

Homeschoolers Joining the Military

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2nd Reconnaissance Platoon, Battalion Landing Team, 1st Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment, 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit DoD photo by Sgt. Alex C. Saucedo, U.S. Marine Corps.

About this article

This article tells about some differences between the two largest career paths in the military services, becoming an officer or enlisting. It also looks at how home education affects those choices. From the view of the military services, homeschooling has an effect on enlistment more than it does on the commissioning of an officer.

This article includes a look at what it means to be an officer or an enlisted person. Included are the ways a college student can become an officer, and how a homeschooled graduate can enlist. Statistics are included from a Navy study that is important to homeschooled graduates who want to enlist, and a complaint, and an answer to the complaint, about the study.

In this article, I propose that the best way to prepare to enlist is to earn a regular high school diploma, but the 'best' way does not rule out other ways. This article is not a step-by-step guide telling homeschooled grads how to join the military, but it does have advice on good ways to prepare to join.



President Barack Obama shares a moment with a U.S. Airman at a mess hall on Bagram Air Field in Afghanistan March 28, 2010. During the surprise visit, which is Obama's first to the region since taking office, the president met with Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai in addition to visiting with service members. DoD photo by Pete Souza

Entering the military

If working in one of the military services is a goal for your teen, he or she must decide whether the goal is to be an officer, or to enlist. The distinctions between commissioning as an officer or enlisting, can be boiled down to seeing officers as the professional managers of one of the services, while enlisted personnel do the daily work in the field.

Another difference is that officers “serve at the pleasure of the President” for an unlimited period, until they retire, resign or are dismissed. If an officer turns in a resignation, the service may or may not accept it depending current needs. Enlisted servicemembers serve at their own pleasure for the length of their contract. After that, the servicemember may either leave the service when the contract is up, or re-enlist. All servicemembers, commissioned or enlisted, must serve for at least eight years. The eight-year obligation may be all active-duty, or a mix of active-duty plus either the National Guard or the active Reserve or inactive Individual Ready Reserve (IRR).¹



P.O.1 Eddie Sharpe, a member of Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit 11, deployed as a part of Combined Task Group 56.1 conducts training with the 2 Alpha handheld sonar in the Red Sea. DoD photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Ja'lon A. Rhinehart, U.S. Navy.

Distinctions between officers and enlisted personnel

The big distinction between being an officer or enlisted is that officers are paid more, but that is a simple view. Broadly speaking, officers carry out their duties across a wide range of their job field, while an enlisted person's job might be a specific part of the field. In looking at the jobs of two people in the same field, one an officer and the other enlisted, the officer would be in charge of people doing different jobs, or oversee a unit providing a specific service, such as supply, intelligence or one of the combat arms. The enlisted person would, again broadly speaking, do a certain job.

Higher up the chain, commanding officers oversee the well-being and training of a unit, plus the housing and feeding of the unit's people, and carrying out the unit's mission. A community commander acts as the 'mayor' of a military installation with all the responsibilities of fire prevention, security, safety and sanitation, plus making sure the buildings stay standing. Ship commanders must also oversee water safety and possible search and rescue, on-ship medical care, food, waste disposal as well as common matters such as sailors buying everyday personal items, sailors banking, and sailors having their hair cut.

Military doctors, though, do the hands-on work they have been trained to do, as well as handling command duties as needed.

Enlisted personnel do the actual jobs that together make up the output of a unit. They are the tank drivers, missile launcher operators, and front-line infantry, air crews, helicopter mechanics and aircraft catapult operators, interpreters, interviewers and photo analysts, military policemen, criminal investigators, and corrections personnel, medical technicians, dental technicians and pharmacy technicians, mechanics, truck drivers and heavy equipment operators, electricians, refrigeration technicians and plumbers, finance clerks, personnel clerks and legal clerks, clarinetists, trombonists and buglers, cooks, bakers and pastry chefs.

The Navy has the widest variety of jobs because of the need to provide full services aboard the floating towns and cities that are naval ships.

In-between the enlisted and officer grades are the warrant officers of the Army, Navy, Marines and Coast Guard. Warrant officers are the technical experts of the military world. They are former enlisted members whose expertise allows them to perform as technical leaders.

The only job in which a homeschooled applicant could apply to be a warrant officer is Army helicopter pilot². Although the “high school to flight school” path is available, it can be a tough path. Applicants must pass the Flight Aptitude Selection Test (FAST), possess a GT score³ of 110 or higher, meet the Army’s physical requirements, have near-perfect vision and no colorblindness, hold their own against enlisted soldier applicants, and successfully complete both Warrant Officer Candidate School and flight school.

The services appoint all other warrant officers from the enlisted ranks. The Air Force stopped using the warrant officer ranks when the services created the top enlisted grades of E-8 and E-9 in 1958.



Commander of the U.S. Central Command Gen. David H. Petraeus, U.S. Army, reenlists sailors aboard the aircraft carrier USS Nimitz. DoD photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Eduardo Zaragoza, U.S. Navy.

Staffing needs

As with civilian ‘human resources,’ the main driver of recruiting is staffing. Whether civilian or military, an organization has a certain number and kind of ‘slots’ and needs people with talent to fill those slots and keep them filled. The people in those slots do not make this easy. Some tire of what they do and re-enlist for a school for a different job. Some tire of where they are and re-enlist for a different place. Some earn promotions. Some earn demotions. Some finish their enlistment and do not re-enlist at all. Some are hospitalized, because of accidents, injuries on the job, or combat wounds. Some retire. Some get themselves kicked out. Some flee. Some are imprisoned. And, tragically, some die.

To add to the complications caused by losses, the entire structure is moving – military personnel are famous for their ‘flightiness.’ They are always going here and there, sometimes at what seems like a moment’s notice. Transfers from place to place that balance losses and gains, plus the necessary lag time for training, keeps the structure loose. Number-crunchers project staffing needs and tell recruiters to fill the holes, which is why the recruiters have quotas for one set of jobs, while holds are put on others.

If a service is overstrength (has too many) in, say, ‘mess-kit repair specialists,’ then no

matter how skilled an applicant is at 'mess-kit repair,' the applicant cannot enlist for that specialty. There are no slots. On the flip side, if a service is always understrength (doesn't have enough) in perhaps 'live-fire target management specialists,' then recruiters will always be on the lookout for people with that talent. There are plenty of slots. Recruiters will offer applicants with the skills to manage targets on live-fire ranges special deals and signing bonuses for the specialty.

Yet another ingredient in the staffing stew is the time needed for teaching civilians military jobs. Few high schools teach students elementary helicopter repair, assistant stevedore, or have clubs for Young Yeomen. Cavalry scout cadet is not an elective in public schools, nor are rocket launcher rookie or artillery apprentice. The course length in military schools (meaning schools that the services have for their jobs, not 'military prep schools' for teens) range from instruction lasting a few months, to those that require successive courses that together take well over a year. All the specialized schooling follows the months of basic military training that each service requires. Add it together, and the result could be that a service invests nearly two years of schooling for some difficult jobs before a recruit is of use to anyone except as someone who rakes leaves or paints rocks. It is because of the investment in training that the services have batteries of tests, enlistment tiers and signing bonuses.



U.S. Air Force Academy Cadet Ryan Kerns, a falconer, introduces school children to the academy's school bird and ambassador. DoD photo by Airman 1st Class Gul Crockett, U.S. Air Force.

Commissioned officers

Commissioning as a military officer requires a college degree, or, for an enlisted member who completes Officer Candidate School (OCS), finishing a college degree within the year. On the commissioning path, the only place where homeschooling is an issue is with college entrance.

In my opinion, homeschool sources that say how easy it is for homeschoolers to join one of the military services, and then use commissioning as an officer as the successful example, are playing a shell game. Yes, the previously-homeschooled college graduate's status as 'homeschooler' still 'exists,' but the college degree erases the effect of homeschooling in qualifying to enter the service.

Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) electives during college are useful in becoming an officer after earning a degree, although the commission is not guaranteed. ROTC programs are available only at schools that participate in the ROTC programs of the Army⁴, Navy⁵ or Air Force⁶. The Coast Guard and Merchant Marines do not have ROTC programs. The Marine Corps program is an option through Naval ROTC⁷. Do not, though, expect to see ROTC programs at all schools and do not expect schools that offer one ROTC program

to offer the ROTC programs from all the services.

Another way to earn a military commission is to qualify for a service academy nomination, and graduate. These nominations are made by Congressional representatives^{8,9}.

The most famous of the service academies is the Army's West Point¹⁰, on the bank of the Hudson River in New York. The Naval Academy is at Annapolis, Maryland and it graduates cadets for both the Navy and the Marines¹¹. The Air Force Academy is located in Colorado Springs, Colorado¹², and is the only academy outside of New England. New London, Connecticut is the home of the Coast Guard Academy, the one academy that does not require a Congressional nomination¹³. The Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, New York¹⁴ completes the five American service academies.

Despite the closeness of the service academies to the military services, cadets are students, not members of the military. Because cadets are students, homeschooling is a factor in gaining an academy appointment. You might consider the following points to improve the chances of your son or daughter being favored with an appointment to one of the academies.

- include extracurricular activities during the 'high school' years
- approach physical fitness as energetically as math and grammar
- focus the high school studies on college-prep academic subjects with four years each of English studies and higher maths, two years of a foreign language, lab science classes in chemistry and physics, and social studies classes such as history, government, geography and economics
- include a year of community college before applying
- include study of a foreign language such as "Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Spanish, German, French, Portuguese or Russian."¹⁵
- take the SAT or ACT



Seaman Samantha Garza butters loaves of freshly baked bread in the bakeshop aboard the aircraft carrier USS George Washington. DoD photo by Seaman Adam K. Thomas, U.S. Navy.

Recruiting enlisted servicemembers

In comparison to enlisting, earning a commission as an officer can seem almost simple: get a degree. Enlisting, though, sometimes seems to depend on phases of the moon, or the moods of an unseen wizard. The services have no ironclad 'step 1, step 2,' guidebooks to enlistment. Each recruit has a different story about how he or she enlisted, and recruiters seem to tell one thing to Person A and another thing to Person B. As a public relations exercise, recruiting earns poor PR ratings from many everyday citizens, but the services have reasons for the fogginess of facts, and the questionable quality of the recruiting experience.

The best way to qualify for enlisting in the military, if the applicant is strong and in good health, is to prepare. The qualities attractive to the military services are the abilities to be instructed, and to follow those instructions. Creative thinking is beneficial, but in the everyday life of a servicemember, team-playing ability is the skill most used. The bottom line is that servicemembers are indeed cogs in a large machine, and each cog, of whatever size, has a role to play in the smooth running of the machine. If Medal of Honor fame sounds dashing, a more individualized profession might be a better fit. Military units expect servicemembers to be where they are needed, when they are needed, to understand the instructions given to them, and have the skill to carry out those instructions.

The yardstick for measuring whether a non-servicemember can understand instructions and follow them is a high school diploma.¹⁶ The best ticket to military enlistment (other than college) is graduating from high school. Is this good homeschooling advice? Maybe not, but it is good enlistment advice.

The only preparation better than graduating from high school is adding enrollment in a military-style program such as the Junior ROTC program or the Civil Air Patrol. As with college ROTC, a school participates in the program and students enroll.^{17, 18, 19, 20, 21} Not all schools participate. Schools that participate in one program do not always offer all programs.



Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. George W. Casey Jr. talks with Advanced Individual Training Soldiers at the new Global Assessment Tool Survey Center in Fort Jackson, S.C., on Apr. 12, 2010. The center supports the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program and will be able to process Global Assessment Tool Surveys for two companies a day. DoD photo by D. Myles Cullen, U.S. Army.

Tiers

Applicants who want to join the military are obviously not all equal. In addition to physical differences, the applicants differ in what kind of schooling they have had. Some graduated from 'regular' schools, some attended college, some have GEDs, and recently a few – less than 1% – were homeschooled.²²

Over the decades, people who study such things and count the costs, noticed that how a person was schooled had an effect of how long they stayed in one of the services. Enlistees who do not finish a hitch are more expensive than enlistees who do (the cost of training one civilian was pegged at over \$18,000 in 1987 dollars²³). Because of this, the services pigeonhole recruits according to the kind of diploma they have as a way of saving money and needing fewer replacements. It is because of the cost of training, feeding, housing, clothing, transporting and paying trainees that the tiers were established.

Educational Credentials²⁴

DoD implemented a three-tier classification of education credentials in 1987. The three tiers are:

- *Tier 1—Regular high school graduates, adult diploma holders, and non-graduates with at least 15 hours of college credit.*
- *Tier 2—Alternative credential holders, including those with a General Education Development (GED) certificate of high school equivalency.*
- *Tier 3—Those with no education credential.*

The benefits of Tier I enlistment are that most recruits are in the Tier I so chances of being accepted are better; that Tier I recruits have a greater range of job choice; and Tier I recruits may be offered signing bonuses.

Whether they were unschooled or did school-at-home, homeschooled graduates can become Tier I recruits by completing one semester of college studies. That one semester qualifies the recruit for Tier I because it improves the chances that recruits will complete their enlistments. The military likes that, and rewards it.



U.S. Army recruits receive their initial haircuts during basic combat training at Fort Jackson, S.C.. DoD photo by Senior Airman Micky M. Bazaldua, U.S. Air Force.

Enlisting as a homeschooler

Despite the advice to attend high school as the best way to fit oneself for enlisting in the military, that advice is not one-size-fits-all. Not everyone who wants to join the military cares to attend high school, and not everyone who wants to join the military needs to attend high school. Homeschoolers can enlist, have enlisted and have done well, but a homeschool diploma does not carry with it the same statistical probability of finishing that first hitch that has been connected through decades of research to a high school diploma.

CNA study of how well homeschooled recruits do at completing a first hitch

From 1999 to 2004, researchers at the Center for Naval Analyses (CNA) conducted a 5-year “pilot program” study that included homeschooled recruits to see how well alternative education credential holders stacked up against high school diploma holders.²⁵ The CNA undertook the study after the Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA) lobbied Congress to “create an equitable enlistment route for home schooled graduates.”²⁶ The point of the CNA study was to see whether certain recruits served out their enlistment contracts, and if they did not finish the contract as agreed, why not.

The study's focus was homeschooled graduates and National Guard ChalleNGe²⁷ program enlistees. These two groups were measured against high school diploma holders (the diplomas being from public schools, or from private schools whose programs are like that of public schools), and against enlistees with associate degrees, or enlistees with GEDs.

In looking at the staying power of recruits who enlisted for four years, homeschooled enlistees' attrition, their rate of leaving the service before their contracts were up, was 43.4% compared with 34.7% for a high school diploma holder²⁸. HSLDA's citing the twelve month attrition rate as favorable²⁹ does not take into account later attrition rates, nor the length of time needed to properly train recruits for some jobs.

The completion of an enlistment is a milestone that, if reached, is a positive part of the person's résumé. Leaving the service before the end of an enlistment contract is usually not a pleasant experience for either the servicemember or that person's co-workers, and may result in a less-than honorable discharge, a definitely un-positive part of a person's résumé.

As I wrote at a blog³⁰ concerning proposed legislation to prevent what some saw as 'discrimination against homeschoolers,'

Leaving the service before a term of enlistment is completed is not accomplished by a sergeant saying, "Gee whiz, I wish it could have worked out better for you," and then giving a hearty handshake and a slap on the back as the young person packs his or her suitcase. Leaving the service before a term of enlistment is completed is usually accompanied by some large event, whether physical so that the servicemember is medically retired, or perhaps psychological, so that the servicemember is counseled first by the immediate superior, and then by increasingly more distant people on up the chain, until there is no resolution other than discharge. The servicemember loses, the people who work with the servicemember lose, and a replacement has to be found.

And as for finding the replacements, they have to be groomed from scratch -- again. In the meantime, someone who has already done his or her bit, has to step in to fill the hole. There isn't a situation where the need goes unfilled for long, someone invariably is detailed to compensate for the loss. I would like to avoid that as much as possible.

The semester of college that qualifies an alternative-diploma holder as a Tier I recruit is therefore of double benefit to a homeschooled applicant as it qualifies that person for the increased range of Tier I benefits regardless of how homeschooled applicants are viewed, and improves the recruit's probability of a successful enlistment.

Criticism of CNA study

The CNA study did not avoid criticism by the very group that lobbied for it. According to HSLDA, the study included mistakes in counting which recruits were legitimate homeschoolers, and which were not, with the chief problem being that of wrongly including high school dropouts³¹ as homeschoolers.

What HSLDA did not include in its critique is that the counting of recruits who were 'wrongly included as homeschoolers' went both ways. Air Force applicants with associate degrees were also counted as homeschoolers. These Air Force "homeschool" recruits performed above the level of the Air Force high school diploma holders.^{32,33} The study's final breakdown included data from both the Air Force associate degree-holders and the Naval dropouts, which should have cancelled each other. The conclusions about the abilities of homeschooled graduates to complete a first term of enlistment should probably rest with the middle rather than the best and worst³⁴.

Second "pilot" study

Since the end of the 1999 - 2004 Tier I pilot program, new information from the Navy and the Marine Corps shows that homeschooled graduates who score above 50 on the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT³⁵) portion of the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) tests complete their enlistments as well as high school diploma holders. Because of this new information, the services are collecting data for a second pilot program (how many programs does it take before the programs are no longer "pilot"?) in which homeschooled applicants who score above 50 on the AFQT are enlisting as Tier I recruits.³⁶

This four-year 50+/Tier I program³⁷ for homeschooled recruits is in place until 30 Sep 2011.



U.S. Air Force airmen participate in advanced arms training at Orangeburg, S.C., on April 9, 2010. DoD photo by Airman 1st Class Alexandra Hoachlander, U.S. Air Force.

Recruiting regulations of the military services

Each of the military services has its own recruiting guidelines, whether they are an instruction, a manual or a regulation. Since the Department of Defense (DoD) manages all the services, these regulations all must fit in with the guidelines in DoD Instruction 1304.30³⁸, Enlisted Personnel Management Plan (EPMP) Procedures. Within those guidelines, though, the services may set standards appropriate to their own needs³⁹. The services also report their statistics to DoD so overall adjustments to defense enlisted recruiting can continue⁴⁰.

The Tossed by the Fates blog contains a compilation⁴¹ of the homeschool-specific portion of the various regulations from the services. Although the services have differences in recruiting, often in AFQT cutoff scores, they do have similarities in what they expect.

Some of the similarities within the current regulations are:

- that most recruits (ca. 90%) will come from the Tier I category
- only high school graduates and alternative credential holders with a full semester of college (15+ credit hours or 22+ quarter hours) are 'coded' as high school graduates
- alternative credential holders are graduates of non-resident, or non-attendance style

programs (correspondence schools, distance learning, self-study, accelerated study, testing completion, homeschool)

- a Tier I qualifying school program consists of graded, day-school, 12-year classroom instruction programs
- some form of external evaluation is expected from applicants whose credential is issued by parents or guardians
- non-traditional graduates of secondary programs must earn an AFQT score above 50

Because of these similarities among the services' recruitment regulations, young people who think they would like to join one of the military services have some consistent guidelines to follow before talking to a recruiter. The preparation for enlisting more easily as a homeschooled grad includes:

- use a teacher/student model for the homeschooling (not unschooling, self-directed study, or a correspondence program)
- do school-at-home for the same hourly course requirements as is usual for local schools
- use on-site classes or tutors
- keep accurate records, to include grades
- do not use an accelerated study program
- do not use a testing-out program
- plan on at least a semester of college or junior college

Conclusion

Homeschooled graduates are able to enter the military both as officers and as enlisted members. Homeschooled grads who want to be officers must meet the requirements of the colleges that they wish to apply to. After earning a degree and becoming eligible for a military commission, the applicant's homeschool status is no longer an issue.

Homeschooled grads who want to enlist may do so. Although homeschooled grads without any college have done well in the military services, those with at least one semester of college have a better track record of completing an enlistment. Regardless of whether homeschool-only enlistment is 'better' for the image of homeschooling, a semester of college after graduating from homeschooling statistically improves a recruit's chances of completing the first enlistment.

Until September 2011, homeschooled graduates with an AFQT score over 50 may enlist in the services as Tier I recruits.

Notes

All photos in this article came from the DoD Image Collection at:
<http://www.defense.gov/multimedia/>

Endnotes

page 2:

1. Individual Ready Reserve (IRR), U.S. Army Human Resources Command
<https://www.hrc.army.mil/site/media/factsheets/irr.htm>

page 4:

2. Army warrant officers
http://www.goarmy.com/about/warrant_officer.jsp

3. “GT score” is a combination of the scores of the Arithmetic Reasoning and Verbal Expression subtest scores that are part of the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) of tests. The ASVAB is not one tests, but a group of tests measuring different abilities. The GT score is used by the Army and Marines, but the Marine score includes the Mechanical Comprehension subtest score. The Air Force “General Aptitude” score is the same as the GT score.

“The ASVAB in a Nutshell,” from *ASVAB for Dummies* by Rod Powers and Jennifer Lawler
http://media.wiley.com/product_data/excerpt/19/04701067/0470106719.pdf

page 7:

4. Army ROTC
<http://www.goarmy.com/rotc/index.jsp>

5. Navy ROTC
<https://www.nrotc.navy.mil/>

6. Air Force ROTC
<http://www.afrotc.com/>

7. Marine Corps option for Navy ROTC
<https://www.nrotc.navy.mil/marine.aspx>

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8. Congressional Nominations to U.S. Service Academies

<http://www.policyarchive.org/handle/10207/bitstreams/2687.pdf>

9. Academy nominations from a California representative

<http://capps.house.gov/services/academy-nominations.shtml>

10. US Military Academy at West Point

http://admissions.usma.edu/prospectus/step_01.cfm

11. US Naval Academy

<http://www.usna.edu//homepage.php>

12. Air Force Academy

http://www.academyadmissions.com/#Page/How_to_Apply

13. Coast Guard Academy

<http://www.uscga.edu/>

14. Merchant Marine Academy nominations

<http://www.usmma.edu/admissions/facts/nominations.htm>

15. Air Force Academy recommendations for foreign language study

http://www.academyadmissions.com/#Page/How_to_Apply

page 10:

16. The GED and the U.S. Armed Forces

<http://www2.ed.gov/pubs/GED/gedusaf.html>

“Studies conducted by the military since 1959 have examined the impact of demographics, background experiences, high school completion status, and cognitive ability on first-term attrition. These studies have shown that of the measures available to the military, the high school completion status of recruits is the single best predictor of attrition, even after controlling for age, cognitive aptitude, and other personal characteristics.”

17. Army JROTC

https://www.usarmyjrotc.com/jrotc/dt/5_EstProg/estunit.html

18. Marine JROTC

<http://www.mcjrotc.org/>

19. Navy JROTC

<https://www.njrotc.navy.mil/>

20. Air Force JROTC

<http://www.au.af.mil/au/holmcenter/AFJROTC/index.asp>

21. Civil Air Patrol

<http://www.gocivilairpatrol.com/html/index.htm>

page 11:

22. "Final Analysis of Evaluation of Homeschool and ChalleNGe Program Recruits," figure 6, Center for Naval Analyses (CNA), January 2004

<http://www.cna.org/documents/D0009351.A2.pdf>

23. "The GED and the U.S. Armed Forces"

"Most enlisted positions require occupational and technical training, and the military services themselves shoulder the cost. Attrition is costly to both the military and the taxpayer--estimated at \$18,400 per premature separation in 1987 dollars (Laurence 1987)."

page 12:

24. "The recruiting process," Chapter 2, Population Representation in the Military Services

http://prhome.defense.gov/poprep2002/chapter2/c2_recruiting.htm

page 13:

25. "Final Analysis of Evaluation of Homeschool and ChalleNGe Program Recruits,"

26. "How do home school graduates enter the military?" March/April 2002, Home School Legal Defense Association <http://www.hslda.org/courtreport/v18n2/v18n203.asp>

"HSLDA lobbied Congress to fix this situation and create an equitable enlistment route for home schooled graduates. With the help of the late Senator Paul Coverdell, an amendment containing a solution was attached to the 1998 Defense Authorization bill. The new regulations created a five-year pilot program where each branch of military would reserve 1,250 slots for home schoolers. The program stipulated that home schooled enlistees would be considered Tier 1, and their progress during military service would be tracked.

"The four branches of the armed services secured the Center for Naval Analysis (CNA) to conduct a one-year, one-time study of the five-year pilot project. The CNA examined several indicators for 67,000 recruits including attrition rates, Armed Forces Qualifications Test (AFQT) scores, pre-service drug tests and interest in military service."

page 14:

27. "The mission of the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program is to intervene in and reclaim the lives of 16-18 year old high school dropouts, producing program graduates with the values, life skills, education, and self-discipline necessary to succeed as productive citizens."

<http://www.ngycp.org/site/>

28. CNA study, "Final Analysis of Evaluation of Homeschool and ChalleNGe Program Recruits," Table 7, PDF-page 32

29. "Army Opens Doors Wide for Homeschool Graduates," 29 Mar 2005, HSLDA

<http://www.hslda.org/docs/news/hslda/200503/200503310.asp>

“For example, homeschoolers enlisting in the Army have consistently scored, on average, as high as traditional public school graduates on the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT). For the first 12 months, their attrition rate was as low as public school graduates.”

30. HR 3753/ S 1691-Homeschool NonDiscrimination Act 2005
<http://hr3753.blogspot.com/2005/10/tier-i-status-for-military-enlistment.html>

page 15:

31. Military Recruitment of Homeschoolers, HSLDA, March 2006
<http://www.hslda.org/docs/nche/000010/200506150.asp>

“The low scores and the high attrition rates are largely a result of recruiters using the homeschool pilot project as a means to place problem candidates and high school dropouts into Tier I. The Department of Defense Regulations defining a legitimate homeschooler came slowly and teaching recruiters what qualifies as a homeschool graduates came even slower.”

32. CNA study, “Final Analysis of Evaluation of Homeschool and ChalleNGe Program Recruits,” page 34, Table 10

33. *ibid*, page 38

“This is the source of the differences between Air Force homeschooled attrition rates in tables 4-6 versus tables 8-10. Recruits with Associate’s degrees have very low attrition rates (the 24- month attrition rates are 24 percent across the Services and 10 percent in the Air Force, calculated using responses to the recruit survey). Therefore, because DMDC’s records call a number of people with Associate’s degrees homeschooled, this makes the attrition rates of homeschooled recruits in the Air Force appear to be very low.”

34. CNA study, “Final Analysis of Evaluation of Homeschool and ChalleNGe Program Recruits,” page 73
 “However, table 17 also shows that the survey recruits were more likely to have nontraditional education credentials; the survey population contains a higher proportion of dropouts and recruits with GEDs but also a higher proportion of recruits with a high school diploma and some college (the last group tends to have low attrition rates).”

35. Computing the ASVAB Score, About.com: U.S. Military
<http://usmilitary.about.com/od/joiningthemilitary/1/blafqtscore.htm>

36. See PDF compilation of extracts from the various recruiting regulations of the services and the OUSD letter about the pilot program
<http://militaryhomeschooling.files.wordpress.com/2010/04/2010-04-apr-23-service-regulations-compilation.pdf>

37. 31 May 2007 memorandum from the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense, Subject: Pilot Test for Home School Diploma Graduates
<http://militaryhomeschooling.files.wordpress.com/2010/04/2007-05-may-31-ousd-memo-on-tier-1.pdf>

page 16:

38. Department of Defense Instruction, Number 1304.30, March 14, 2006
<http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/130430p.pdf>

39. "The recruiting process," Chapter 2, Population Representation in the Military Services
"This DoD policy does not prohibit the Services from setting their own targets above these benchmarks. These benchmarks were set by examining the relationship between costs associated with recruiting, training, attrition, and retention using as a standard the performance level obtained by the reference cohort of 1990, the cohort that served in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm."

40. Department of Defense Instruction, Number 1304.30
"7.1.4. Instituting a regular analysis and briefing cycle for DoD Recruiting and Retention Leading Indicators ensures greater collaboration among personnel analysts throughout the Services and the OSD. The result is provision of thorough, analytically sound, and timely information to senior decision makers, reassuring them when recruiting and retention are proceeding smoothly and allowing them to reallocate resources proactively as the outlook becomes less favorable."

41. Military recruiting expectations for homeschooled graduates, April 2010
<http://militaryhomeschooling.files.wordpress.com/2010/05/2010-04-apr-23-service-regulations-compilation.pdf>