

UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
Marine Corps Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps
Fort Mill High School
215 N. Hwy 21 Bypass
Fort Mill, South Carolina 29715

15 Jan 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian:

I would like to take this opportunity to provide you with some information about the JROTC Leadership Education Program at Fort Mill High School. Over the past few years there has been a misconception about what the program is all about. I am confident that if parents had a better understanding of what we are trying to accomplish through this program, they would be excited about their child being a part of it.

The primary purpose of JROTC Leadership Education is to promote citizenship; to make the student a better citizen. This is accomplished by teaching the student self-control, discipline, responsibility and personal accountability. This applies not only to behavior in the classroom with academic instruction, but also outside the classroom where they spend most of their time. Although a military structure is the basis for teaching these concepts, the focus is on helping the individual "mature" as a person, not to send them off to the military. With that said **"There is absolutely no military obligation in taking this course"** whether your son and or daughter attends the program for one day or four years. Joining any military service, active, reserve or National Guard is a choice by each student and their parents and/or guardians.

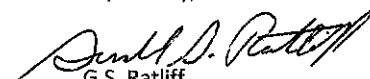
Currently, 11% of our enrollment (grades 9-12) are in the top 10% of their class and 21% of our enrollment (grades 9-12) are in the top 25% of their class. One can see by looking at these statistics, that we have some of Fort Mill's best students in our program. There is a reason for this: parents want their children in a program where there is structure and discipline. The skills your child will learn are lifelong skills that will make them a leader among their peers.

Our typical "weekly schedule" consists of academics on Monday and Tuesday, uniform wear, inspection & drill on Wednesday and Thursday, and Physical Training on Fridays. We occasionally deviate from this schedule, thereby helping the students establish a "routine" to make learning easier. In addition to academics, we have Drill and Air Rifle Teams that compete locally and throughout the tri-state area against other schools. We are very competitive and the students love competing. We also have teams for field meet (track and JROTC specific events), academic, and orienteering. Participation on these teams are totally voluntary; however, the students who participate on these teams and events seem to get more out of the program and develop life-long friendships. We also support Fort Mill with color guards for our varsity football, basketball and baseball games, as well as, the local community. Each year we conduct a three-day trip out of town to a military base so the students can see and learn about how those organizations operate. We give each of our students numerous opportunities to receive community service time. Besides supporting the school in this area, we typically support the Veterans of Foreign Wars Buddy Poppy Drive, the Marine Corps League Toys-for-Tots Drive and a local meals on wheels for the elderly.

I would encourage you to consider JROTC Leadership Education as an elective for your child this upcoming school year. This will be an opportunity for them to challenge themselves, develop relationships, and have the chance to experience leadership camps, while at the same time developing life skills they will take with them beyond high school. If they are not currently enrolled in JROTC Leadership Education One, you can call the Fort Mill High School Counselors' office and they can assist you with adjusting your child's schedule.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding our program, either I or First Sergeant Sprague would be happy to discuss them with you. We can be reached at: ratliffg@fortmillschools.org or spragues@fortmillschools.org or contact us at our office phone at: 803-548-1965.

Respectfully,


G.S. Ratliff
Maj USMC (Ret.)