



COMMITTEE FOR EDUCATION FUNDING

Education Matters: Invest in Learning for Military Readiness April 29, 2015

Military readiness is dependent on an education system sustained by robust investments at all levels -- from preschool through high school graduation.

Mission: Readiness, the nonpartisan national security organization of over 500 retired admirals, generals, and other retired senior military leaders has articulated the national security case for investments in education. Our military's most important asset is the men and women willing to serve. A successful military needs Americans who have graduated from high school, can pass the military entrance exam, are physically prepared for military training and service, and do not have a criminal record. Military service has done a tremendous amount of good for many of our young people, helping them to master skills and gain knowledge that both serves them—and the rest of us—well. Unfortunately, according to the U.S. Department of Defense, our public education system is failing to adequately prepare youth for military service:

- Over 70 percent of young Americans ages 17-24 are unable to qualify for the military, primarily because they are poorly educated, physically unfit, or have a criminal record.¹
- More than 1 in 5 high school graduates aspiring to join the Army could not score high enough on the military entrance exam to be able to enlist.²

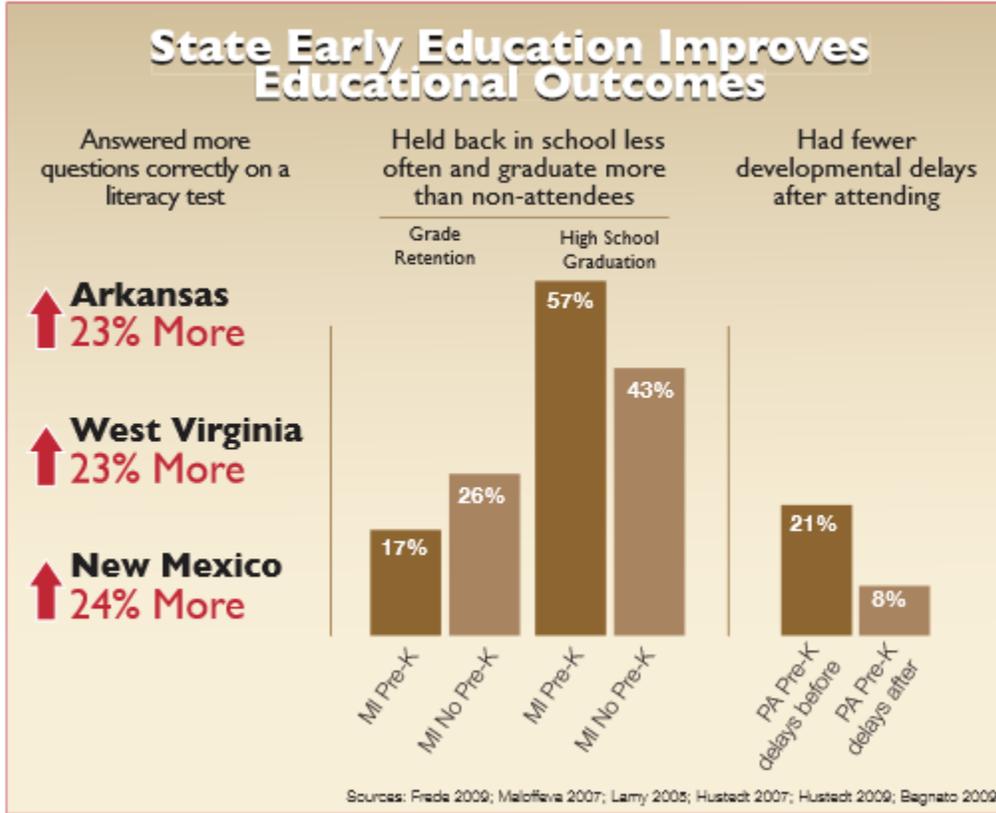
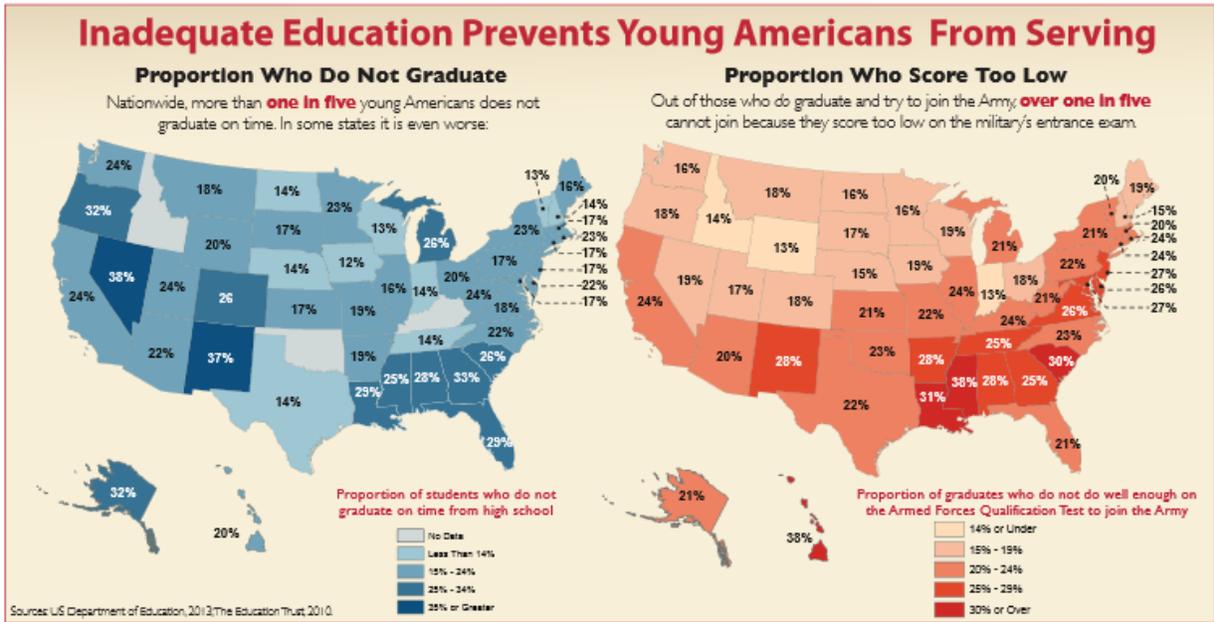
Investing in education is essential to building a strong and capable military.

- Quality early education is important for our nation's future security.
 - High-quality early childhood education can prepare children to start school ready to learn, ultimately contributing to stronger graduation rates and deterring youth from high-risk activities.
 - Early childhood learning helps children develop pre-literacy and pre-math skills, preparing them for a successful K-12 experience.
 - School-based physical education and physical activity programs help reduce obesity rates by instilling healthy habits for a lifetime of fitness.
- The military needs high school graduates prepared for rigorous intellectual pursuits.
 - Without qualified personnel, investments made in sophisticated, 21st Century military systems will be severely compromised and U.S. national security will be put at risk.
 - More than twice as many African Americans fail to qualify than white candidates and when they do qualify, they score much lower on the assessment tool used by the military than their white peers.³

¹ *A Commitment to Pre-Kindergarten is a Commitment to Readiness*. Mission Readiness, Council for a Strong America. Accessed online at http://missionreadiness.s3.amazonaws.com/National_prek_report.pdf. 4.20.15

² *Shut Out of the Military*: Education Trust. Accessed online at http://1k9gl1yevnfp2lpq1dhrqe17.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/ASVAB_4.pdf 4.20.15

3. *ibid.*



Source for both charts: Mission: Readiness, *A Commitment to Pre-Kindergarten is a Commitment to National Security.*

For additional information, please contact Joel Packer, Executive Director of the Committee for Education Funding at jpacker@cef.org, or Megan Wolfe, Advocacy Manager for ASCD at megan.wolfe@ascd.org