



NEWS

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Principals Eager to Work with Education Secretary Nominee Duncan

Alexandria, VA—December 17, 2008—The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) applauds President-elect Barack Obama’s choice in nominating Arne Duncan—whose practitioner’s background will bring new levels of understanding to the complexities of educating students to be successful in the 21st century global environment—as the next U.S. Secretary of Education. NAESP is eager to work with Duncan, whose stances on education transformation suggest that at the federal policy level America’s schools are in for much-needed change over the coming months and years. Principals, who provide critical leadership in our nation’s schools, are poised to be key players in assisting Duncan with this tremendous endeavor.

“Duncan’s view that federal education law should be revised to grant greater local autonomy and flexibility and consider students’ growth over time indicates that the newly nominated secretary has heard the voices of principals who are enthusiastic about changes to the law,” said NAESP executive director Gail Connelly. “These changes will be welcomed by principals as they help each child reach his or her highest potential.”

“NAESP appreciates Duncan’s focus on early childhood education, development of extended learning opportunities that benefit the whole child, and support of principals as leaders of learning communities, all of which NAESP has published standards on in the second edition of *Leading Learning Communities: Standards for What Principals Should Know and Be Able To Do*,” added Connelly.

“Principals are heartened that Duncan believes that funding education is ‘the best long-term investment Congress can make,’ and principals must be included as key partners in the education transformation that is about to occur,” said NAESP President Nancy Davenport. “Duncan’s reform of Chicago public schools included increasing the number of nationally board certified teachers; however, high-quality teaching and effective school leadership go hand in hand. NAESP is on record promoting the creation of a voluntary national board certification program for principals and we hope the new Secretary of Education will implement initiatives that include fully-funded professional development for school leaders as an essential element of raising student achievement.”

NAESP is committed to partnering with Duncan and the Department of Education to create sound and effective federal education policies, especially regarding the whole child and school leadership. Principals are willing to lead the way for educational transformation that puts children at the center of teaching and learning, that sets high standards for school leaders, and that values and supports the critical role of principals in the education of our nation’s children.

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Established in 1921, the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) serves 28,000 pre-K-8 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.