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## Frequently Asked Questions about JROTC / June 2009

### Recent History of District Actions Regarding JROTC

**May 23, 2006** - The resolution to phase out JROTC was introduced by Commissioners Dan Kelly and Mark Sanchez. It was then discussed at the Curriculum and Program Committee and the Budget Committee prior to returning to the full board for a vote.

**November 14, 2006** – The Board voted 4–3 to phase out JROTC by the end of the 2007-2008 school year (Resolution no. 65-23A1). The Board directed the Superintendent to “create a task force to develop alternative, creative, career driven programs with the elements of the existing JROTC program that students have indicated are important to them.”

**December 11, 2007** – The Board voted 5–2 to amend Resolution no. 65-23A1 to extend JROTC for one year with no changes until the end of the 2008-2009 school year. This action was recommended by the JROTC Alternative Program Task Force, which had requested a one year extension of JROTC to allow sufficient time to develop and implement these alternative programs (Resolution no. 712-11S03).

**May 8, 2008** – The District received a letter from the legal organization Public Advocates which indicated that it was requesting public records in an effort to determine whether the District was illegally granting PE credit for JROTC classes. The letter urged the District to desist from providing PE credit to classes that lack mandated PE content and to staff all classes, for which PE credit is given, with properly credentialed PE teachers.

**June 17, 2008** – Commissioners Norman Yee and Jane Kim introduced a resolution to reconsider the Board’s December 11, 2007 decision and to cease provision of PE credit for JROTC effective at the beginning of the 2008-2009 school year (Resolution No. 86-17A1). The Board voted 3-3 with 1 absence and so the Resolution did not pass.

**June 26, 2008** – The Board interpreted its Rules to permit another vote on Resolution No. 86-17A1 and voted 4–1 with 2 absences to eliminate the provision of PE credit for JROTC classes offered in 2008-2009. During the 2008-2009 school year, schools offer JROTC as an elective course to students at 7 high schools.

**May 12, 2009** – Resolution No. 93-24A1 was introduced by Commissioners Wynns and Norton and approved by a vote of 4 - 3. The resolution directs seven SFUSD high schools to continue offering the option of JROTC to all students for the 2009-2010 school year and beyond, unless a school has less than fifty (50) students enrolled. If a school has less than fifty (50) students enrolled in the JROTC program in a given year, that school may choose to drop JROTC as a choice for the following year.

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**June 9, 2009** – The Board voted 4 - 3 on Resolution No. 95-26A2 to allow JROTC students to utilize independent study to obtain PE credit, thereby creating time in the school day for students to take the JROTC course as an elective. Independent Study, per California Ed. Code, provides an alternative means for pupils to complete a prescribed course of study. The Superintendent must develop an administrative regulation by August 2009 to implement this policy which addresses how the independent study will be appropriately supervised by an instructor who has met the necessary certification and requires that students will have documented how they met the content standard requirements for PE and requires that students enroll in a PE course if they have not passed the Fitnessgram in 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grade.

### **How many students participate in the program in SFUSD schools?**

Of the 7 high schools with JROTC in SFUSD, there were 563 students enrolled in JROTC in 2008-2009, down from 1,050 enrolled in 2007-2008.

### **What is the position of the California Department of Education (CDE) regarding granting PE credit for JROTC?**

In January 2008 SB 601/ Education Code 33352 was enacted which requires the CDE to monitor the extent to which each school within the jurisdiction of the school district provides instruction in physical education by physical education teachers who hold appropriate teaching credentials.

On April 14, 2008, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell issued a letter to Colonel Michael R. Johnson, who oversees JROTC programs in California, stating that JROTC classes "do not, in most cases, fulfill CDE code requirements for physical education. Moreover, the course content for JROTC is developed by the military and does not have the approval of the State Board of Education." However, "ultimately, local school boards are responsible for determining which courses will meet the graduation requirements in their districts."

On May 11, 2009, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell issued a letter regarding physical education programs, which included further guidance regarding the provision of PE credit for JROTC courses. In the letter, Superintendent O'Connell stated the following:

One issue that has recently been identified as a particular concern is what criteria must be used by an LEA in determining whether physical education credit may be awarded to students in grades nine through twelve. Specifically, this question has arisen in regard to physical education credit being awarded for participation in Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps, marching band, cheerleading, and drill team.

In making the determination of whether to award physical education credit for any given activity or class, EC Section 51220 (d) and EC Section 33352(b)(7) together require that an LEA offer a course of study in physical education for grades nine through twelve that includes instruction in the eight areas over the span of the "physical education" classes offered as part of the school's course of study. The law does not specify that every class must include instruction in all eight areas, but rather it speaks to a course of study over grades nine through twelve that includes all eight areas. It is ultimately the obligation of the LEA to determine how each particular course, as conducted in its district, supports its course of study for grades nine through twelve that includes the eight areas and substantially meets the objectives and criteria of EC section 33352(b)(7). While it is not required that every course for

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which physical education course credit is given include all eight areas, an LEA is required to structure its course offering such that all areas are included over the course of study offered to all students.

In addition, it is important to note that EC Section 33352(b) requires the LEA to meet additional responsibilities should the LEA decide to award physical education credit for a particular course. These responsibilities include the provision of minimum instructional minutes, various reporting requirements, and the assignment of an appropriately credentialed teacher.

### **What is the cost of JROTC?**

For 2008-2009 the total budget for the program is about \$1.4M.

- The Department of Defense contributes half the cost of instructor salaries or approximately \$530,000.
- SFUSD spends approximately \$870,000 for the other half of salaries and all the costs of staff benefits.
- The average annual salary for the SFUSD JROTC instructors is \$88,270.

### **What are the qualifications of the current SFUSD JROTC instructors?**

All JROTC instructors must be retired military personnel and must go to military schools for JROTC instructor training in order to be qualified for the position. None of the District's JROTC teachers currently possess a credential authorizing him/her to teach physical education courses.

### **How many JROTC instructors teach at SFUSD schools?**

There are 12 JROTC instructors for the 2008-2009 school year.

### **How do students enroll in JROTC?**

Until the Board's decision on June 24, 2008 students could enroll in JROTC as an option to fulfill their PE graduation requirements. They must have 2 years of PE credit in order to graduate. For the 2008-2009 students were able to enroll in JROTC as an elective course but not for PE credit.

### **How long has the JROTC program been in SFUSD schools?**

The Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps was established by the National Defense Act in 1916. According to JROTC officials, the program has been in existence in San Francisco since 1916.