



#### MLDC Research Areas

- Definition of Diversity
- Legal Implications
- Outreach & Recruiting
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- Promotion
- Retention
- Implementation & Accountability
- Metrics
- National Guard & Reserve

This issue paper aims to aid in the deliberations of the MLDC. It does not contain the recommendations of the MLDC.

Military Leadership Diversity Commission  
1851 South Bell Street  
Arlington, VA 22202  
(703) 602-0818

<http://mldc.whs.mil/>

## Increasing the Pool of Eligible Youth

### Potential Partnerships Between DoD and Other Federal Agencies

#### Abstract

Racial/ethnic minorities and women have a lower likelihood of meeting Service eligibility requirements for a number of reasons, including lower educational attainment and issues related to health, criminality, and citizenship. Although it is beyond DoD's purview to *directly* address issues of educational attainment, health, citizenship, and criminality in America's youth, improvements in these areas will increase the pool of candidates (especially among minorities) qualified to serve in the military. Thus, one option is for DoD to develop partnerships with other federal departments and government agencies, such as the Department of Education (ED), that have a direct stake in addressing these matters. This issue paper summarizes past DoD-ED collaborations and suggests potential future collaborations between DoD and ED and other agencies. It finds that, to date, collaborations between DoD and ED have been piecemeal and decentralized, and there has not been much documentation of either the programs or evaluations of how well they have worked. Yet, DoD could pursue a number of opportunities with ED and individual ED offices that could contribute to improvements in the quality of education in the United States. A starting point might be the development of a formal liaison within the Office of the Secretary of Defense to the Office of the Secretary of Education. Such a liaison could conduct rigorous evaluations of programs and initiatives, allowing them to be improved if necessary or, if they are deemed useful, replicated. Beyond opportunities in the educational arena, DoD could also pursue opportunities in partnership with other federal agencies that could help deal with issues related to youth health, criminality, and citizenship.

As MLDC issue papers on how requirements shape the demographic profile of the eligible population show, the demographic profile of the population eligible to enter the military Services does not match the demographic profile of the broader U.S. population (Military Leadership Diversity Commission, 2009a; 2009b; 2010). For example, compared with whites, blacks and Hispanics graduate from high school and college at lower rates, have higher rates of obesity, and have a higher likelihood of having been incarcerated. Hispanics are more likely than blacks and whites not to be U.S. citizens, and women pass physical-fitness requirements at a lower rate than men, especially requirements related to weight and percentage body fat. It is also the case, however, that many white youth are ineligible for military service based on these requirements. As a result, the eligible population differs from the total population not only in terms of its demographic makeup but also in terms of size: The eligible population is much smaller than the total youth population, and this is of concern to all of the Services.

Taking steps to increase the pool of eligible youth, particularly minority or female youth, by directly affecting children's education, health, criminality, and even citizenship is neither the job of the Department of Defense (DoD) nor within its purview. One option for working toward this goal, however, is for DoD to partner with the federal departments or agencies that *are* responsible for dealing with those issues. Consequently, the MLDC commissioners requested an issue paper about how DoD could collaborate with the U.S. Department of Education (ED) to improve children's schooling success and thereby increase the pool of youth eligible to enter the military. This issue paper, therefore, focuses on children's education, examining past and potential collaborations between DoD and ED and between DoD and other national or state agencies.<sup>1</sup> Although our

emphasis is on collaborations that aim to improve educational outcomes, we also briefly discuss potential DoD collaborations with other federal departments and agencies that are related to health, criminality, and citizenship that would be designed to increase the pool of eligible youth.

### **History of Collaborations Between DoD and ED**

In partnering to improve educational outcomes, the logical starting point is to work with ED. To understand DoD partnership opportunities with ED, however, one must understand ED's roles and responsibilities. ED works to guide policy and practice through the power of the purse (by funding programs at the state and district levels) and through its influence as a department. The Secretary of Education helps to guide the national education agenda for the executive branch, which, in turn, can make proposals to Congress. ED also provides some direct funding for specific educational initiatives at the state and local levels, supplies grants for research and evaluation of educational efforts, and issues grants and loans for post-secondary schooling (U.S. Department of Education, 2010b and 2010c). Direct control of education, however, falls to the states and districts. The relationship between ED and individual states (and districts within states) in terms of pursuing educational objectives has implications for the partnerships that DoD pursues. Further information about ED is provided in the appendix.

DoD and ED have partnered in the past to improve the rates of learning science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) skills in high school and in postsecondary settings. This record, however, has been inconsistent. In the following sections, we summarize a handful of the joint programs that are documented. Ours is in no way an exhaustive account of all previous or ongoing collaborations, and we cannot offer much evidence about the strengths and weaknesses of those partnerships because there has been little documentation of evaluations of whether initiatives proved successful.

**Programs in Support of STEM.** Since the enactment of Title 10 in August 1956, the Secretary of Defense has been encouraged to consult with the Secretary of Education on issues relating to improving the teaching and learning of STEM skills necessary to meet the long-term national defense needs of the United States (10 U.S.C. 2192, 1999). The focus of this partnership is on establishing programs to improve the mathematics and scientific knowledge and skills of students and staff of elementary and secondary schools (10 U.S.C. 2193a, 1999). The Secretary of Defense may also authorize the director of each defense laboratory to partner with educational institutions—such as local educational agencies (school districts), colleges, universities, and any other nonprofit educational authorities—to encourage and enhance study in scientific disciplines.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, high priority is given to partnering with historically black colleges and universities or other minority institutions<sup>3</sup> and to assisting women, members of minority groups, and others who are disproportionately

underrepresented in the mathematics, science, and engineering professions (10 U.S.C. 2194, 1999).

Currently, DoD operates a number of programs to encourage learning of STEM skills. (One such program is STARbase, which will be described in a future issue paper.) To date, however, no joint STEM programs between DoD and ED have been documented.

### **Programs in Vocational/Career and Technical**

**Education.** Responding to an increasing need for vocational (or specialized-skill) expertise in the armed forces, the Assistant Secretary of Vocational and Adult Education launched a number of related efforts in the early 1980s (Chase, 1985).<sup>4</sup> In recent decades, however, federal attention has shifted away from vocational education as the push for accountability, standards, and assessments—and the belief that all students should be prepared to enter higher education—has grown. ED continues some work to improve vocational education in the country,<sup>5</sup> but more-recent collaborations between DoD and ED have not been documented.

**Programs Focused on At-Risk Youth.** DoD and ED have worked together to develop programs that prevent at-risk youth from dropping out of high school. In 1992, DoD and ED created the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) Career Academy, a new high-school program aimed at encouraging at-risk youth to remain in school and graduate. DoD provided over \$3.5 million in seed money to local educational agencies to support the first three years of the program in nine urban high schools across the United States.<sup>6</sup> This program combined the military training that the Services had been providing to high-school students for decades through JROTC with special schools-within-schools to target particular students who were not prospering under traditional coursework or school settings. The program integrated vocational education with academic instruction and training in responsibility, self-discipline, and leadership in a nurturing environment (Hanser & Robyn, 2000).

Early studies found the program to be successful: Enrollees had higher attendance and graduation rates than similar students in traditional programs, and they experienced increases in their grade-point averages during their enrollment. Successes have been attributed to the vocational option, which retained students who otherwise would not attend, and to the students' perceptions of belonging and care (Elliott, Hanser, & Gilroy, 2000; Stevens, Schroder, Kwari, & Sanchez, 1996).<sup>7</sup> Few JROTC career academies still exist, however, because DoD funding was stopped and districts were often unable to retain the necessary level of financial or academic support.

Although not specifically established to improve the education of at-risk youth, the Troops to Teachers (TTT) program has had that effect. TTT, established in 1994 and continuing today, provides troops with a path to become certified teachers. Under the program, the Secretary of Education transfers funds to DoD for the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional

Education Support (DANTES) to provide assistance, including stipends of up to \$5,000 to eligible members of the armed forces to obtain certification as elementary or secondary teachers.<sup>8</sup> More than 30,000 members of the armed services joined the program between its inception and 2005 (Shaul, 2006).

Studies have shown that TTT has improved the educational quality of students who are in high-poverty, inner-city, and high-minority areas by:

- filling a gap of minorities and men in the teaching force (Owings et al., 2006; Shaul, 2001)
- increasing the number of teachers in science, math, special education, and vocational education (Shaul, 2006)
- filling spots in inner-city schools, which are often the least-attractive teaching positions and, therefore, the hardest to fill (Owings et al., 2006)
- placing teachers with a strong commitment to service, higher retention rates, and high marks in maintaining classroom discipline (Owings et al., 2006).

### Programs Focused on Educating Children in Military Families.

DoD supports districts that serve high populations of military children through the Department of Defense Education Authority (DoDEA), which is dedicated to promoting every military child’s right to a quality education regardless of his or her location or how often the family moves.<sup>9</sup> By supporting the education of military children, DoD may be broadening the pool of eligible youth because children of servicemembers have a higher probability of joining the military than children whose parents do not have a military background.

### Potential Collaborations Related to Educational Attainment

In this section, we summarize some opportunities for collaboration between DoD and ED and between DoD and other educational agencies, states, or organizations. Although these potential points of collaboration are merely ideas—they have not been supported in the literature as particularly

**Table 1. Potential DoD Collaboration Opportunities with Specific ED Offices**

ED Office	What the Office Does	Potential DoD Collaboration Opportunities
Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (OSDFS)	Administers, coordinates, and recommends policy for programs and activities that are designed to reduce drug use and violence or to promote character and civics education in K–12 and colleges and universities. Part of its mandate is to participate in interagency committees and partnerships with other federal agencies on issues related to comprehensive school health (U.S. Department of Education, 2007a).	Within OSDFS’s Division of Character and Civic Education, provide funding for states and districts that incorporate coursework or curricula on citizenship, history, and the value of military service.
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE)	Promotes academic excellence, enhances educational opportunities and equity for all of America’s children and families, and improves the quality of teaching and learning by providing leadership, technical assistance, and financial support. OESE is currently holding a series of competitions for states and districts (e.g., Race to the Top) to spur innovation in education (U.S. Department of Education, 2009c).	Work with OESE and the White House Initiative to promote efforts to educate students about the importance of staying in school and about the fact that the military is a career option available to high-school and college graduates.  Work with OESE and the White House Initiative to identify young minorities, women, or at-risk youth that are high-achievers or show great potential whom the military could target for financial or educational support. (DoD already has access to data on graduating seniors as part of the No Child Left Behind law.)
White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans	Provides advice and guidance to the Secretary of Education on education issues related to Hispanics and addresses academic excellence and opportunities in the Hispanic community (U.S. Department of Education, 2009e).	
Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE)	Helps all students acquire the skills to be prepared for high-skill, high-wage, or high-demand occupations in the 21st-century global economy (U.S. Department of Education, 2009a).	Improve the quality and amount of vocational education offered in middle and high schools around the country (e.g., by holding a competitive process during which states or districts submit applications outlining changes to their curricular offerings, including citizenship or vocational training). (DoD and ED have partnered on vocational education in the past, and that partnership could be reenergized.)
The Institute of Education Sciences (IES)	Funds rigorous evaluations and research efforts to provide evidence on which to base education practice and policy, collects and warehouses data about the nation’s schools, and disseminates findings of its research and that of its grantees (Institute of Education Science, n.d.).	Support IES’s efforts by funding research on education reforms intended to improve the school-completion rates of minorities or at-risk youth.

viable, and they have not been analyzed for advantages or disadvantages, feasibility, or cost-effectiveness—they provide a starting point and a stimulus for discussion.

**Department of Education.** ED has a number of offices with missions that would support DoD’s goal to increase the eligible pool of candidates qualified for military service. Table 1 lists these five ED offices, describes their functions, and identifies some potential DoD-ED collaboration opportunities to both increase the pool of youth qualified for military service (particularly minority and women candidates) and increase positive points of contact between the military and the civilian youth and their parents.

Note that any DoD-ED collaboration efforts must be coordinated with the Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development (OPEPD) in the Office of the Secretary of Education. OPEPD oversees ED planning, evaluation, policy development, and budget activities and coordinates these activities with ED principal offices and outside organizations, such as Congress, the Office of Management and Budget, and state education agencies (U.S. Department of Education, 2009b).

Beyond collaboration opportunities with specific offices, DoD could also work directly with the Secretary of Education to expand the number of DoDEA schools. For example, it could assist in opening new schools in high-risk areas where servicemembers are stationed. Furthermore, the secretaries of the two departments could collaborate to help civilian students enter DoDEA schools. This would widen school-choice initiatives for disadvantaged children. Data suggest that minority achievement in DoDEA schools is higher than the national average (Brigdlall & Gordon, 2003; Viadero, 2000). Some of this is credited to the culture and requirements that the military can enforce. If the schools are opened to civilians but maintain requirements as a prerequisite to attendance, this may contribute to increased minority success and create the opportunity for positive points of contact with the military.

**National Education Professional Organizations.** Another option for DoD to address recent educational attainment trends is to collaborate with national education professional organizations that often serve as research, advocacy, and policy-development groups for specific education professions and have representatives from each state. Examples of such associations are the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, the American Association of School Administrators, the Council of Chief State School Officers, and the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE).

An example of this type of collaborative effort is the March 2009 memorandum of understanding (MOU) between NASBE and the U.S. Army Accessions Command. The MOU provides “a cooperative framework to increase collaboration in supporting the Nation’s young people and improving the educational experiences, next-stage preparedness, and graduation rates of the Nation’s high school students” (National Association of State Boards of Education, 2010, para.3).

NASBE conducts annual study groups to provide professional development to members of state boards of education,

set organizational direction and priorities, and inform state education policymakers of key issues. Reports of the NASBE study groups have been the basis of major policy changes on critical education issues throughout the United States. Through the MOU with the Army, NASBE received funding from the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs to conduct one of its 2010 study groups on the following topic: challenges and opportunities in coordinating the K–12 education and military sectors to meet the needs of youth. The 2010 study will examine the coordination between K–12 education and the military to meet the needs of youth in the following areas:

- building a comprehensive understanding of post-secondary choices for students
- improving graduation rates
- improving the health and fitness of high-school students
- expanding career exploration/assessment and test-preparation resources for educators and students
- elevating the need for well-trained teachers, particularly in the areas of science and mathematics (National Association of State Boards of Education, 2010).

**States and Districts.** A third option for DoD is to work directly with states and territories. The National Guard Youth Challenge (ChalleNGe) program is an example of this type of collaborative effort. The ChalleNGe program—a quasimilitary, residential program designed to serve 16- to 18-year-old high-school dropouts—is funded jointly by DoD, the states, and state National Guard units. Currently, there are 34 programs in 29 states and the territory of Puerto Rico (McHugh & Wenger, 2009). Because the U.S. education system is localized and decentralized, with core responsibility for the education of the nation’s youth placed on the states, this is a viable option for reaching targeted populations. The drawback, however, is that start-up efforts may take a long time because individual relationships with key state education officials need to be developed.

**National Science Foundation.** A fourth option for DoD is to work with the National Science Foundation (NSF) to focus efforts on improving research and evaluation of education initiatives that aim to increase (1) the school-completion rates of minorities or at-risk youth and (2) the learning of STEM or vocational skills. NSF is an independent federal agency that was created by Congress in 1950 “to promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare; to secure the national defense” (National Science Foundation, 2010, para. 1). With an annual budget of about \$6 billion, it funds approximately 20 percent of all federally supported basic research (National Science Foundation, 2010). DoD could work with NSF to (1) learn from NSF research on STEM programs to improve the efficacy of DoD STEM programs and (2) directly fund selected research.

### Potential Collaborations Related to Citizenship

Typically, a noncitizen wishing to become a U.S. citizen must have five years of legal permanent residency in the United States to apply, and a noncitizen married to a U.S. citizen for at least three years can apply after three years of residency. However, special provisions apply for members of the armed forces. On July 3, 2002, in Executive Order 13269, President George W. Bush declared that all persons serving honorably in active-duty status in the armed forces of the United States at any time on or after September 11, 2001, are eligible to apply for naturalization in accordance with the *service during hostilities* statutory exception in Section 329 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) to the naturalization requirements. This means that individuals with even one day of honorable active-duty service can apply for citizenship, regardless of how long they have been residents (8 U.S.C. 1440, 2003).<sup>10</sup>

To ensure that citizenship does not prove to be a barrier to those interested in joining the military, DoD could expand the current program with the Department of Homeland Security's Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to fast-track the citizenship applications of noncitizen youth who commit to entering the military after high school or college. Requirements to serve honorably in the military for a specified number of years would remain. Another avenue is to undertake an advertising campaign about the naturalization option for legal immigrants who serve honorably. Compared with other races and ethnicities, a disproportionate number of Hispanics tend to be noncitizens, so these measures might encourage a larger number of otherwise ineligible Hispanics to consider joining the military.

### Potential Collaborations Related to Physical Fitness

As demonstrated in an earlier MLDC issue paper, obesity is clearly an issue for minority populations, and it disproportionately disqualifies these groups from entering the armed forces (Military Leadership Diversity Commission, 2009a). An obvious ally in addressing these obesity trends is the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), which is responsible for protecting the health of all Americans and providing essential human services. DoD and DHHS could work together on education-outreach efforts that encourage physical fitness among youth and could support research efforts to stem the obesity epidemic.

As suggested in the earlier MLDC issue paper, DoD could also target recruitment efforts at healthier populations, such as noncitizens. It could do this in tandem with DHHS and USCIS to target noncitizens who are in the U.S. legally and are strong candidates for recruitment.

### Potential Collaborations Related to Drug or Alcohol Involvement and Criminal Behavior

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) within the U.S. Department of Justice would be a good candidate for partnering with DoD to deter youth from engaging in drug or alcohol use and other criminal activities.

OJJDP sponsors research, programs, and training initiatives; develops priorities and goals and sets policies to guide federal juvenile-justice issues; disseminates information about juvenile-justice issues; and awards funds to states to support local programming (U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, n.d.). Thus, the Secretary of Defense could collaborate with OJJDP to fund community-based programs or develop other programs that address the needs of youth and their families.

### Conclusion

Although it is beyond DoD's purview to directly address issues of educational attainment, health, citizenship, or criminality in America's youth, improvements in these areas will increase the pool of candidates—especially minorities—qualified to serve in the military. Thus, one option is for DoD to develop partnerships with other federal departments and government agencies that have a direct stake in addressing these issues.

To date, collaborations between DoD and ED in particular have been piecemeal and decentralized, with little documentation of the programs and few evaluations of how well the collaborations have worked. Nevertheless, there are a number of potential opportunities that DoD could pursue in moving forward with ED as a whole, with individual ED offices, and with other educational agencies or organizations to improve the overall quality of the education system in the United States. Beyond the educational arena, DoD could pursue partnerships with other federal agencies that could help deal with issues related to youth health, criminality, and even citizenship—issues that, if addressed, could increase the pool of youth (especially minorities and women) eligible to serve in the military.

One option to pave the way for these future efforts is the development of an Office of the Secretary of Defense liaison with the Office of the Secretary of Education and other federal agencies to promote the education and civic character of U.S. youth. This individual or office could track partnerships and data collected so that programs' effectiveness could be analyzed. Such an effort could contribute to the preparation of future generations of youth to enter not only the 21st-century military but also the broader global workforce.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup>This issue paper does not summarize any educational or outreach programs that are solely under DoD's purview. Another issue paper discusses those programs.

<sup>2</sup>A defense laboratory can be any laboratory, product center, test center, depot, training and educational organization, or operational command under DoD jurisdiction. The defense laboratories may also loan equipment, make personnel available to teach courses or help develop coursework, involve faculty or students of the institution in defense-laboratory research projects, and provide academic or career advice to students.

<sup>3</sup>A "minority post-secondary institution" is referred to in paragraphs (3), (4), and (5) of section 312(b) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1058(b), 1965).

<sup>4</sup>ED made concerted efforts to make vocational education fit military needs during this period. It established the Defense Preparedness Task Force in October 1981 and convened the Defense Preparedness Review Group in September 1982, organizations that brought together industry, public and private postsecondary institutions, state education agencies, and trade associations. During 1982 and 1983, ED and DoD sponsored vocational-education and defense-preparedness seminars to identify current vocational programs supporting defense preparedness, discussed ways to replicate these programs, and sponsored a supplemental study at the National Center for Research and Vocational Education.

<sup>5</sup>For example, ED's Office of Vocational and Adult Education funds the National Center for Career and Technical Education, which is a partnership among the University of Louisville, the University of Minnesota, Cornell University, and Clemson University. Its mission is to "improve the engagement, achievement, and transition of high school and postsecondary CTE [career and technical education] students through technical assistance to states, professional development for CTE practitioners, and dissemination of knowledge derived from scientifically based research" (National Research Center for Career and Technical Education, n.d.).

<sup>6</sup>Curtis Gilroy, in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, and Alan Ginsburg, in the Office of Policy and Evaluation Services, Department of Education, developed the concept of JROTC career academies.

<sup>7</sup>Evaluations of the implementation of JROTC career academies also noted areas in need of improvement. Successful implementation occurred when districts, schools, and the military sponsors made formal agreements, particularly around specific accountability measures to track the progress of implementation. Schools whose academy coordinators were knowledgeable about similar reforms and whose principals supported the academy were more likely to be successfully designed and implemented. This program needed a high level of commitment and expertise in both military and local educational systems. And, finally, the more-successful academies were those that received specific budget guidelines from DoD.

<sup>8</sup>TTT also helps servicemembers find employment in high-need local educational agencies. In lieu of the \$5,000 stipends, DANTES may pay \$10,000 bonuses to participants who agree to teach in high-poverty schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2009d).

<sup>9</sup>Section 574 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act directs the Secretary of Defense to work collaboratively with the Secretary of Education "in efforts to ease the transition of military dependent students from attendance in DoD dependent schools to attendance in schools of local education authorities" (20 U.S.C. § 7703b, 2009). In FY 2007, DoDEA and ED began offering grants and training to teachers and staff in districts on how to meet the needs of military children (Department of Defense Education Activity, 2010). On June 25, 2008, DoD and ED signed an MOU that formally established an agreement to collaborate to ensure the quality of the education of military dependents and to assist local education agencies in taking on projected increases of military dependents. As part of the MOU, DoD and ED share data on military children's schooling. DoDEA's Educational Partnership Branch collaborates with the EDFacts Data Usage Team to help inform decisions about priorities and partnerships with military-connected school districts (U.S. Department of Defense and U.S. Department of Education, 2008).

<sup>10</sup>Section 329 of the INA also applies to servicemembers who served on active duty during World War I, World War II, the Korean Conflict, the Vietnam Conflict, or Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

<sup>11</sup>For more information about ED's history, roles, and responsibilities, see <http://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/focus/what.html#whatis>

<sup>12</sup>Detailed information about the budget process can be found at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/process.html>

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