2013, 114 were returned. However they reported that 2011-2012 forms were destroyed. AFSC are not sure of the reason why the forms were destroyed.
- Opt-out forms are returned to Guidance.
- There is no JROTC program.

Grade: B

Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School

80 Locust St, Northampton, MA 01060

Correspondence: The first request to Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School was sent on July 12, 2012, and a second was sent on July 24, 2012. A response was received sometime over that summer, and an opt-out form was attached. However the information was not complete and a third request was sent out October 25. A complete response to the remaining questions was received Nov 1.

Response:

- Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School does not keep track of recruiters because, “we don’t have them visiting enough”.
- Unfortunately this school did not give a conclusive answer to where the recruiters set up, but based off an AFSC staff members’ experience visiting the school recruiters normally set up in the cafeteria during lunch hours.
- There was no answer to who supervised the recruiters, so AFSC presume, there is no designated oversight.
- “No applications pamphlets” are handed out by recruiters. There was no other information given about what is brought into the school.
- ASVAB was answered with “N/A” which AFSC takes to mean that it is not administered.
- A sample opt-out form was attached to the response which is distributed at the beginning of the school year.
- Opt-out form specifically segregates “military recruiters” from college recruiters in the release options students can check so they may single out the military as not receiving their information.
- The forms are due September 18th, and are returned to the principal’s assistant.
- This school does not keep track of the number of opt-out forms that are returned.
- In response to the question about JROTC, “N/A” was given.

Grade: C

Northampton High School

380 Elm Street, Northampton, MA 01060

Correspondence: The first request was sent out on November 7, 2012. A response was received on November 9, 2012 with an opt-out form attached. All information was complete.

Response:

- Each branch of military is allowed to visit once a year which usually means about 3-4 total visits a year.
- Recruiters are set up in guidance office conference room with the supervision of guidance department staff.
- Recruiters bring handouts.
- ASVAB test has been given some years and not others. ASVAB test was not given last year, but the number of test takers is usually under 10.
- Opt-out forms are given to incoming 9th graders on the first day of school and to any new enrolled students throughout the year. AFSC presume that only those student groups are receiving opt-out forms.
- The deadline for returning opt-out forms is within a week. AFSC presumes this to mean that the deadline is within a week of distributing the forms to the students. However, both of these claims regarding opt-out forms appear to be in conflict with the policy on the forms stated in the student handbook. In the handbook it states that, "You can request that the school not make your child's information available [to military recruiters] by... filling out the form given to your child on the first day of school and returning it to the Main Office or by stopping by the main office and completing the form." AFSC presumes that opt-out forms are distributed to all students on the first day of school, and forms are available year-round in the main office.
- In the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school year approximately 80-90% opt-out forms were returned back to main office staff.
- There is no JROTC program in the school.

Grade: B



Pioneer Valley Performing Arts High School

15 Mulligan Drive, South Hadley, MA 01075

Correspondence: The first request sent on October 2, 2012, the second request sent on October 30, 2012, the third request sent on March 27, 2013. On April 9, 2013 a request was sent by way of certified mail, and the school received it on April 10, 2013. October 28, 2013 another certified request was sent, and a response was finally received on November 6, 2013. A request was sent to the school on April 5th, 2013. A response was sent out via certified mail on April 7th, 2013.

Response:

- The school doesn't allow military recruiters into the school.
- Opt-out forms are distributed in August and the deadline is September 15 to the main office.

- The school stated opt-out forms were also mailed in January 2013 and the date to return was February 4th, 2013.
- They stated no opt-out forms were returned.
- The school says that it doesn't have a JROTC program, it doesn't administer the ASVAB.

Grade: A



South Hadley High School

153 Newton Street, South Hadley, MA 01075

Correspondence: The first request sent on July 12, 2012, a complete response was received on July 30, 2012. All information was complete.

Response:

- Recruiters visit South Hadley High School once a year where they set up in the guidance office for a half-hour visit.
- During this visit the recruiters are supervised by the guidance counselor.
- Recruiters bring brochures.
- ASVAB test is administered with approximately five test takers per year.
- Opt-out forms are distributed in the August e-newsletter and at the September open house.
- The deadline for the forms that were sent out in August is the end of September. The deadline for the forms at the September open house is stated to be two weeks later.
- 11 opt-out forms were returned the 2010-2011 school year and 24 in 2011-2012.
- The forms are to be given to the administrative assistant which is then given to the principal.
- JROTC program was responded with "N/A".

Grade: B



Ware High School

237 West Street, Ware, MA 01082

Correspondence: The first request to Ware High School was sent on October 2, 2012, a response received on October 3, 2012, however, the answers to several questions were illegible, and so the form was sent again on October 4. A second completed response was received on October 9, 2012.

Response:

- Military recruiters visit Ware High School twice a year, setting up in the cafeteria, and supervised by the guidance department.
- Recruiters bring handouts but no applications.

- AFSC is not sure whether or not Ware High School administers the ASVAB because the handwriting on the response being unintelligible.
- Opt-out forms are distributed before the beginning of the school year on August 30th. From this AFSC presume that the forms are mailed to the students' homes.
- The forms are stated to be due "upon student entry." By this AFSC presume that the forms are due on the first day of school.
- The number of opt-out forms returned in the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school years was 45. AFSC is unsure whether this is the number is for the 2010-2011 school year, the 2011-2012 school years, both years combined, or if the number returned in both years was the same.
- The forms are returned to guidance counselor.
- There is no JROTC program.

Grade: C



Hampshire Regional High School

19 Stage Road, Westhampton, MA 01027

Correspondence: The first request sent to Hampshire Regional High School was on October 31, 2012. A complete response was received on November 15, 2012. All information was complete.

Response:

- Each military branch visits Hampshire Regional High School once per school year.
- The school stated that recruiters set up in the cafeteria and guidance counselors coordinate oversees the visits.
- The materials provided are limited to brochures.
- ASVAB is not administered.
- Opt-out forms are distributed on the first day of school and are available on the school's website.
- The forms are due on September 30th. The school stated that most opt-out forms are returned.
- Forms are stated to be returned to the main office, and received by the office manager.
- There is no JROTC program.

Grade: A

Hampden County



Agawam High School

760 Cooper Street, Agawam, MA 01001

Correspondence: The first request sent to Agawam High School was on October 31, 2012 and a response was received on November 28, 2012 via fax machine. However, several answers required clarification, so a follow up letter was sent on December 12, 2012. On January 22, 2013, we received a complete response.

Response

- Military recruiters may visit Agawam High School as often as they request with a limit of only one visit per day. A follow-up revealed that the school does not keep track of the number of recruiter visits per year. However, the school estimated approximately three visits occurred in December 2012, and four were scheduled for January 2013.
- Recruiters are set up in the cafeteria during lunch period, where they are unsupervised.
- The school's response to our question of what materials the recruiters bring was: "depends on the recruiter," and "much less materials than in the past."
- The school no longer administers the ASVAB test because only five students attended the most recent testing time. In the past, the school stated there would be over 100.
- Opt-out forms are distributed to students.
- The forms are to be returned back to the main office.
- In the 2010-2011 school year the number of opt-out forms returned with "N/A", by which AFSC presumes that the opt-out forms for 2010-2011 were not kept. In 2011-2012, 1277 opt-out forms were returned.
- There is no JROTC program.

Grade: **D**

Chicopee High School

820 Front Street, Chicopee, MA 01020

Correspondence: The first request to Chicopee High School was sent on July 12, 2012, a second request was sent on July 24, 2012. A response was received on August 9, 2012. However, the information regarding the JROTC program was not included. A follow up was sent on October 17, 2012, and a phone call was made on November 6, 2012, to ask only about JROTC program. Finally, a complete response with all the documents included was received on November 19, 2012. All information was complete, an opt-out form and JROTC documents were attached.

Response:

- Military recruiters visit Chicopee High School once a month.
- Recruiters are stated to set up in the cafeteria hallway, where they are supervised by vice principals and teachers.
- Recruiters are stated to usually bring handouts to these visits.
- The ASVAB is administered, and there are approximately 30 test takers.
- The school distributes opt-out forms to all students on the first day of school in the opening day student packet. Additionally, the school said that forms are always available.
- Information on opting-out is included in the Students' Rights and Responsibilities Handbook.
- The deadline for returning the military opt-out forms is the 15th of September.
- In the 2010-2011 school years, 4 opt-out forms were returned to the school. In the 2011-2012 school years 13 were returned.
- The opt-out forms are stated to be returned to the Guidance Department Secretary.
- Chicopee High School reports that it has a JROTC program.

Grade: C

East Longmeadow High School

180 Maple Street, East Longmeadow 01028

Correspondence: The first request to East Longmeadow High School was sent on October 2, 2012. The second request was sent on October 16, 2012. On October 23, 2012, a response was received via fax and by mail on October 23, 2012. An AFSC staff member called on July 23rd, 2014, to clarify their answers on opt-out form and JROTC.

Response:

- Recruiters visit the school twice a year on November 9th and April 14th, (on a school initiated "Military Day").

(East Longmeadow High School, continued)

- Recruiters are stated to set up in the hallway outside the auditorium.
- Recruiters bring handouts and are supervised by John Martin, the school counselor.
- ASVAB is administered twice a year, on Nov 14 and April 9, with about ten test takers each time.
- East Longmeadow High School gave the answer “N/A” when responding to the questions about opt-out forms and JROTC programs. AFSC presume that the school does not distribute the opt-out forms to students and there is no JROTC program in the school.
- An AFSC staff member called on July 23, 2014, to confirm these answers. A message was left with the Guidance Department. The staff person then called the office and spoke to Terry Hellyer, the Principal’s Secretary, and was told there is not JROTC program. Ms. Hellyer stated she did not know for sure, but believed the school did not distribute opt-out forms.

Grade: F

Holyoke High School

500 Beech Street, Holyoke, MA 01040

Correspondence: The first request sent out to Holyoke High School was on July 12, 2012, and a second on July 23, 2012. Our response came in on the July 12th form, however not all questions were answered completely, so a third request was sent out on October 9, and a fourth on October 23. A secretary from the office called in October, giving the answers to the remaining incomplete questions. Despite the completion, we followed up with a letter for some clarifications on distribution of opt-out forms, and the complete response was received on November 26, 2012.

Response:

- Each branch of military is allowed to visit Holyoke High School twice a year.
- Recruiters set up outside the cafeteria where they are supervised by guidance.
- Panel-board and handouts are brought to the school by recruiters.
- ASVAB is not administered.
- Opt-out forms are to be distributed through guidance, but only to the seniors in the first week of October. Only the student information of seniors who don’t turn in their opt-out forms is sent to the Armed Forces. *
- There is no stated deadline for when the forms can be returned.
- In both the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school years, the school reports 20 forms were returned.
- The forms are to be returned to guidance.
- JROTC program was answered with “N/A”. AFSC presume that the school does not have JROTC program.

* Though the school asserts the information of underclassmen will not be sent, the military still has the ability to request their information and the school is required by law to honor that request. Therefore, by not giving younger students opt-out forms, their information is still liable for being utilized by the military.

Grade: **B**



Dean Technical High School

1045 Main Street, Holyoke, MA 01040

Correspondence: The first request sent out to Dean Technical High School was on July 12, 2012, and a second on July 23, 2012. The response came in on the July 12th form, and all information was complete.

Response:

- Military recruiters are allowed to visit once a month.
- Recruiters set up in the cafeteria where they are supervised by Mrs. Bryla.
- Recruiters bring pamphlets, lanyards, calendars, and key chains.
- ASVAB is administered and is taken by 40-50 students.
- Opt-out forms are distributed in homeroom at the beginning of the school year, and the deadline for them is the first month of school.
- The records for 2010-2011 are unavailable, but 134 opt-out forms were returned in 2011-2012.
- The forms are to be returned to the school secretary.
- The questions about a JROTC program were left blank. AFSC received no copy of a JROTC agreement as requested. However, the school has a section dedicated to their JROTC program on their website under the Academics Section, within the history department.

Grade: **D**



Longmeadow High School

95 Grassy Gutter Road, Longmeadow, MA 01106

Correspondence: The first request sent out to Longmeadow High School was on September 27, 2012, and a response was received on October 9, 2012. All information was complete.

Response:

- Military recruiters visit Longmeadow High School once a year.

(Longmeadow High School, continued)

- Recruiters set up in the conference room where they are under the supervision of the Guidance department, and the recruiters hand out pamphlets.
- ASVAB is not administered.
- Opt-out forms are not distributed to students and have not been in the past. On July 22, 2014, an AFSC staffer called Longmeadow High School and was told by teacher Joseph Smith that LHS does distribute an opt-out form in the beginning of the school year. The opt-out form does not single out military recruitment. It also includes a number of entities parents can exclude such as newspapers, honor roll, military recruiter etc.
- Mr. Smith did not remember the exact date but the form is due by late September to October. He said the form is disbursed to students on the first day of school in home room.
- The question asking whether or not the school has a JROTC program was given a question mark. On August 6th 2013, an AFSC staffer left a message at the main office inquiring about the existence of a program. We have received no response.

Grade: **D**

+

Ludlow Senior High School

500 Chapin Street, Ludlow, MA 01056

Correspondence: The first request was sent out on October 31, 2012 with a response coming in on November 19, 2012. However, the response was incomplete, only questions 1-5 were answered, with a note saying that 6-11 were being forwarded to the principal. AFSC received no response. We sent another request on November 16, 2013. In total, AFSC sent out two copies, one to the guidance counselor and one to the principal.

Response:

- Military recruiters visit Ludlow High School when they want to which is usually visiting every 2-3 months. However not all of the branches visit that frequently.
- Recruiters are stated to set up in the cafeteria.
- Usually an assistant principal supervises these visits. Most days at least two assistant principals are within a few feet of where the military sets up.
- Recruiters bring brochures.
- ASVAB is administered after school in the cafeteria in November.
- The number of students who take the ASVAB varies between 10-40 students.
- AFSC received no response about the opt-out forms and JROTC program.

Grade: **F**

Palmer High School

4105 Main Street, Palmer, MA 01069

Correspondence: The first request to Palmer High School was sent on September 27, 2012, the second request was sent on October 11, 2012, the third was sent on October 23, 2012, and the fourth was sent on April 5, 2013. A response was sent from Palmer April 11, 2013.

Response:

A letter from the vice principal, cc. the superintendent and principal informed us that the high school doesn't keep this information in any specific "report or data set" and that a processing fee of \$30.00 per hour would be required to gather a response. At an estimated hour and a half of work, \$45.00 would be required to do the job. In response to their processing fee request in April, 2012 a call back was made September 23, 2013 which said that after all these months, we at AFSC are compiling information from public schools in the area and were following up with the only schools that haven't successfully given us the information we need. An intern told the secretary at the main office that we were sent a mailed response from the vice principal (Joseph C. Bianca) saying that if AFSC wanted the information we were requesting, then we would have to pay a processing fee of \$45 dollars. She said that the best thing to do now would be to email the principal and have everything down in writing.

Grade: F

Roger L. Putnam Vocational Technical Academy

1300 State Street, Springfield, MA 01109

Correspondence: The first request to Putnam Vocational High School was sent on November 7, 2012, and then we called the school on February 27, 2013. On March 27, 2013, we mailed a third request to the school. April 9 2013 a request was sent certified mail and the school received it April 10, 2013. Another certified mail request was sent October 28, 2013 and it was received by the school on October 29, 2013. We have not heard from the school.

Response: None

Grade: F

Springfield High School of Commerce

415 State Street, Springfield, MA 01105

Correspondence: The first request to Springfield High School of Commerce was sent on November 7, 2012 and a second request was sent via certified mail on March 9, 2013. A representative from the Springfield public school system made a phone call on April 23, 2013, which was late considering when we sent the request, requesting an email copy of our mailed request which was sent on April 24, 2013. An email response was received on April 25, 2013, all information was complete.

Response:

- Military recruiters visit several times per week.
- Recruiters are stated to set up in the cafeteria, under the supervisions of the guidance clerk, assistant principal, and teachers on lunch duty.
- Recruiters bring handouts, business cards, and materials.
- ASVAB test had been administered in the past; however, this year due to changes in staff of the Guidance Department, it was not scheduled, so it was not administered. Last year, the school claims there were about 60 test takers.
- Opt-out forms in the beginning of the year as part of the student handbook.
- The deadline for returning military opt-out forms is October 1st.
- Opt-out forms were returned in the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school years, the answer given is “unknown”, by which we presume that the school does not keep records of how many forms been returned back. However, the person the opt-out forms are returned to is the Guidance clerk, Mrs. Swiecanski.
- JROTC is listed under Academic Departments of the school's website.

Grade: **D**

Springfield Central High School

1840 Roosevelt Avenue, Springfield, MA 01109

Correspondence: The first request sent to Springfield Central High School was on September 27, 2012. A second request was sent out on October 11, 2012. A response was received on October 12, 2012, but the information was incomplete. Therefore a third request was sent out on October 16, 2012. On October 19, 2012, a call came in from Ms. Bazos of the guidance department saying she had received our latest request, but was confused as to what to do. One of our staff members left a voice message on October 30, 2012 at the number she left telling her “to answer the questions to the best of her ability and send it in.”

Response:

- Military recruiters visit ten times per year, and set up in the cafe, where they are supervised by the guidance department.
- Recruiters bring pamphlets.
- ASVAB is administered, with 70 students taking it.
- Opt-out forms are distributed in October, with a December deadline, and are returned to guidance. The school did not answer how the forms are distributed.
- The school did not answer the question on the JROTC program or provide the documentation on the program. However, an AFSC staffer found a page of their website dedicated to their JROTC program, which based off the history page, has existed since 1975.

Grade: **D**



Springfield High School of Science and Technology

1250 State Street, Springfield, MA 01109

Correspondence: The first request to Springfield High School of Science and Technology was sent on September 27, 2012, the second was sent on October 11, 2012, and a third request was sent on October 23, 2012. Another request was sent on April 9, 2013 via certified mail and an email response was received on April 25, 2013. All information was complete, except for an answer to the JROTC program.

Response:

- Military recruiters visit several times per week, and set up in the cafeteria, under the supervisions of the guidance clerk, assistant principal and teachers on lunch duty.
- Recruiters bring handouts, business cards, and materials.
- ASVAB test has been administered in the past; however, this year due to changes in staff of the Guidance Department, it was not scheduled, so it was not administered. Last year, there were about 60 test takers.
- As part of the student handbook, the school distributes military opt-out forms in the beginning of the year.
- The deadline for returning military opt-out forms is October 1st.
- Opt-out forms were returned in the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school years, the answer given is “unknown”, by which we presume that the school does not keep records of how many forms, been returned.
- Opt-out forms are returned to the guidance clerk, Mrs. Swiecanski.
- An AFSC staffer called on July 22nd 2014 to clarify and was told by Iris Corali of Guidance that the school did have a JROTC program.

Grade: **D**

Westfield High School

177 Montgomery Road, Westfield, MA 01085

Correspondence: The first request to Westfield High School was sent on July 12, 2012, and a response was received on July 17, 2012. All information was complete.

Response:

- There are two military recruiters per month. They either set up in the Career Center or the cafeteria during lunch; if they are in the Career Center they are supervised by Career Center staff, and if in the cafeteria by the on-duty administrators.
- It is believed only handouts and brochures are passed out.
- ASVAB is administered, in 2010-2011, 24 students were tested. For 2011-2012, 13 were tested.
- Opt-out form is distributed annually as part of the Student Handbook on the first day of school.
- The deadline for return is a week, but the school said they continue to accept them throughout the year.
- In 2011-2012, 100 grade twelve students opted out, and 57 grade eleven students opted out. No records from prior years were saved, but they will begin to save this information if we plan to make a regular request of this.
- The forms are returned to the Principal's secretary.
- There is no JROTC program.

Grade: C

Westfield Vocational High School

33 Smith Avenue, Westfield, MA 01085

Correspondence: The first request to Westfield Vocational High School was sent out on July 12, 2012, the second request was sent out on July 23, 2012, the third was sent out on October 2, 2012, and the fourth on October 16, 2012. On October 30, 2012 a fifth request was sent out, this time to the Guidance Department. A response was received to this last request on November 14, 2012.

Response:

- Military recruiters visit the school every two to three weeks, where they set up in the hallway outside during lunch, and are supervised by the administration.
- Recruiters bring handouts, applications, banners and videos.

(Westfield Vocational High School, continued)

- ASVAB is utilized periodically. In previous years, the school administered it to the entire sophomore class, but this was discontinued, and now last year approximately 10 students took it.
- Opt-out forms are distributed to all students at the beginning of the year and there is no deadline for returning them.
- 80% of students return opt-out forms.
- Forms are returned to main office secretaries.
- When asked about JROTC the answer given was “N/A.”

Grade: C

Berkshire County



Monument Mountain High School

600 Stockbridge Road, Great Barrington, MA 01230

Correspondence: On April 10, 2013, we received a voice message from Doreen calling from Berkshire Hills regional school district asking for an e-mail address in order to provide information to our request regarding Monument Mountain High School. On April 16, 2013, we received an email from the superintendent's office which was a response to our request from March 27th, 2013.

Response:

- Military recruiters comes five times that year.
 - Recruiters set up in the front hallway and then moved to the cafeteria during lunches.
 - They were supervised by the assistant principal and brought handouts, pens, water bottles and signup sheets.
 - The ASVAB is not administered and opt-out forms are distributed during summer mailing.
- They must be returned to the guidance or principal secretaries before October 1st.
 - During the 2010-2011 school year 327 were returned, and 296 in 2011-2012.
 - There is no JROTC program.

The same day we received another response to our request from the assistant principal Annand Scott:

Response:

- Recruiters contact the assistant principal to set up times to visit.
- Recruiters generally come once per year.
- Recruiters meet with students at a table set up in the front hallway during lunch time.
- If a student shows an interest, the student and the recruiter may set up a follow up time to meet.
- The Assistant Principal sets up and supervises the informal meeting.
- If a follow up meeting is scheduled, those are supervised by the guidance department.
- Recruiters will have pamphlets, pens, folders, posters, cards, etc.
- Recruiters do not have applications but may take names of interested candidates.
- ASVAB tests are not administered at Monument Mountain Regional High School. Last year, one student went to a neighbor high school to take the tests.

- Opt-out forms in the summer mailing packet, which goes out in August.
- Opt-out forms are expected to be returned within the first couple of weeks of school.
- 326 forms were returned for the school year 2010-2011, 293 forms were returned for the year 2011-2012.
- The forms are returned to the office secretaries.
- The information is passed to the guidance secretary where the data is kept.
- There no JROTC program.

NOTE: Some of the information is contradicting.

Grade: **B**



Pittsfield High School

300 East Street, Pittsfield, MA 01201

Correspondence: The first request to Pittsfield High School was sent out on July 12, 2012, a second request was sent out on July 23, 2012. A reply came in October 8th, 2012, on the July 12th request. However, this response was incomplete, and another request was sent out on October 30, 2012. There was still no response to this by November 6th, so an AFSC staff member called the school, asking the status of the request. On December 6, 2012, a response was received and all information was complete.

Response:

- Military recruiters visit the school monthly to bi-monthly and are allowed to set up a table outside the cafeteria at lunch, where they are supervised by faculty from the high school.
- Individual visits are supervised by school guidance counselors.
- Recruiters bring informational fliers, lanyards, pens and pamphlets.
- ASVAB is administered and there were 30 test takers in the 2011 school year.
- A section in the student handbook – which is distributed in August via mail – contains opt-out forms.
- Opt-out forms are returned to guidance and there is no deadline for returning them.
- In 2011-2012, 114 forms were returned, but there was no information provided about the 2010-2011 school year.
- JROTC program was answered with “N/A,” by which AFSC presumes that the school does not have JROTC program.

Grade: **C**

Drury High School

1130 Church Street, North Adams, MA 01247

Correspondence: The first request to Drury High School was sent out via mail on March 27, 2013, and a response was sent out by the school on April 1, 2013. All information was complete and an opt-out form attached.

Response:

- Military recruiters come, on average, about once every two months and stay in the cafeteria.
- Recruiters are supervised by a guidance counselor named Kathy Morgan, and they bring handouts, pens, pins, and general information.
- ASVAB is administered, with about twelve test-takers per year; however, this year there were twenty.
- Opt-out forms are distributed during registration, transfers, and appointments.
- There is no deadline; none were returned the year of 2011-2012 and two were returned for 2012-2013.
- Opt-out forms are returned to Mrs. Kidder, the principal's secretary.
- There is no JROTC program.

Grade: C

Hoosac Valley High School

125 Savory Road, Cheshire, MA 01225

Correspondence: The request to Hoosac Valley High School was sent out on March 27, 2013, and a response was received April 12, 2013.

Response:

- Military recruiters visit Hoosac Valley High School twice during school year and set up outside the cafeteria supervised by the guidance office.
- Recruiters bring flyers, posters, business cards, lanyards, and "etc."
- ASVAB is not administered.
- The school did not answer if they distribute opt-out forms. An AFSC staffer called on July 23rd, 2014, and spoke to the Guidance Department Secretary. She believed the school does distribute opt-out forms based on remembering her own kids receiving them; however, she was not sure.
- The Guidance Department Secretary stated she did not believe the program existed in the school, but stated there was an Recruiter that visited, talked to the students, and "did some things outside."

Grade: F

+

Mount Greylock Regional High School

1781 Cold Spring Road, Williamstown, MA 01267

Correspondence: The first request to Mount Greylock Regional High School was sent out on March 27, 2013 and a response was received on April 11, 2013.

Response:

- Military recruiters visit Mount Greylock Regional High School 1-2 times a year and set up in the school counselor's office.
- They are supervised by the counselors and only bring handouts with them.
- ASVAB is administered and on average 20-25 students will take it.
- Opt-out forms are sent to every student during the summer mailing period.
- The deadline for return is the first Monday in October and the forms are returned to Guidance Secretary.
- The number of returnees during the 2010-2011 year isn't available, but during 2011-2012, 113 students opted out.
- Regarding JROTC program, the answer given is "N/A".

Grade: **B**

Franklin County



Frontier Regional High School

113 North Main Street, South Deerfield, MA 01373

Correspondence: The first request to Frontier Regional High School was sent out on July 12, 2012, a second request was sent out on July 23, 2012. A response was received on August 24, however, we misplaced the correspondence, and a third request was sent out on October 10, 2012. We received a complete response.

Response:

- Military recruiters are allowed to visit Frontier Regional High School once per semester.
- Recruiters set up in the cafeteria or guidance where they are supervised by the principal or guidance staff.
- The recruiters are stated to bring informational handouts.
- ASVAB is administered and is taken by approximately 12 students per year.
- Opt-out forms are distributed upon enrollment, and then annually, but only by request.
- Returns are high--354 for the 2010-2011 school year, and 349 for 2011-2012.
- Forms are returned to the Guidance Secretary
- There is no JROTC program.

Grade: **B**

Greenfield High School

1 Lenox Avenue, Greenfield, MA 01301

Correspondence: The first request to Greenfield High School was sent out on July 12, 2012, a second was sent out July 23, 2012, a third sent out October 2, 2012, and a fourth sent out on October 16, 2012. On October 30, 2012, a fifth request was sent out, this time to the Guidance Department instead. A response was finally received to the request from October 30, on November 14. However, it was incomplete. In November, we received mailed to us a fax from July, showing a response to the initial request, containing some of the information that had been incomplete on the response from November.

Response:

- Military recruiters visit Greenfield High School twice a month and set up in the cafeteria.
- Both the principal and the guidance counselor set of the visits from the military.
- Recruiters bring handouts, pens, pads and lanyards are brought.
- ASVAB is not administered.
- Opt-out forms are distributed at the beginning of the year in the student packet, with a deadline of two weeks after sent out.
- In 2010-2011 there was a 60% return rate, and 75% for the 2011-2012 school year. The July response contained the numbers for these percentages: 123/170 and 96/175.
- Opt-out forms are returned to the main office on November response, but the July response stated specifically that they go to the school administrative assistant.
- There is no JROTC program.

Grade: A

Turners Falls High School

222 Turnpike Road, Montague, MA 01351

Correspondence: The first request to Turners Falls High School was sent out on July 12, 2012, a second was sent out July 23, 2012, and a third was sent out October 2, 2012. A response was received October 15, but information was incomplete, and a third request was sent out October 16. The second response was received on October 30, 2012. The school called on November 6, 2012 to inquire about the status of their response. All information was complete.

Response:

- Military recruiters visit Turners Falls High School once a month, and set up in the cafeteria, where they are supervised by teachers.
- Informational pamphlets, pens and pencils are brought.

(Turners Falls High School, continued)

- There was no response regarding whether or not the school administered ASVAB test.
- At the beginning of the school year, in first period, teachers pass out opt-out forms and the deadline for those is usually the first month of school.
- Opt-out forms were returned in the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school years the answer given was very few for both years.
- Opt-out forms are returned to the administrative assistant at the front office.
- There is no JRTOC program.

Grade: **D**

+

Pioneer Valley Regional High School

97 F Sumner Turner Drive, Northfield, MA 01360

Correspondence: The first request to Pioneer Valley Regional High School was sent out on November 7, 2012, and a response was received on November 14, 2012 stating that the school does not have documents to our request.

Response: See above.

Grade: **F**

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Ralph C. Mahar High School

507 South Main Street, Orange, MA 01364

Correspondence: The first request to Ralph C. Mahar High School was sent out on November 7, 2012, and a response was received on November 28, 2012. All information was complete.

Response:

- Military recruiters visit monthly at a table set up outside of the cafeteria during lunch.
- Recruiters are supervised by student-services.
- Depending on which branch of the military is visiting the documents brought “varies”
- The ASVAB is administered and 15 students took the test.
- Opt-out forms are only for juniors and seniors, who receive it in the beginning of the year packet and must be returned one week after.
- 105 opt-out forms were turned in for 2010-2011 and 87 were turned in for 2011-2012.
- Opt-out forms are returned to the high school office.
- There is no JROTC program.

Grade: **C**

Mohawk Trail Regional High School

24 Ashfield Road, Shelburne Falls, MA 01370

Correspondence: The first request to Mohawk Trail Regional High School was sent out on September 27, 2012. A second request was sent out on October 11, 2012, and a response was received around October 15, 2012. All information was complete.

Response:

- Military recruiters visit Mohawk Trail Regional High School a couple of times per year and set up in the cafeteria during lunches.
- Recruiters are supervised by a member of the faculty/administration who supervises the high school lunches.
- Handouts are brought by recruiters.
- There is no ASVAB test administered.
- Opt-out forms are distributed at the beginning of the school year during first block and are turned in at the end of the first week to the student services secretary.
- The number turned in for the 2010-2011 school year is unavailable, but the number for 2011-2012 was 32.
- There is no JROTC program.

Grade: A

Franklin County Technical High School

82 Industrial Boulevard, Montague, MA 01376

Correspondence: The first request to Franklin County Technical High school was sent out on October 2, 2012, a second request was sent out on November 7, 2012, but it was misplaced so a third was sent out on March 27, 2013. Another certified letter was sent on April 9th, 2013; a response was received sometime during April. The response included the two earlier requests we sent out. All information was complete.

Response:

- Military recruiters visit Franklin County Technical High School once per year.
- Recruiters set up in the hallway during lunchtime, where they are supervised by the guidance department.
- Recruiters are asserted to bring handouts.
- The ASVAB is administered and there are approximately 29 test-takers.
- Opt out forms are stated to be distributed in beginning of the year information packets and are returned to the guidance office within two weeks from the start of school.

- In 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school years, the answer given is “approximately 81.” It is unclear if this number refers to both years combined or for each school year.
- There is no JROTC program.

Grade: **C**

Grades for all Schools

School	Grade
Amherst Regional High School	B
Belchertown High School	B
Easthampton High School	A
Granby High School	C
Hopkins Academy	B
Smith Academy	C
Gateway Regional High School	B
Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School	C
Northampton High School	B
Pioneer Valley Performing Arts High School	A
South Hadley High School	B
Ware High School	C
Hampshire Regional High School	A
Agawam High School	D
Chicopee High School	C
East Longmeadow High School	F
Holyoke High School	B
Dean Technical High School	D
Longmeadow High School	D
Ludlow Senior High School	F

Palmer High School	F
Putnam Vocational High School	F
Springfield High School of Commerce	D
Springfield Central High School	D
Springfield High School of Science and Technology	D
Westfield High School	C
Westfield Vocational High School	C
Monument Mountain High School	B
Pittsfield High School	C
Drury High School	C
Hoosac Valley High School	F
Mount Greylock Regional High School	B
Frontier Regional High School	B
Greenfield High School	A
Turners Falls High School	D
Pioneer Valley High School	F
Ralph C. Mahar High School	C
Mohawk Trail Regional High School	A
Franklin County High School	C