

## TALKING POINTS for starting an opt-out campaign in your school

### **Background information:**

The No Child Left Behind Act requires that

- schools give students names, addresses and telephone listings to military recruiters on request.

It ALSO requires that

- schools notify parents that they or their child can submit a request to withhold that information.

From SEC. 9528 of the No Child Left Behind Act

“A secondary school student or the parent of the student may request that the student's name, address, and telephone listing described in paragraph (1) not be released without prior written parental consent, and the local educational agency or private school shall notify parents of the option to make a request and shall comply with any request.”

### **What you want:**

If your school has not been notifying parents, ask them how you can help them do that. Find out if they have a form readily accessible for people to submit.

If they have been notifying parents, say you feel it should be publicized more because many parents and students are still unaware of it.

Explain that you are concerned that many students and parents are too overwhelmed by school paperwork and other things to really understand the issue. You are willing to provide information at school registration or orientation to help them understand and opt out if they wish.

### **Why is it so important to publicize opting out?**

- **It's a privacy issue.** The school would not generally give out this kind of information to anyone who asks. It's important for families to know that they need to take steps to exercise their privacy options with the military.
- **Regardless of political views**, the decision to enlist in the military is a serious one. It will affect a child's future and it will affect his or her friends and family. It is not like taking a job, where someone can quit if it doesn't suit them. In fact, the military contract is irrevocable even though its terms can be changed at any time by the military.

#### **The Military Enlistment contract states:**

"Laws and regulations that govern military personnel may change without notice to me. Such changes may affect my status, pay, allowances, benefits, and responsibilities as a member of the Armed Forces REGARDLESS of the provisions of this enlistment/reenlistment document."

- **Recruiters are salespeople**, not counselors, and are trained to promote the positives of enlisting. They also have quotas to fill. Although teenagers are close to adulthood, many aren't equipped to carefully think through their actions. Giving recruiters a list of contact information makes it easy for them to contact students without guidance from a counselor or parent. Any student who is interested in joining the military has seen enough advertising to know where to sign up without being pressured.

More information available at [www.tamewisconsin.org](http://www.tamewisconsin.org)

## **Tips for a successful opt-out campaign in your school:**

Find out who to talk to. Office staff can help you figure out the protocol for making requests at your school. They can connect you with the person who organizes registration or orientation, or they may have you start with the principal, who will probably need to give the ultimate approval anyway. Keep trying to contact people if they don't get back to you soon.

Keep it nonpolitical. Even if you have a sympathetic administration, they have to answer to the entire school community. You will make it easier for them to say yes if you don't put them in a position of having to approve/disapprove what they see as a political statement. You may want to present this as primarily a privacy issue if you think it might be better received from that perspective.

Offer your help. You may believe that this issue is more important than whatever else is going on, but school personnel are generally overworked and have many other things on their minds. Ask if you can help on registration/orientation day by setting up tables, compiling packets or organizing handouts, or recruiting volunteers. Offer to provide handouts and forms and help duplicate them. You will gain more ground as an aide than an adversary.

Have a connection. It's helpful (but not necessary) if you or someone with you is a parent of a current, past or future student at the school, or is somehow involved with the school or district in a positive way – whether you volunteer, donate, coach, or attend school events. Be sure to let them know how you are connected with the school or the community.

Have a plan but be flexible. Have some sample materials ready, but don't present your complete plan or the materials until you've introduced the idea and gotten some feedback. If you don't get to do everything you want, remember that you are laying groundwork. If some parents and students appreciate your efforts you will be able to do more in the future.

Start early. School and district bureaucracy can be cumbersome and may take some time to wade through, so don't expect immediate results. Follow up.

Be respectful and polite but persistent. Bureaucrats may present obstacles but disparaging criticism can cause otherwise helpful people to dig in their heels. Keep looking for ways they can say yes by engaging them as potential allies rather than adversaries. After all, you are trying to help them follow the law and do what's best for their students. They don't have to agree with your political views.

Encourage receptive parents/students to get involved. Have something available (with contact information) that you can give people who want more information, even if you are not allowed to display it. If you think it won't compromise your efforts, bring some pamphlets like "Do you know enough to enlist?" and pull one out when you see a student who seems to be interested in enlisting, or not sure.

More information and materials available at [www.tamewisconsin.org](http://www.tamewisconsin.org)

## **SEC. 9528. ARMED FORCES RECRUITER ACCESS TO STUDENTS AND STUDENT RECRUITING INFORMATION.**

### **(a) POLICY-**

#### **(1) ACCESS TO STUDENT RECRUITING INFORMATION-**

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.

**(2) CONSENT-** A secondary school student or the parent of the student may request that the student's name, address, and telephone listing described in paragraph (1) not be released without prior written parental consent, and the local educational agency or private school shall notify parents of the option to make a request and shall comply with any request.

**(3) SAME ACCESS TO STUDENTS-** Each local educational agency receiving assistance under this Act shall provide military recruiters the same access to secondary school students as is provided generally to post secondary educational institutions or to prospective employers of those students.

**(b) NOTIFICATION-** The Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, shall, not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, notify principals, school administrators, and other educators about the requirements of this section.

**(c) EXCEPTION-** The requirements of this section do not apply to a private secondary school that maintains a religious objection to service in the Armed Forces if the objection is verifiable through the corporate or other organizational documents or materials of that school.

**(d) SPECIAL RULE-** A local educational agency prohibited by Connecticut State law (either explicitly by statute or through statutory interpretation by the State Supreme Court or State Attorney General) from providing military recruiters with information or access as required by this section shall have until May 31, 2002, to comply with that requirement.

These requirements are also contained in 10 U.S.C. § 503, as amended by § 544 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002 (P.L. No. 107-107), the legislation that provides funding for the nation's armed forces in fiscal year 2002.

### **The Military Enlistment contract states:**

"Laws and regulations that govern military personnel may change without notice to me. Such changes may affect my status, pay, allowances, benefits, and responsibilities as a member of the Armed Forces REGARDLESS of the provisions of this enlistment/reenlistment document."

# OPT OUT FORM

**Section 9528** of the **No Child Left Behind Act of 2001** requires schools to release our family's private information to military recruiters unless we **"opt out"** in writing.

\_\_\_\_\_As a student, I am exercising the right to "opt-out" and request that my own name, address and telephone number not be released to military recruiters.

\_\_\_\_\_As a parent, I am exercising the right to "opt-out" and request that you do not turn over the name, address and telephone number of the following student to military recruiters.

School\_\_\_\_\_

Student Name\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Student\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

Federal public law 107-110, section 9528 of the ESEA, "No Child Left Behind Act" requires school districts to release student names, addresses, and phone numbers to military recruiters upon request. The law also requires the school district to notify students and parents of the right to Opt-Out from this by requesting that the district not release students information to military recruiters. This form is intended to serve as a request to withhold this information.

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS about students and military recruiters**

*Q. Why does the school give my name, address & phone number to military recruiters and other institutions?*

- A. The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act states that any school receiving federal NCLB funding must “provide, on a request made by military recruiters or an institution of higher education, access to secondary school students names, addresses, and telephone listings,” unless the student or parent requests in writing that the information not be provided.

If your school does not have an official “opt-out” form, you can use the generic form found at [www.afsc.org/youthmil](http://www.afsc.org/youthmil) or write a letter.

*Q. If I submit a request (opt-out form), will colleges still be able to contact me?*

- A. If you have only requested to withhold your contact information from military recruiters, it will have no effect on who else gets this information. Ask your principal or guidance counselor what the school’s policy is on releasing student contact information to others.

*Q. Who needs to sign the form?*

- A. Students, parents or guardians may sign the form or letter.

*Q. Where can I submit the form?*

- A. Mail or bring it to your school or district office. Be sure they have a procedure for processing the form and keeping your name off the military recruiter list.

*Q. When do I need to submit the opt-out form?*

- A. You should be sure to get the form in by October of 10<sup>th</sup> grade, however the military can request student records at any time so it’s never too soon. The beginning of your freshman year is a good time.

*Q. Will submitting this form prevent military recruiters from contacting me?*

- A. No. The opt-out form prevents the school from including your name on the list it sends to recruiters, but you still need to pay attention to where else you provide information about yourself (e.g. ASVAB, recruiter events).

*Q. I submitted this form last year. Do I need to do it again?*

- A. It depends on your school's policy. Ask your principal or guidance counselor.

*Q. What if a recruiter does get my name, address and phone number?*

- A. A recruiter will contact you to set up an appointment to talk with you about joining the military. Several parents have reported that the recruiter called their sons daily, even after being told they were not interested. Recruiters will continue to call or attempt to visit for months or years.

Recruiters play up the benefits of joining the military. Many of the benefits have hidden conditions, for example "paying for college" involves contributions from soldiers' salaries, and "career training" means you get 6 weeks of training in your chosen area but no guarantee that you will be placed in that area when the training is over. When you leave the military, your training often does not apply to civilian jobs. Some recruiters make promises that cannot be kept. And they don't always mention war, which is really what the military is all about.

*Q. I signed up for the delayed enlistment program, and now I have changed my mind. Can I get out of it?*

- A. Yes. Until you are 18 and have signed official enlistment papers, you are under no obligation to join the military. You simply do not have to report for duty, or you can write a letter stating your decision not to go. There are no consequences or records that will affect your future employment or legal status. If your recruiter tells you otherwise, get help from your school counselor.

*Q. Are military recruiters allowed to be in my school?*

- A. Yes. Ask your principal or guidance counselor when and where they will be present. You are under no obligation to meet with them.

*Q. Where can I get more information about military recruiters?*

- A. Go to [www.tamewisconsin.org](http://www.tamewisconsin.org), [www.afsc.org/youthmil](http://www.afsc.org/youthmil) or [www.warresisters.org/youth/](http://www.warresisters.org/youth/) on the internet.

If you are interested in working with other parents or students to address the issue of military recruiting in the schools, please contact \_\_\_\_\_.

# Do you want your child's name and address given to military recruiters?

The recent No Child Left Behind Act **requires schools to submit lists of students along with their addresses and phone numbers to military recruiters** upon request, unless the student has submitted an "opt-out" form signed by a parent (or by the student if over 18).

- ◆ **If you don't want your name, address and phone number released by your school to military recruiters, you need to submit this form.**

## Why not give my child's name to military recruiters?

Regardless of your political views, the decision to enlist in the military is a serious one. It will affect your child's future and it will affect his or her friends and family. It is not like taking a job, where someone can quit if it doesn't suit them.

## Your child should not make this decision under pressure.

- ◆ **Any potential recruit should realize that his or her recruiter is not a teacher or a counselor but a salesperson.** Recruiters are under great pressure to enlist a certain number of people each month; if they don't, they may lose privileges, bonuses, and may be transferred from the recruiting command.
- ◆ **Recruiter fraud has become a serious problem in the military.** Four hundred recruiters were relieved in a three year period for misconduct. Sometimes recruiters try to convince enlistees to lie on the enlistment agreement - to provide false information so that you will be accepted into the service. They may also lie to you or to your child.
- ◆ **In reality, most soldiers never realize the benefits offered,** including high-tech training, money for college, great job opportunities. And the contract, while binding you to the military for 8 years, does not obligate the military to keep any of the promises made in the enlistment agreement.

Opt-out forms can be obtained from \_\_\_\_\_

(For more information, see [www.tamewisconsin.org](http://www.tamewisconsin.org))

# Why is this form important?

The school is required to give out student names, addresses and phone numbers to military recruiters unless you submit this form.



*Regardless of your political views, the decision to enlist is a serious one:*

- It will affect your future.
- It will affect your friends and family.
- You can't quit if it doesn't suit you.



***REMEMBER THAT RECRUITERS ARE NOT COUNSELORS.***

**Recruiters are salespeople trained to market the military. They are under pressure to enlist a certain number of people every month. They offer many benefits that recruits may or may not receive.**



**No one should have to make the decision to enlist under pressure.**

# Opt-Out Form – Why fill it out?

The school is required to give out student names and contact information to military recruiters unless you submit this form.



Regardless of your political views, the decision to enlist is a serious one:

- It will affect your future.
- It will affect your friends and family.
- You can't quit if it doesn't suit you.



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**No one should make this decision under pressure.**

**Do you want your child's  
name and address given to  
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