



*Students protest at school board meeting, 10/14/2008. Photo: Project YANO*

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# Guide to Removing Marksmanship Training from High Schools

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## Summary

This Guide contains information on steps that can be taken to remove JROTC shooting ranges and marksmanship training from high schools. The content is based on decades of research and extensive experience organizing around the JROTC issue, including a campaign that succeeded in a highly militarized community. Samples of materials used in that campaign are at the end of the Guide.

It should be noted that the JROTC program in general is not the focus of this Guide. While some activists would prefer to see the complete removal of JROTC itself, such a goal is much more difficult to attain and requires different methods than those covered here. (See the "Strategy" section on page 3 for more on this, or contact Project YANO.)

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Compiled for the National Network Opposing the Militarization of Youth  
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**Introductory note: If you don't need background information or an explanation for the organizing approach emphasized in this Guide, skip the next few pages and go directly to the "Suggested Steps" section on page 5.**

## **BASIC BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- The Junior Reserve Officers' Training Program is an elective sponsored by high schools in partnership with the various branches of the U.S. military. It is taught by retired military officers. The approximate number of schools sponsoring JROTC is 3,400; the number of students enrolled is over 550,000. (RAND Report RR-1712, 2017)
- For a school to maintain a JROTC unit, the total number of students participating must be at least 100 or 10% of the student body.
- Marksmanship training is an optional component that can be chosen, with school permission, by the JROTC unit. According to the Civilian Marksmanship Program (see below), about 2/3rds of JROTC units – i.e., 2,000+ schools – include marksmanship training. At those schools, cadets individually choose to participate in the activity.
- The Civilian Marksmanship Program (CMP) is a federally chartered organization that, among other things, trains JROTC shooting instructors and helps organize shooting competitions for JROTC participants.
- The NRA sometimes supports JROTC marksmanship programs, but it is in the form of limited grants, usually for equipment. NRA support is relatively minor compared to the military and school district resources used to support JROTC.
- In most cases, JROTC marksmanship training is conducted with a shooting range at the school, which can take up space in classrooms, the cafeteria or gymnasium.
- The basic rifles and shooting range equipment are generally provided by the military, sometimes with supplemental support from local unit fundraising and other organizations (e.g., the NRA). Currently, the rifles used are CO<sub>2</sub>-powered guns that fire lead pellets. They can cause serious injury or death. Pellet particles also create a lead poisoning risk for students and staff.



## **STRATEGY: WHY BAN MARKSMANSHIP TRAINING AND NOT JROTC?**

There is a very practical reason for a campaign that focuses on eliminating marksmanship training rather than JROTC itself. Groups in many parts of the country have tried the latter and learned that the lobbying force that mobilizes in support of JROTC is so successful at intimidating school officials that it makes it virtually impossible to succeed, even in the most anti-war, politically progressive cities (e.g., San Francisco tried and failed twice). In cases where school districts have removed existing JROTC units, it has been done without public campaigns and for one of two reasons: either due to budget cuts or a unit's failure to meet the minimum enrollment requirement for the program.

Calling narrowly for the removal of rifle training and shooting ranges is an achievable goal because it focuses on one of the most egregious aspects of JROTC and does not directly threaten the existence of a JROTC unit. School board members might profess support for JROTC, but they also do not want to appear to be giving students mixed messages about guns and violence. It is difficult to defend the contradiction between having a zero-tolerance policy on weapons and teaching students to become skilled shooters, even when supporters of marksmanship training claim it is merely a "sport." If parents wish to teach their children gun safety or enroll them in shooting competitions, they are free to do so on their own. It doesn't have to be brought into the school environment where it can affect other students, like Nikolas Cruz, who learned his shooting skills through JROTC marksmanship training. He used these skills when he brought an assault rifle to Douglas High School on Feb. 14, 2018, and massacred 17 students and staff.

## **WHY FOCUS ON LOCAL ACTION VERSUS STATE OR FEDERAL ACTION?**

Experience has shown that any effort to curtail or diminish JROTC will inevitably provoke a well-organized pushback from JROTC cadets, their family members and program instructors. Other supporters of JROTC that can be, and have been, mobilized include military veteran organizations, the NRA, National Guard units and the Dept. of Defense (JROTC is critical to military recruiting). The pushback intensity level will grow according to the size of the perceived threat to JROTC. An effort to pass restrictions on a statewide or national level, for example, would likely provoke a large pro-JROTC mobilization, one with enough resources to intimidate legislators who are normally afraid to appear anti-military. Such a dynamic could even lead to legislative moves to strengthen the JROTC program, rather than diminish it.

The picture is significantly different at the local level. A locally focused campaign with the goal of banning JROTC marksmanship training has three important advantages: it does not pose an overtly existential threat to local JROTC units, and thus can reduce the intensity of pro-JROTC pushback; it makes it easier to mobilize sufficient numbers of people to be effective; and, because the governing board of a school district meets and does it work locally, its members are much more accessible and easier to influence than state or federal legislators. The San Diego experience described later in this Guide illustrates these points.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE VERSUS POLICY APPROACHES TO BANNING MARKSMANSHIP TRAINING**

### Administrative action:

In 1999, JROTC marksmanship training in Chicago Public Schools was banned by School Superintendent Paul Vallas. His action was partly a response to the Columbine School massacre that year. Vallas said, "We don't want to send a contradictory message in the school by on the one hand discouraging the use of firearms

and being tough on violence and then on the other having a marksmanship curriculum." While there was no community pressure forcing Vallas's hand, an organized campaign could conceivably lead to this type of administrative action in other places. It might be an especially effective approach in school districts where the governing board is not elected by voters.

One weakness of such an approach is that its success is dependent on the sympathy of an administrator who is serving at the discretion of the district's governing board. A different superintendent might eventually be hired who could restore the program without any public discussion and regardless of community sentiment.

#### School board action:

Governing boards have the ultimate power to establish policy on the presence of weapons in their schools. It is almost universally the case that schools take a zero-tolerance position when it comes to student possession of any object that can be used as a weapon. Even possession of an object that merely resembles a weapon (e.g., a toy knife or squirt gun) can lead to suspension of a student. A school board can, therefore, be asked to make its zero-tolerance policy consistent by banning marksmanship training.

Waging a campaign for a board policy can require more time and energy than pursuing administrative action by a superintendent. On the positive side, however, such a campaign can be used to educate the wider community, and if it succeeds, the new policy could not be reversed without a public hearing and majority vote of the board.

#### **AN EXAMPLE OF A SUCCESSFUL ORGANIZING CAMPAIGN**

San Diego County is generally very pro-military and prides itself as being home to one of the largest military complexes in the world. However, when it became known in the fall of 2007 that 11 of San Diego City's high schools housed JROTC shooting ranges, students, teachers, parents and community activists formed the Education Not Arms Coalition and approached the elected school board with the following set of demands:

1. Eliminate all JROTC shooting ranges and marksmanship training from the school district.
2. Ban the involuntary placement of students in JROTC classes.
3. Stop misleading students with claims that JROTC helps students meet college entrance requirements.

The last two demands were included because it was discovered that JROTC was using a combination of the shooting ranges, involuntary placement, and misleading statements about college eligibility to enroll enough students to meet the minimum number required in order to have JROTC.

The coalition's campaign began with small groups of people giving testimony during the open comment period at monthly school board meetings. Their goal was to convince board members to eventually make the issue an agenda item, which was the only way to have a full debate leading to action.

To build momentum for the campaign, students began circulating a petition at schools and in the community, and a forum was held in the African American community. Also, fliers were handed out on

campus by students and outside school entrances by non-students. One student created a Powerpoint presentation and was allowed to show it in several classes.

Soon, people began protesting with signs outside monthly school board meetings, while smaller signs were held up during testimony inside. As word of these activities spread, more students participated. Car pools were used to help get them to the meetings, and toward the end of the campaign an ally organization donated charter buses to help with transportation.

To support the coalition's 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> demands, interviews were conducted with students who had been involuntarily placed in JROTC. Several students at one school reported they had been persuaded to drop a college-prep course (AVID) in order to take JROTC. Some of these accounts were presented to the school board, leading to an administrative investigation. Subsequently, the superintendent circulated a memo directing that no student be placed in JROTC without first obtaining informed consent from the student and a parent or guardian. A consent form also had to clearly state that credit for military science courses would not count toward meeting college entrance requirements. Demands #2 and #3 were, therefore, granted administratively.

Eventually, the coalition met with a few individual board members and presented them with a draft resolution to ban all shooting ranges and marksmanship training (see materials section). In February 2009, fourteen months after the campaign began, the resolution was on the board meeting agenda as an action item. Before the meeting, over 100 students, parents, and community members rallied outside. Inside, the auditorium was filled to capacity and dozens of people spoke either for or against the resolution. At the end, the board voted 3-2 to approve the resolution. Marksmanship training was banned and all eleven shooting ranges were removed from San Diego City high schools by the end of the year.



**Postscript:** As a result of the changes in school district policy and the discussions generated by the campaign, student enrollment in Marine Corps JROTC at one San Diego school fell so low that the unit was eventually forced to leave. It demonstrated the ripple effect that such a campaign can have beyond the narrow issue of marksmanship training.

*School board meeting, February 10, 2009: Students opposing marksmanship training stand face-to-face with JROTC cadets during the Pledge of Allegiance. Photo: Project YANO*

## SUGGESTED STEPS FOR A CAMPAIGN

1. Confirm the existence of marksmanship training in your local school district:

Look at all the district's high school web sites for references to JROTC or "military science." If there is a JROTC page, look for a list of activities. Look for photos of shooting ranges and/or rifle teams, not just

cadets drilling with what may be non-firing “replica” weapons. Search the site for terms like “marksmanship” and “rifle team.” Look at school calendars for shooting matches or competitions. If a school has JROTC but you see no evidence of marksmanship training, try calling the school and asking if it is offered. If it is, ask where students are able to practice. Some JROTC units use space for rifle practice off-campus, like at a Boys Club or shooting club’s facility.

If you confirm the existence of rifle or marksmanship training, move on to the following steps.

2. Research district policies:

Look for any policy relating to weapons at school. Search for a zero-tolerance policy. Search for any policies, administrative procedures or protocols that relate to JROTC or marksmanship training.

3. Using what you’ve learned, begin alerting others:

Reach out to educator, student and community groups that would be concerned if they found out there were shooting ranges and/or weapons training in local schools. Identify people or groups that are working on issues like youth violence and gun regulation. Organize a meeting with representatives of various groups to discuss what to do about it. Invite them to join a coalition to organize a campaign. Arrange for a forum in the community to educate more people, especially parents.

4. Carefully research school board meeting dates and the requirements for giving public comment on non-agenda items. Recruit 3-4 speakers to attend and present the case for a regular agenda item on the issue. Board members do not have to respond to non-agenda testimony, and it might require presentations over several months before the board will agree to make it an official agenda item.

5. As more people are mobilized to attend board meetings, plan to hold up signs both inside the meeting room and outside the building. Always make it clear that your goal is to remove weapons training from schools, not JROTC in general (doing so would produce stronger JROTC pushback and alienate school board members who might otherwise support you).

6. Draft a petition to circulate. Keep the focus narrow. Plan to present the signed petitions at a public school board meeting.

7. If school board elections are being held, attend forums for candidates and ask for their position on weapons training and shooting ranges in schools.

8. Produce a simple flier that can be distributed by students inside schools and non-students outside. Make it bilingual, if possible.

9. Draft a school board resolution to eliminate any shooting ranges and ban all marksmanship training. Identify potential supporters on the school board and have small delegations meet with them. Ask for their advice on the resolution and whether they would be willing to introduce it.

10. Assuming the school board eventually agrees to put the issue on their agenda, plan to have many speakers to counter the likely turnout of JROTC supporters. Make sure there are students, parents and people representing communities that are especially victimized by gun violence.

11. If the resolution passes, ask for a follow-up inspection to confirm that any spaces that were used for rifle training have been converted for other educational uses.

## **TIPS**

1. Look for news reports of any shootings that have involved district students.
2. Keep focusing on the school district's zero-tolerance policy and the "mixed message" created when schools teach the acceptability of gun use through marksmanship training.
3. When rifle shooting is defended as merely a sport, plan to point out that it is different in the sense that the equipment used in school sports—e.g., balls, bats and tennis rackets—are not designed for the purpose of killing.
4. Cultivate student involvement and leadership in the campaign by reaching out to student clubs (e.g., social justice, environmental, LGBTQ, African American, Chicano, etc.). Club members can often host coalition organizing meetings when classes are over at their school.
5. Educate students about their legal rights when it comes to exercising free speech at school. See <https://www.aclu.org/know-your-rights>
6. Ask students to share their observations of JROTC activities at school. Is marksmanship training being used to get students to enroll in JROTC? Are students being involuntarily placed in JROTC? Are other classes being sacrificed to make room for JROTC classes or shooting ranges? Are these factors serving to divert students from low-income neighborhoods away from higher education and into the military instead? If these issues exist, exposing them can motivate students and parents to get involved in the campaign.
7. If NRA support for marksmanship training is going to be made an issue, do not overemphasize it. Schools may offer to reject the relatively minor NRA support as a "compromise," but then continue with rifle training.
8. When marksmanship training and shooting ranges are banned, it is important to look for a drop in JROTC enrollment over the following two years. Submit a records request for JROTC enrollment numbers at the end of each school year. If enrollment drops below the minimum of 100 or 10% of the student body during any year, the minimum enrollment must be reached at the beginning of the following year or federal law requires the JROTC unit to be discontinued. To learn how this led to removal of a JROTC unit at one school, see: [http://comdsd.org/article\\_archive/SDstudentsGivePinkSlipHSmilitaryProgram.html](http://comdsd.org/article_archive/SDstudentsGivePinkSlipHSmilitaryProgram.html)

## **RESOURCES**

National Network Opposing the Militarization of Youth. General information on military recruiting and militarism in schools, including JROTC, [www.nnomy.org](http://www.nnomy.org)

Education Not Arms Coalition > Campaign to challenge JROTC weapons training in San Diego City high schools. Photos, media, and other documents:

[http://projectyano.org/educationnotarms/JROTC\\_Campaign\\_index.htm](http://projectyano.org/educationnotarms/JROTC_Campaign_index.htm)

FB Page: [www.facebook.com/educationnotarms](https://www.facebook.com/educationnotarms)

Video of San Diego school board hearing and vote to end marksmanship training (approx. 90 minutes) 02/10/2009. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pMdfKlJvFqA&feature=youtu.be&t=2h51m19s>

Victory! Rifle Ranges Removed from 11 Schools. [http://comdsd.org/article\\_archive/Victory.html](http://comdsd.org/article_archive/Victory.html)

Inadequate High School Courses Pushes Students into the Military.  
[http://comdsd.org/article\\_archive/InadequateHScourses8-09.html](http://comdsd.org/article_archive/InadequateHScourses8-09.html)

### **SAMPLE ORGANIZING DOCUMENTS**

The following pages contain various documents that were used to educate and mobilize for the Education Not Arms Coalition's campaign to remove marksmanship training and shooting ranges from San Diego schools. More materials, including news coverage, can be found at [http://projectyano.org/educationnotarms/JROTC\\_Campaign\\_index.htm](http://projectyano.org/educationnotarms/JROTC_Campaign_index.htm).

#### Order of enclosed documents:

1. Chicago Schools End Riflery Program, Associated Press, 11/09/1999.
2. SDUSD Zero Tolerance Policy, fall 2005.
3. Shooting Range Meeting, 12/06/07.
4. Forum Malcolm X Library, 01/23/08.
5. Rebuttal to comments by district representatives (4 pages), 05/27/08.
6. Bilingual flier: Were you placed in JROTC without wanting or asking for it (2 pages)?, 05/30/08.
7. Bilingual flier: Why are students being taught to shoot weapons (2 pages)?
8. News report: Boy, 14, shot in face with pellet rifle, 07/22/08.
9. Supt. Grier memorandum, 09/28/08.
10. Bilingual flier: Stop Weapons Training in Our Schools, 02/10/09.
11. No Rifles graphic.
12. Bilingual petition (2 pages).
13. School board resolution, 02/10/2009.



Associated Press Online

November 09, 1999; Tuesday 09:24 Eastern Time

## Chicago Schools End Riflery Program

**SECTION:** Domestic, non-Washington, general news item

**LENGTH:** 331 words

**DATELINE:** CHICAGO

In the wake of recent school shootings, the Chicago public school system will drop riflery training and competition offered as part of the Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps program.

"We don't want to send a contradictory message in the school by on the one hand discouraging the use of firearms and being tough on violence and then on the other having a marksmanship curriculum," public schools chief Paul Vallas said Monday, noting recent shootings at Colorado's Columbine High School and others.

Abolition of the training is effective immediately, he said.

School officials and senior JROTC leaders recently have discussed banning rifle training, and Vallas had vetoed a rifle range in the basement of the newly opened Bronzeville Military Academy.

His decision Monday followed a report last week in the Chicago Tribune that detailed how weaponry instruction continues at many Illinois high schools even as the nation struggles with deadly gunfire in schools.

Chicago has about 9,000 students enrolled in JROTC programs at 41 of the city's public high schools, making it one of the largest such programs in the country. Riflery is taught at 33 of the campuses, where students usually take the shooting instruction class for one semester during their junior year. About 1,000 currently are enrolled.

The training does not use real rifles or ammunition, relying instead on high-performance air rifles to simulate actual rifle-range experiences.

The decision to drop riflery was not popular among the JROTC students.

Miriam Ortiz, 16, a cadet staff sergeant at Hubbard High School, told the Chicago Tribune that she has been practicing her marksmanship daily since her freshman year and is proud of the progress she has made.

"You get a feeling in the pit of your stomach," Ortiz said. "I really got upset when they told us they were going to cancel it. It's not fair to take away something that kids love and that has no harm to it."

**LOAD-DATE:** November 09, 1999

**LANGUAGE:** ENGLISH

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## Zero Tolerance Policy

Safe and secure schools are essential to providing a learning environment in which all students can become literate, thinking, and contributing members of a multicultural society. A safe environment is essential to staff and students and to support good attitudes toward teaching and learning.

The Board of Education has adopted a Zero Tolerance Policy on weapons, violent acts, and repeated fighting. This policy applies to middle level, junior high, and high school students. Secondary students who violate this policy will be suspended and recommended for expulsion. Students are subject to arrest if having or using the weapon violates the law.

**Weapons, violent acts, and fighting:** Weapons include guns, knives, BB guns, replica guns, explosives, fireworks, or any object that is used in a threatening or harmful manner. Carrying any kind of knife (for example, a pocket knife or butter knife for use at lunch) will not be allowed. An object used in a threatening manner will be considered a weapon even if its normal use is not as a weapon.

The policy also means that students who are involved in repeated fights that cause physical injury will be recommended for expulsion.

**Alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs:** Our district prohibits alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use on all school campuses, at sponsored events, and going to and from school or school sponsored events. Students found to be selling or furnishing controlled/prohibited substances or in possession of an amount of a controlled/prohibited substance determined to be for more than personal use, will be recommended for expulsion on the first offense, except for tobacco offenses. If your child is found in possession of tobacco, he/she will be recommended for expulsion on the fourth offense.

School district personnel will also counsel disciplined students by way of early intervention. Counseling may include:

- Individual instruction or tutoring
- Conferences with parents
- Referral to a community agency
- Regularly scheduled appointments with the school counselor

If a student violates an intervention contract, the student will be suspended. If the student violates the contract a second time, the student may be reassigned to another program or school.

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Contact Information: Placement and Appeal: (619) 725-5660  
Media inquiries: (619) 725-5578

[www.sandi.net](http://www.sandi.net)  
revised 09/20/05

Serving nearly 136,000 students, San Diego City Schools is the second largest school district in California, with 202 educational facilities and more than 14,500 full-time equivalent positions (representing more than 15,800 employees). SDCS is improving student achievement by focusing on challenging instruction in reading, writing and mathematics in pre-kindergarten through Grade 12. The district is committed to supporting schools and enhancing the classroom learning environment through modernized facilities and resources and through parent, teacher and community involvement in the educational process.

# DID YOU KNOW THAT LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL IS BUILDING A SHOOTING RANGE ON CAMPUS?

## Community Meeting For Concerned Folks

Are our children being trained to shoot weapons in violation of the SDUSD Zero Tolerance policy?

Come and share your concerns about how this can affect our children, parents and community.

When: Thursday Dec. 6, '07  
6:30PM

Where: Jacobs Center Bldg.  
5160 Federal Blvd., San Diego, CA 92105



For more information contact the UJIMA Institute for Civic Responsibility (619) 587-0789

# SAVE THE DATE!

UJIMA Institute for Civic Responsibility  
*hosts community issues forum*

“Why is the San Diego Unified School District teaching our children how to shoot weapons in spite of the Zero Tolerance policy?”

*What would Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. say?  
... what would he do?*



**Date:** Wednesday, January 23, 2008

**Time:** 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

**Where:** Malcolm X Library (Multipurpose Room)  
5148 Market Street  
San Diego, CA 92114

Contact: Mshinda Nyofu, Executive Director at [info@ujimainstitute.com](mailto:info@ujimainstitute.com)

# Education Not Arms Coalition

c/o UJIMA Institute for Civic Responsibility  
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## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Board of Education, San Diego Unified School District

**From:** Education Not Arms Coalition, contact Rick Jahnkow, 760-634-3604

**Date:** May 27, 2008

**Subject:** JROTC

In the past few months, parents, students, educators and other members of our coalition have presented the board of education with a petition regarding the district's JROTC program. The petition, signed thus far by 2,000 individuals, asks the board to issue policy statements that would address specific areas of concern (i.e., weapons training, involuntary enrollment and misrepresentation of the program's academic relevance).

The purpose of this memo is to clarify some important facts and points that we believe have been ignored or distorted by district representatives in the responses we have heard to our petition. To better understand the issues we have raised, we ask you to consider our answers to the following claims that have been made:

***Claim:** The action that has been requested of the board is termination of the entire JROTC program.*

**Response:** Neither the petition nor our coalition has called for any such thing. The policy statements we have asked the board to make, if approved, are designed only to stop certain practices of the program that are inappropriate or in violation of California Education Code 51750. Eliminating these practices would not prevent the program from continuing.

***Claim:** JROTC is voluntary because district policy requires parents to sign consent forms.*

**Response:** Apparently, requiring parental consent for participation in JROTC is an accepted premise in the district; however, we have found no language in any of the district's administrative procedures or the policy manual that expressly requires parental permission for a student to enroll in JROTC. If we all agree that such a policy is appropriate, then the board should make it real and adopt it officially.

A consent form for parents does exist but is not always collected, as demonstrated by a sample inspection conducted at just one school by the interim JROTC program coordinator: he reported half a dozen forms missing from the school. Even when consent forms are obtained, the forms are handed out after students are already in JROTC, and therefore they do not solve the problem of students being illegally placed in the class without requesting it. Furthermore, there is not true consent if it is granted based on a

fraudulent representation of the academic benefits of the program. For the district to be in compliance with the state education code, consent must be granted prior to a student being assigned to the class, and it must be fully informed consent.

An additional issue has arisen over the requirement that all incoming 9th graders attend a beginning JROTC class as a condition for enrolling at the LEADS school in the San Diego HS complex. The state education code is very clear when it says that if a school chooses to have JROTC, it cannot require students to take it, thus it appears that a mass violation of law is occurring at LEADS.

***Claim:** If informed consent of the student and parent were required before students are placed in JROTC, the same standard would have to be applied to all other electives.*

**Response:** This is not the case. The state of California took action to specifically prohibit involuntary JROTC enrollment. There may be a few other individual educational programs with similar restrictions (e.g., sex education), but there is no requirement that schools apply such a standard to all electives. In this case, requiring advance consent as a policy would be a way to solve the difficulty the district has had complying with Education Code 51750.

***Claim:** No students have been identified who were placed in JROTC involuntarily.*

**Response:** With only a limited effort, our coalition has interviewed a dozen students who have indicated JROTC was placed on their schedules without their requesting it. They attend Mission Bay HS, Kearny HS, and LEADS. So far, two of these students have identified themselves publicly at school board meetings. In addition, the enrollment policy at LEADS would appear to place the entire student body into the category of students who have been required to take JROTC for at least a semester.

***Claim:** The weapons training component of JROTC is justifiable because it has existed in the district since 1919.*

**Response:** This historical fact lacks relevance today. Many other things also existed in 1919 that we now do not regard as appropriate (e.g., racial segregation, "separate but equal" education and the lack of voting rights for women). Our society and the local community have changed a great deal since high school weapons training was introduced, including, on the negative side, the increased level of violence. In the context of such changes, it is logical and reasonable to reconsider weapons training in schools today.

***Claim:** The weapons training component of JROTC is justifiable because it is safely taught, does not violate the zero-tolerance policy, is just another sport and is voluntary.*

**Response:** The safety record of JROTC rifle ranges is not the issue. It is the inconsistency of teaching students on the one hand that they should leave guns alone and resolve their differences nonviolently, while at the same time popularizing guns and teaching them to shoot with school system approval. Emphasizing gun safety cannot reverse the negative effects of such a mixed message. Whether the zero-tolerance policy technically allows official approval for weapons training or not, the spirit of zero-tolerance is still being

violated, which cannot be rationalized by arguing that weapons training is voluntary or considered a sport outside of school.

***Claim:** The air rifles are not "guns" or "weapons."*

**Response:** Some individuals have sought to avoid discussing the real implications of weapons training in our schools by debating the definition of "gun" or "weapon," and making a distinction between guns that propel lead ammunition with compressed gas versus gun powder. The irrelevance of such a distinction is recognized by the zero-weapons policy, which treats all guns, the same. "Rifles" are, in fact, guns, and even air rifles shoot lead ammunition that can kill or injure living things. The Army regulations governing the JROTC program (CCR-145-2) refer to the air rifle used in the program as a "weapon," as do the MCJROTC instructor and cadet handbooks.

***Claim:** Marine Corps JROTC, specifically at Mission Bay HS, requires weapons training.*

**Response:** The MCJROTC Cadet Handbook acknowledges that weapons training is not always part of the course: "Some Marine Corps JROTC units are not able to have marksmanship as a part of their curriculum" (page 17, "Marksmanship"). The Army and Navy are more explicit in stating that weapons training is optional for the program, and the Air Force totally prohibits it. It is entirely appropriate for the district to assert its policy authority on this aspect of the program.

***Claim:** The interim coordinator of the JROTC program has suggested that students have been coached and manipulated in their statements to the board.*

**Response:** Students, like school board members, have had to educate themselves about the issue. They have organized their own forums and given presentations of information they have learned from their research. In some cases, they have shared with you and the public their own direct experiences with the JROTC program. If this raises suspicions of manipulation and coaching, then it should be noted that board members and administrators have sometimes repeated arguments that come verbatim from documents prepared by JROTC staff members.

***Claim:** JROTC is just another choice for students.*

**Response:** We are not seeking to eliminate JROTC as a choice for students. However, schools make decisions limiting educational content all the time, especially when some choices are potentially harmful to the students and community. The only choice we are seeking to limit is the harmful choice of schools to break the law by placing students into JROTC involuntarily, the harmful choice made by some school staff to mislead students about the academic value of the program, and the harmful choice of conducting weapons training in community schools.

***Claim:** JROTC is not causing students to lose other course choices, according to one principal.*

**Response:** School sites have finite resources for the number of classes they can support. It is only logical that if resources are devoted to hiring JROTC instructors, they are not available to provide other choices to students. JROTC requires two instructors to be hired

for up to 150 students, which is twice the staffing allocation required for other classroom subjects, and at least triple the allocation required for P.E. classes. And when firing ranges are factored in, there is less classroom space for other courses.

At Mission Bay HS, for example, where MCJROTC was introduced in the fall, classes that were cancelled over the past year include two CAHSEE prep classes and AVID classes for 9th graders. Five Spanish teachers were cut to 3-1/2, and 3 AVID teachers were cut to 1-1/2. P.E. classes are overcrowded, and according to a first-hand witness at MBHS, some students are being advised by counseling staff that their only choice is taking JROTC instead.

***Claim:** JROTC provides elective credit and helps students get into college.*

**Response:** We have never disputed that students receive elective credit that can be applied toward high school graduation. However, many students have given first-hand accounts of being told by school staff that the class would help them get into college. At Lincoln HS, for example, six students switched from AVID to JROTC this school year based, in part, on such a claim made by a JROTC recruiter who visited their P.E. classes. This amounts to fraudulent recruiting, since JROTC credits are not counted toward meeting academic requirements for college and university acceptance, and grades for the class are deleted from the GPA calculation used to establish financial aid eligibility.

***Claim:** JROTC helps students qualify for ROTC scholarship money and may help them get military academy appointments.*

**Response:** The JROTC interim program coordinator has made this point to demonstrate that JROTC does not make empty promises on college. However, financial aid does not help a student get into college; acceptance necessitates meeting academic requirements first, to which JROTC does not contribute. Furthermore, the scholarships and academy appointments that JROTC facilitates, for the most part, are only available to students who enter the military.

***Claim:** JROTC is not military recruitment.*

**Response:** The absurdity of this claim is revealed by the fact that the college benefits offered to cadets (i.e., ROTC scholarship money and possible military academy appointments) require them to join the military. Students are also promised that if they join JROTC for at least three years, they can later enlist at an advanced pay grade. It is such an effective recruitment tool that one Dept. of Defense official told Congress that the proportion of JROTC graduates who enlist is "roughly five times greater than the proportion of non-JROTC students" (Under Secretary of Defense Rudy de Leon, March 2000).



## Were you placed in JROTC without wanting or asking for it?

- Some Principals have said, "Nobody is put in JROTC without requesting it."
- *If you are in JROTC, did one of your parents or guardian sign a consent form? If so, did they sign it before you were put in the class?*
- Were you told that there was no more space in PE and that you had to choose JROTC instead?
- *Were you told that JROTC will help you get into college?*

**CONTACT US!!!** We are the Education Not Arms Coalition and we are collecting information about students who want P.E. and/or academic classes but are not being given the opportunity to take them.

Email [ujimainstitute@yahoo.com](mailto:ujimainstitute@yahoo.com), or phone  
Project YANO, 760-634-3604



San Diego Coalition for Peace and Justice, May 2008.  
Distribution inside schools by students is legal under Calif.  
Education Code Sec. 48907/48950

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## ¿Te dieron la clase de JROTC sin quererla o sin pedirla?

- Algunos directores han dicho: "Sólo quienes pidieron la clase de JROTC están en ella"
- *Si estás en JROTC, ¿tus padres firmaron el permiso? Y si lo hicieron, ¿lo firmaron antes de que entraras a la clase?*
- ¿Te dijeron que ya no había lugar en Educación Física y que sólo quedaba JROTC?
- *¿Te dijeron que JROTC te va a ayudar a entrar a la universidad?*

¡¡¡Contáctanos!!! Somos la **Coalición educación sí, armas no** y estamos consiguiendo información sobre los estudiantes que quieren estar en Educación Física o en otras clases académicas pero que no se les dio la oportunidad de tomarlas.

Correo electrónico [ujimainstitute@yahoo.com](mailto:ujimainstitute@yahoo.com) o llama por teléfono a Project YANO (760) 634-3604



Coalición por la Paz y la Justicia de San Diego, Mayo de 2008. La distribución dentro de las escuelas por los estudiantes es legal bajo El Código de Educación de California 48907/48950.

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# WHY ARE STUDENTS BEING TAUGHT TO SHOOT WEAPONS IN SAN DIEGO HIGH SCHOOLS?



Madison High School rifle range

**Why are students being misled about military science courses and placed in them without informed consent?**

**Why are high schools tracking students into the military instead of offering adequate educational alternatives?**

## Facts:

- Military science courses (i.e., JROTC) are now taught in most San Diego City high schools. They are not required to include weapons training, yet many of them have high-powered pellet gun ranges on school grounds. This is despite the school district's zero-tolerance weapons policy and community efforts to teach young people NOT to use weapons.
- Some students have been placed in military science courses without their or their parents' informed consent, violating Calif. Education Code sec. 51750.
- To get the minimum number of students required for JROTC, some school staff are incorrectly telling students that military science will help them qualify for college. Six students at one local high school, for example, were persuaded to drop AVID classes in order to take JROTC. In fact, JROTC credits do NOT count toward meeting admission requirements for Calif. colleges and universities, while AVID is specifically designed to help get underrepresented students into college.
- In some schools, students are being denied adequate academic electives—like advance placement, honors, AVID and A-G courses—while being steered toward JROTC. This amounts to tracking students into the military since, despite denials by JROTC, the Dept. of Defense has testified to Congress that it is a highly effective military recruiting program.

We are a coalition of parents, students, teachers and community activists who want San Diego Unified to eliminate weapons training from its military science courses, just as Chicago schools did several years ago. We also want the district to comply with state law and stop placing students in military science courses without consent from students and parents. We want students and parents to be correctly informed that JROTC does not satisfy any college admission requirements, and we want students to have adequate alternatives that actually can help them get into college.

For more information, contact **Education Not Arms Coalition**, c/o UJIMA Institute for Civic Responsibility, P.O. Box 12204, La Jolla, CA 92039-2204; [www.projectyano.org/educationnotarms](http://www.projectyano.org/educationnotarms); email [ujimainstitute@yahoo.com](mailto:ujimainstitute@yahoo.com)

# ¿POR QUÉ A LOS ESTUDIANTES DE SAN DIEGO SE LES ESTÁ ENSEÑANDO A DISPARAR ARMAS DE FUEGO?



Madison High School campo de tiro.

**¿Por qué los estudiantes son engañados sobre los cursos militares e inscritos en ellos sin ser propiamente informados y sin su consentimiento?**

**¿Por qué las escuelas preparatorias están empujando a los estudiantes hacia clases de entrenamiento militar en lugar de ofrecerles alternativas académicas correctas?**

## Hechos verificados:

- Los cursos militares (por ejemplo, JROTC) existen en la mayoría de las preparatorias de la ciudad de San Diego. Las escuelas no tienen la obligación de ofrecer entrenamiento en el uso de armas, pero a pesar de eso, en muchas de ellas hay campos de tiro. Todo esto existe a pesar de la política del distrito de cero tolerancia sobre armas y los esfuerzos de la comunidad de enseñarle a los jóvenes a no usar armas.
- A algunos estudiantes les han asignado clases de entrenamiento militar sin el consentimiento informado de los padres, en violación del Código de Educación de California 51750.
- Para lograr el mínimo de estudiantes que se requiere para mantener las clases de JROTC, parte del personal de las escuelas, le dice incorrectamente a los estudiantes, que esa clase les va a ayudar a ingresar a la universidad. En una escuela, seis estudiantes fueron persuadidos a dejar la clase de AVID para inscribirlos en la clase de JROTC. Es un hecho que los créditos de JROTC no cuentan como requisito de admisión en el sistema universitario del estado de California mientras que AVID ha sido específicamente creado para que los estudiantes más necesitados entren a la universidad.
- En algunas escuelas, a los estudiantes se les ha negado el acceso a clase optativas académicas como AP, Honores, AVID y cursos de A–G al mismo tiempo que se les ha desviado hacia la clase de JROTC. Esto es llevar a los estudiantes hacia cursos predeterminados y a pesar de la negativa de JROTC, el Departamento de Estado ha testificado ante el Congreso que este es un programa de reclutamiento altamente efectivo.

Nosotros somos una coalición de padres y madres de familia, estudiantes, maestros y activistas de la comunidad que desean que el Distrito de San Diego elimine el entrenamiento con armas de fuego de sus cursos militares, en la forma en que ya se hizo en las escuelas de Chicago hace algunos años. También queremos que el distrito respete la ley estatal y deje de poner estudiantes en clases militares sin el consentimiento de padres y estudiantes. Queremos que los padres de familia sean correctamente informados de que JROTC no satisface requisitos de admisión universitarios, y queremos que los estudiantes tengan alternativas adecuadas que realmente les ayuden a acceder a la universidad.

Si desea obtener más información, contacte **Education Not Arms Coalition**, c/o UJIMA Institute for Civic Responsibility, P.O. Box 12204, La Jolla, CA 92039-2204. Correo electrónico: [ujimainstitute@yahoo.com](mailto:ujimainstitute@yahoo.com)

## Boy, 14, shot in face with pellet rifle during sleepover

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**By Mark Arner**  
STAFF WRITER

**July 22, 2008**

SANTEE – A 14-year-old boy was severely wounded during a sleepover in Santee early yesterday when another boy shot him in the face with an air-powered pellet rifle.

Anthony Martinez suffered paralysis on the left side of his body, but doctors expected him to survive, his mother said yesterday. They anticipate he will need physical therapy to regain full use of his body, she said.

The pellet pierced his left eye and lodged at the top of his spinal column, said his mother, Jolene Martinez, 35.

Anthony's sister Clarissa, 17, said doctors told the family that it's too early to tell how his eyesight will be affected.

The shooting was reported at 4 a.m. at a home on Dove Hill Drive, near Prospect Avenue, said sheriff's Lt. Mike Munsey. Investigators have not decided whether to charge anyone, he said.

"The juvenile (victim) was at a home . . . with several friends, shooting at empty milk jugs," sheriff's Sgt. Damon Blankenbaker said in a news release. "Based on initial statements, one of the juveniles was holding a pellet rifle when it accidentally went off, striking the victim."

Others in the house had gone to bed, and no one else saw the shooting, Jolene Martinez said.

She said her son told her: "All I saw was the barrel, heard a big boom and fell to the ground. The blood was all over."

The boy was being treated at Rady Children's Hospital in San Diego.

"I hold the adults (at the home) as responsible as the kid," said Anthony's grandfather, Loyal Summers, 74.

The residents were not at the house when a reporter went there yesterday.

Anthony graduated from Chet Harritt School in Santee and is preparing for his freshman year at West Hills High School. His mother said he is enrolled in the school's ROTC program.

*Staff writer Leonel Sanchez contributed to this report.*

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■ Mark Arner: (619) 542-4556; [mark.arner@uniontrib.com](mailto:mark.arner@uniontrib.com)

[»Next Story»](#)

As you know, this past year the Board of Education has been approached by parent and students questioning the district's practices when scheduling students into Military Science Courses. We are asking that you take the steps prior to the beginning of the 2008-2009 school year.

1. Make sure that no student is placed in a Military Science class without first obtaining fully informed consent from the student **AND** a parent or guardian of the student (in accordance with California Education Code sec. 51750).
2. Make sure that before a student enrolls in a Military Science class, they **AND** their parents or guardian are informed that the course is a nonacademic elective and does not provide credit that counts toward meeting general college or university admission requirements in the state of California.

If we do not have a Military Science registration permission form that outlines these guidelines, I would suggest that a committee of high school principals work with Nellie Meyer to develop such a document and require both students **AND** parents to sign it prior to registering them for Military Science class.

In addition, SDUSD has been notified by the California State Department of Education that in the future Military Science, band, cheerleading, flag, etc. classes can no longer count as substitute credit for a physical education graduation requirement.

Thank you for your assistance and please call me should you have questions. ---Terry Grier

Terry B. Grier, Ed.D.  
Superintendent  
San Diego Unified School District  
4100 Normal Street  
San Diego, CA 92103  
619-725-5506 (O)  
619-291-7182 (F)

# STOP WEAPONS TRAINING IN OUR SCHOOLS!!

We must let our Educational Board Members know that **NO** guns in schools means **NO** guns in schools!

**Lets demand that our Board Members take out these shooting ranges from our school campuses!**

*(Visit website on how to write to them or Fax them.)*

Join us on:

## **FEBRUARY 10th**

### **@ 4:00 pm**

**Students will lead a massive protest!!**

**SCHOOL BOARD MEETING**

**Education Center, 4100  
Normal St., San Diego**

**We must end the militarization of the youth!!**



**Students, parents and teachers  
NEED YOUR SUPPORT!**

For more Information:

educationnotarms@gmail.com  
or  
<http://www.projectyano.org/educationnotarms/>

# ¡¡¡ALTO AL ENTRENAMIENTO DE ARMAS EN NUESTRAS ESCUELAS!!!

¡Debemos decirle a nuestra Junta Educativa que **NO** tener armas en nuestras escuelas significa **NO** tener armas!

**¡Exijamos que nuestra Junta Educativa cierre los campos de tiro de nuestras escuelas!**

*(Vaya a nuestro sitio en la red para escribirles o mandaries un fax)*

Apóyenos el:

## **10 DE FEBRERO**

### **@ 4:00 pm**

**¡¡Los estudiantes encabezarán una protesta masiva!!**

**JUNTA DE LA MESA EDUCATIVA**

**Education Center, 4100  
Normal Street, San Diego, CA**

**¡Debemos terminar con la militarización de nuestros jóvenes!**



**¡Estudiantes, padres y maestros  
NECESITAN SU APOYO!**

Si desea obtener más información vaya a:

educationnotarms@gmail.com  
ó  
<http://www.projectyano.org/educationnotarms/>





# Petition to End Weapons Training and Require Informed Consent for Military Science Courses

We the undersigned parents, students and other residents of the San Diego Unified School District are concerned about the problems of community and school violence, the presence of weapons training programs in several district schools, and the misleading way that many students are being tracked into military training programs rather than academic alternatives. We, therefore, ask the district to take the following actions:

- 1. Remove all rifle ranges and marksmanship training programs from district schools.**
- 2. Adopt a policy clearly stating that no student in the district shall be placed in a military science class without first obtaining fully informed consent from the student and a parent or guardian of the student (in accordance with Calif. Education Code sec. 51750).**
- 3. Require that before students enroll in a military science class, they and their parents (or guardians) must be informed that the course is a nonacademic elective and does not provide credit that counts toward meeting general college or university admission requirements in the state of California.**

---

1. _____ <b>Print Name</b> Check if either applies: I am a _____ parent _____ student	_____ <b>Signature</b> School Name: _____
2. _____ <b>Print Name</b> Check if either applies: I am a _____ parent _____ student	_____ <b>Signature</b> School Name: _____
3. _____ <b>Print Name</b> Check if either applies: I am a _____ parent _____ student	_____ <b>Signature</b> School Name: _____
4. _____ <b>Print Name</b> Check if either applies: I am a _____ parent _____ student	_____ <b>Signature</b> School Name: _____
5. _____ <b>Print Name</b> Check if either applies: I am a _____ parent _____ student	_____ <b>Signature</b> School Name: _____
6. _____ <b>Print Name</b> Check if either applies: I am a _____ parent _____ student	_____ <b>Signature</b> School Name: _____
7. _____ <b>Print Name</b> Check if either applies: I am a _____ parent _____ student	_____ <b>Signature</b> School Name: _____
8. _____ <b>Print Name</b> Check if either applies: I am a _____ parent _____ student	_____ <b>Signature</b> School Name: _____

# Petición para Eliminar el Entrenamiento en el Uso de Armas de Fuego y por el Consentimiento, Debidamente Informado, para la Inscripción en Cursos Militares

Los abajo firmantes, padres y madres de familia, estudiantes y otros residentes del Distrito Escolar Unificado de San Diego, estamos preocupados por la violencia en nuestras escuelas y comunidades, la existencia de programas de entrenamiento con armas de fuego en varias escuelas del distrito, y la forma engañosa en que muchos estudiantes han sido dirigidos hacia los programas de entrenamiento militar en lugar de ofrecerles alternativas académicas. Nosotros, por lo tanto, le pedimos al distrito que tome las siguientes acciones:

- 1. Eliminar todos los campos de tiro y programas de entrenamiento de tiro al blanco de las escuelas del distrito.**
- 2. Adoptar una política que establezca claramente que ningún estudiante en el distrito debe ser inscrito en una clase de entrenamiento militar, sin el permiso previo del estudiante y el padre, la madre o el tutor del estudiante (de acuerdo con el Código de Educación de California sección 51750, que prohíbe la inscripción involuntaria en las clases de entrenamiento militar).**
- 3. Requerir que, antes de ser inscrito en una clase de entrenamiento militar, el estudiante y sus padres (o tutores) deben ser informados que la clase de entrenamiento militar es un curso optativo y no académico, y que no cuenta como requisito de admisión en el sistema universitario del estado de California.**

=====

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
**Nombre en letra de molde** **Firma**  
Marque lo aplicable: Soy un/una \_\_\_\_\_ padre/madre \_\_\_\_\_ estudiante Nombre de escuela: \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
**Nombre en letra de molde** **Firma**  
Marque lo aplicable: Soy un/una \_\_\_\_\_ padre/madre \_\_\_\_\_ estudiante Nombre de escuela: \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
**Nombre en letra de molde** **Firma**  
Marque lo aplicable: Soy un/una \_\_\_\_\_ padre/madre \_\_\_\_\_ estudiante Nombre de escuela: \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_  
**Nombre en letra de molde** **Firma**  
Marque lo aplicable: Soy un/una \_\_\_\_\_ padre/madre \_\_\_\_\_ estudiante Nombre de escuela: \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_  
**Nombre en letra de molde** **Firma**  
Marque lo aplicable: Soy un/una \_\_\_\_\_ padre/madre \_\_\_\_\_ estudiante Nombre de escuela: \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_  
**Nombre en letra de molde** **Firma**  
Marque lo aplicable: Soy un/una \_\_\_\_\_ padre/madre \_\_\_\_\_ estudiante Nombre de escuela: \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_  
**Nombre en letra de molde** **Firma**  
Marque lo aplicable: Soy un/una \_\_\_\_\_ padre/madre \_\_\_\_\_ estudiante Nombre de escuela: \_\_\_\_\_

BOARD OF EDUCATION  
SAN DIEGO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

Resolution in the Matter of           )  
Eliminating Marksmanship Training    )  
From San Diego Unified School        )  
District Schools                                 )

WHEREAS, the San Diego Unified School District has a zero-tolerance policy on weapons in schools and seeks, as one of its primary goals, to teach students to resolve conflicts without resorting to violence; and

WHEREAS, the District cannot risk sending a mixed message to students when some of their lives have been recently taken by gun violence;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that any existing school district property used for shooting ranges shall be immediately closed for that purpose and converted for other educational uses by the beginning of the next regular school year.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that marksmanship training, whether it is conducted on-campus or off-campus, and through textbooks or physical instruction, shall not be taught in connection with the San Diego Unified School District and shall be discontinued immediately.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Education of the San Diego Unified School District, San Diego, California, at a public meeting thereof duly called and held this 10<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2009, by the following vote:

AYES:  
NAYS:  
ABSENT:  
ABSTAIN:

oOo

STATE OF CALIFORNIA        )  
                                      )    SS:  
COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO     )

I, Cheryl Ward, Board Action Officer, Board of Education, San Diego Unified School District, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by said board at a meeting thereof held on the day and by the vote above stated, which resolution is on file with the minutes of said meeting.

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Board Action Officer, Board of Education  
San Diego Unified School District