

Template Letter to the Superintendent of Schools

Your Name, etc.

Date

Superintendent of Schools,
_____ County Public Schools

Dear Superintendent _____:

The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) is the military's entrance exam that is given to fresh recruits to determine their aptitude for various military occupations. The test is also used as a recruiting tool in _____ high schools _____ County Public Schools (1) and in 11,900 schools across the country. The 4 hour test is used by military recruiting services to gain valuable information on more than 650,000 high school students across the country every year. In most cases, students take the test without parental knowledge or consent.

In the spring of 2010, Maryland became the first state in the nation to pass a law that bars schools from automatically releasing ASVAB test information to military recruiters. Instead, students, and their parents if they are under 18, will have to decide whether to give the information to the military. One other state, Hawaii, has a similar policy for its schools. More than a thousand schools across the country have taken steps to protect the privacy of students who take the test. Some of the nation's largest school systems, including those in Los Angeles and New York City, have implemented policies that have the same effect as Maryland's law.

Although the military promotes the ASVAB as a voluntary "Career Exploration Program" administered to juniors and seniors, the US Army Recruiting Command's School Recruiting Program Handbook, USAREC Pamphlet 350-13 says the primary purpose of the ASVAB is to provide military recruiters "with a source of leads of high school juniors and seniors qualified through the ASVAB for enlistment into the Active Army and Army Reserve." (2)

Conversely, take a look at the homepage of the DoD website, www.asvabprogram.com. The military fails to identify what the acronym "ASVAB" stands for and fails to mention the primary purpose of the testing regime. In _____ County Public Schools, the ASVAB is often promoted without revealing its tie-in to the military or its primary function as a recruitment tool.

School counselors and administrators throughout _____ County Public Schools encourage students to take the test that many claim assists students in matching their abilities with certain career paths. There is evidence some schools require entire classes of students to take the ASVAB, judging from the numbers of test-takers from various schools. Across the country, Pentagon data reveals that more than a thousand schools *require* students to take the test. The military uses the four-hour exam to gather a treasure-trove of information to use in a

sophisticated psychological recruiting program. After the test is administered, military representatives meet with children to discuss their scores and suggest career paths. Later, recruiters make calls to unsuspecting youth, using individualized profiles gathered from test data and other sources.

As you're aware, federal and state laws strictly monitor the release of student information, but the military manages to circumvent these laws with the administration of the ASVAB. The Family Educational Rights Protection Act, (FERPA), and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), both contain requirements for opt-out notifications in releases of student information. Parents are given the right to stop their child's personal information from being released to third parties, but there are no such requirements in the ASVAB student testing program. **(3)**

In 2007, the last year such data is available, _____ students in _____ of the schools in the _____ County Public School system across took the ASVAB and _____ % of them had their test results and private information, (including social security numbers) forwarded to military recruiting services, without parental consent.

Although military regulations allow schools to administer the test while precluding test results from reaching recruiters, few school administrators in _____ County Public Schools have selected the option.

U.S. Military Entrance Processing Command (USMEPCOM) Regulation 601-4 identifies several options schools have regarding the administration and release of ASVAB information. **(4)** These options range from Option 1, which permits test results and other student information to be released to military recruiters without prior consent, to Option 8, which requires active parental consent to release the ASVAB test results and private information. Inaction on the part of a school will cause USMEPCOM to automatically select Option 1.

The release options in Regulation 601.4 correspond to the types of recruiter contact identified in the Pentagon database acquired by the Philadelphia Inquirer. For instance, Option 8 corresponds to "no recruiter contact."

Following is a breakdown of the schools in _____ County Public Schools that administered the ASVAB in 2007. 4 high schools in _____ County Public Schools administered the ASVAB to 625 students during the 2006-2007 school year. Of these, 99% had test results automatically forwarded to military recruiters

(sample)

School	Number	ASVAB Release Option
Patriot High School	22	Unrestricted Recruiter Contact
Freedom High School	7	No Recruiter Contact
Old Soldiers High School	436	No Contact Prior to 60 Days
Warriors High School	160	Unrestricted Recruiter Contact

Please take steps to select Release Option 8 for all children taking the ASVAB in _____
County Public Schools.

Sincerely,

Notes:

(1) "Military Testing." Philadelphia Inquirer. 08/05/2008. Web. 23 Sep 2009.
<http://www.philly.com/inquirer/multimedia/26249194.html>

(2) Page 6. "USAREC Pamphlet 350-13." Headquarters, United States Army Recruiting
Command. Web. 23 Sep 2009
http://www.usarec.army.mil/im/formpub/REC_PUBS/p350_13.pdf

(3) PDF: "The Los Angeles Unified School District's Current Administration of the Armed
Services Vocational Aptitude Battery Violates NCLB, FERPA, The California Constitution, and
California Statutes." The National Lawyers Guild, Los Angeles Chapter

(4) Page 3-2. "USMEPCOM Regulation 601-4" United States Military Entrance Processing
Command. 13 Nov 2006. Web. 23 Sep 2009.
<http://www.mepcom.army.mil/publications/pdf/regs/r-0601-004.pdf>

Cc: Members, _____ County Board of Education