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The Military's Homeschool Policy

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Dear Friends,

Marching (!) right along through the school year, this month we would like to share with you information regarding the military and its enlistment policy towards homeschoolers. Although we realize not everyone's child may be planning to enter the military, we felt sharing pertinent information regarding how the military views homeschool graduates would be helpful in case your child determines at some point during his high school years that he or she would like to explore this path after graduation.

We wish to commend and thank those of you in the homeschooling community who have family members serving our country in the military. We appreciate you and your family. The military is an honorable profession, and we are grateful for the service you give and the sacrifices you make.

As with any other option you are considering for your child's post high school years, it is crucial to prayerfully and pointedly consider all of the ramifications of a military decision. Seek out the Lord's wisdom and guidance first, and then by all means involve other godly counselors whom you respect to provide their input. For a spiritually mature child, the military offers a wealth of training and the opportunity to serve our country and guard our liberties. For a child who is struggling spiritually, the military atmosphere may or may not be conducive to encouraging spiritual growth. However, the Lord has His people in all walks of life, and His purposes will be accomplished anywhere -- in barracks, in mess halls, or in the desert of far-off countries. If you are confident the military is where your child should be, then trust the Lord to care for that child.

We leave as a matter of personal conviction the issue of women in the military and whether or not this option should be considered for your daughters. It is vital you search out Scripture on your own and also take time to consider the views of people you respect.

With these thoughts in mind, let's move on to the actual military homeschool policy to give you and your family helpful information you can use in making your decisions.

ENLISTMENT

For those who are considering enlisting in one of the branches of the military following high school graduation, we want to stress the importance of your high school academic program. Remember, if the high school years mark the end of your child's formal education, then you should provide him with the broad base of knowledge and skills he will need for his adult life. Should your child decide to take college courses while serving in the military, he will have these foundational high school courses to build on.

In 2007, the Department of Defense modified its enlistment policy so that homeschoolers who receive an AFQT (Armed Forces Qualification Test) score of 50 or above will enlist as Tier 1. Homeschool students who score below 50 will enlist as Tier 2.

All recruits in all tiers are required to take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery test known as the ASVAB test. Included on the ASVAB are 4 critical parts which comprise the recruit's Armed Forces Qualifying Test score (AFQT). It is critical for a homeschooler who wishes to enlist as Tier 1 to study for and complete practice ASVAB tests in order to attain an AFQT score of 50 or above. Scoring high on the entire ASVAB test will additionally provide recruits with the most job opportunities as well as signing bonuses. Some recruiting centers offer classes and/or coaching to help recruits score well on this test. There are also websites which provide [practice tests](http://www.hslda.org/elink.asp?id=3821) (<http://www.hslda.org/elink.asp?id=3821>) as well as give [test taking strategies](http://www.hslda.org/elink.asp?id=3822) (<http://www.hslda.org/elink.asp?id=3822>).

The ASVAB test should be taken before enlisting. It can be repeated as often as necessary at 30 day intervals in order to attain the necessary 50+ score. Again, it is important that your son or daughter take the ASVAB before enlisting so he or she will be enlisted as Tier 1 which will accord your child many worthwhile benefits such as possible bonuses, promotions, specialized training, choices of postings, and so on.

At the time of enlistment, a homeschooler will also be given an Assessment of Individual Motivation (AIM) Test that measures other personnel characteristics such as adaptability and motivation. This test will be used only for research purposes for data collection and will not affect, in any way, the status of the recruit.

No longer is a GED needed to prove your child has completed high school. Rather, a high school diploma along with a parent-generated transcript of your son or daughter's high school record will suffice. The transcript should be an original, typed, professional looking document which is notarized to verify the signatures are yours and that you are truly the people who schooled your child. [Click here](#) to see sample transcripts and formatting.

If specific concerns arise while speaking with a recruiter and you are an HSLDA member, call us and a member of our staff will assist you often by calling the recruiter and if that doesn't resolve the issue, we will speak with our contacts at the Pentagon in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense who are always helpful and accommodating to homeschoolers.

Enlistment also brings with it benefits for the recruit. These benefits may vary among the different branches of the military, but let's look at the Army's incentives. There are cash bonuses up to \$20,000 for enlistments of three or more years and access to the Army College Fund, which provides \$70,000 for college. Certain months there may be particular promotions offered if the recruiting office is behind in meeting its recruitment goals. Also, if the recruit stays longer in the military, there may be an additional incentive offered. Last but not least, he'll receive a monthly salary and be given 30 days of leave a year!

Along with these monetary benefits, there are also the benefits of confidence-building, acquiring new skills and training, and new life experiences which will stretch and mature your child into an adult.

MILITARY ACADEMIES

The military academies offer a rigorous and comprehensive education. Military academies are highly selective in their admission policies and you should begin early in the high school years to investigate the academic requirements for admission. Homeschool graduates have been admitted to all of the service academies, and the academies lay out clear admission policies on their websites. Extracurricular activities are important for successful applicants (leadership positions are a definite plus). Sports involvement is highly recommended, and in some cases, mandatory for those making application to the academies. Applicants must be physically fit and must also secure a Congressional recommendation. For more information on the service academies, check out these sources:

- Air Force Academy
- United States Military Academy (West Point)
- United States Naval Academy
- United States Coast Guard Academy
- United States Merchant Marine Academy

In order to have an edge up on meeting the requirements for admission, prospective academy applicants may want to consider applying to one of the summer sessions the military academies offer during the summer after the junior year of high school.

- [U.S. Air Force](#)
- [U.S. Army](#)
- [U.S. Coast Guard](#)
- [U.S. Navy](#)
- [U.S. Service Academies Accepting Homeschoolers](#)

Some of the benefits your child will receive from attending a service academy include:

- Excellent education and career training,
- Entering military service as a commissioned officer,
- Salary commensurate with level of commission,
- Job opportunities in related field of interest following retirement from service.

MILITARY SERVICE AFTER COLLEGE

If your child is interested in attending college first and then serving in the military, you may wish to check out the Reserve Officer Training Program (ROTC) affiliated with the college of your choice. Students apply for the ROTC programs (which are highly competitive) and are awarded scholarships which may include up to full tuition and other benefits in exchange for an active duty service obligation (usually four years) following college graduation.

Other than the obvious benefit of college tuition, your child will have the opportunity of further training in his or her career while also being compensated financially. Be aware, however, that if further education is funded, many times this will add to the years of service required.

- Navy ROTC
- Army ROTC
- Air Force ROTC

If you are interested in additional information regarding homeschool graduates and the military, check out the [military section](#) of HSLDA's Homeschooling Thru High School website for more articles and resources.

One last item, if you know a military family, take time to pray for them and to thank them for their service. If the military family currently has a member serving overseas, here are [some ideas](#) from the Home School Heartbeat to serve this family and to let them know you appreciate them.

Join us next month, when we discuss some ideas for interesting courses to inspire your child and broaden his high school plan.

Saluting you and the work you faithfully do each day,

Becky Cooke and Diane Kummer
HSLDA High School Coordinators



This resource is an article from the *Homeschooling Thru Highschool* newsletter (3/1/2007), and is provided by the Home School Legal Defense Association as a service to the homeschooling community.

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