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## NEWS

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### NAESP'S STATEMENT ON THE RELEASE OF PRESIDENT BUSH'S FINAL BUDGET PROPOSAL

Alexandria, VA—February 5, 2008—Our nation's schools are faced with unprecedented challenges, and educators are working to create and maintain effective learning communities to help children reach their highest potential. However, the Fiscal Year 2009 budget proposal that President Bush delivered to Congress this week fails to adequately fund essential programs to prepare the nation's students for the bright futures that they deserve. President Bush's final budget request calls for \$59.2 billion for federal education programs, which represents a cut in total spending. Just one week after the President's State of the Union address, where he called for Congress to swiftly reauthorize the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, he has delivered a budget proposal that seeks to eliminate funding for 47 programs and to freeze funding for many others.

We are extremely disappointed that Bush has proposed two new federal voucher programs, demonstrating his continued interest in privatizing public education. He earmarked \$300 million for the Pell Grants for Kids program and \$800 million for the newly proposed 21st Century Learning Opportunities Scholarships program.

"NAESP strongly opposes vouchers of any kind and will fight to redirect funds of this nature to support public schools and public school programs and the children that depend on them," said NAESP's executive director Gail Connelly.

The small Title I increase would be targeted to high schools under the President's request, reducing the funds available to elementary and middle schools.

Recognizing that principals are the chief advocates for learning, we strongly oppose the proposed elimination of funding for the School Leadership Program, which helps local districts recruit and train principals.

Furthermore, NAESP disagrees with the proposed elimination of funding for Elementary and Secondary School Counseling, Arts in Education, and Education Technology State Grants, as well as the significant cut to Safe and Drug-Free Schools. These programs are essential to the development of the whole child because they address the so-called "non-academic" needs that, in fact, strongly influence students' academic success.

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Established in 1921, the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) serves 30,000 elementary and middle school principals in the United States, Canada, and overseas. NAESP leads in the advocacy and support for elementary and middle-level principals and other education leaders in their commitment to all children.