

# AASA Position Statements

## **Position Statement 1: GETTING CHILDREN READY FOR DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP**

- a. All students should be provided with access to multiple languages, to multicultural studies and to programs that promote diversity.
- b. AASA recognizes that all students should be prepared to be successful in a global environment.
- c. AASA resolves to encourage school leaders to recognize children for their success, especially in light of the expanded challenges many of them face in today's culture and communities. AASA believes children today are role models worthy of recognition

*\* First Adopted: 2005; Re-Adopted July 2006  
Scheduled Review: 2008 completed; Next Review: 2011*

## **Position Statement 2: PUBLIC EDUCATION AS THE CORNERSTONE OF OUR DEMOCRACY**

- a. Public education is the cornerstone and heart of our democracy and AASA will aggressively defend against actions that would weaken or undermine public education, such as vouchers, tax credits and charters that are not publicly accountable.
- b. School districts should be held accountable for student success. AASA opposes the use of a punitive system that punishes both schools and students. To set up a system that ensures that schools are engaging in continuous improvement, AASA resolves that:
  - i. The disaggregation of student data is important as a measure of accountability.
  - ii. This data should include the expectation that states and the federal government will fulfill all obligations to ensure that all children are ready to learn.

45           iii.     The application of the state and federal public school  
46           accountability systems should apply to all institutions or  
47           individuals that receive public funding to educate  
48           children.

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50     \*     *First Adopted: 2005; Re-Adopted: July 2006*  
51     *Scheduled Review: 2008 completed; Next Review: 2011*

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54     **Position Statement 3:**           **GETTING CHILDREN READY FOR**  
55   **SUCCESS IN SCHOOL**

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57     a.       For children to be ready to attend school, steps must be taken  
58       to account for non-school factors that could affect student  
59       achievement. Therefore, AASA strongly supports the  
60       enactment of universal healthcare for all children.

61

62     b.       Recognizing the critical role that families and early education  
63       plays in getting students ready for school, AASA resolves that  
64       every child must be provided with quality, comprehensive  
65       early childhood programming so that he/she can enter  
66       kindergarten ready to learn with skills necessary to ensure  
67       success in school.

68

69     c.       AASA supports comprehensive services and programs that  
70       encourage children to be healthy.

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72     \*     *First Adopted: 2005; Re-Adopted: July 2006*  
73     *Scheduled Review: 2009*

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76     **Position Statement 4:**           **Licensure for Administrators**

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78     Only graduate degrees, licensures or endorsements in educational  
79     administration, supervision and leadership issued by state licensing  
80     agencies through accredited colleges and universities should be  
81     recognized for the preparation, appointment and promotion of school  
82     leaders.

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84     \*     *First Adopted: 2006; Re-Adopted: July 2006*  
85     *Scheduled Review: 2009*

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89 **Position Statement 5: GETTING SCHOOLS READY FOR**  
90 **CHILDREN**

- 91
- 92 a. Schools that are aligned around systems leadership will  
93 accelerate movement toward universal proficiency. Therefore,  
94 AASA resolves that school administrators should place a  
95 greater emphasis on systems leadership to meet the  
96 challenges of a global society.  
97
- 98 b. The intended focus of No Child Left Behind is laudable but the  
99 current law contains four major conceptual problems  
100 including:  
101
- 102 i. A challenge to federalism,
  - 103 ii. A flawed organizational change strategy,
  - 104 iii. A flawed educational change strategy, and
  - 105 iv. A failure to account for the impact of non-school  
106 factors on student achievement.
- 107

108 AASA resolves that decision making should be made at the  
109 local level to allow local educators, who best understand the  
110 needs of their students, to make decisions and design  
111 educational programs to meet children’s needs.  
112

- 113 c. AASA resolves that all students and families must have access  
114 to the latest technology and be provided opportunities to  
115 learn and develop the intellectual skills necessary for success  
116 in our global society.  
117
- 118 d. AASA resolves that all students and families be provided a  
119 strong support system to include advocacy and advisement.  
120

121 \* **First Adopted: 2005; Re-Adopted: July 2006**  
122 **Scheduled Review: 2009**

123

124 **Position Statement 6: INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES**  
125 **EDUCATION ACT (IDEA)**  
126

127 The education of children with disabilities demonstrates a national  
128 commitment to equal educational opportunity for every child. IDEA  
129 should be fully funded at 40% of the national average per pupil  
130 expenditures (as promised in the 1997 and 2004 reauthorizations of  
131 IDEA).

132 AASA strongly supports Congress fulfilling its promise to fully fund  
133 IDEA to the 40 percent level through mandatory funding and allowing  
134 for maximum local flexibility. AASA also urges the Center for Medicare  
135 and Medicaid Services (CMMS) to reimburse districts for medical  
136 services to Medicaid eligible students.

137  
138 \* *First Adopted: 2003; Re-Adopted: July 2007*  
139 *Scheduled Review: 2008 completed; Next Review: 2011*

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143 **Position Statement 7:            MAKING FEDERAL FUNDING FOR**  
144 **IDEA MANDATORY**

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146 This Position Statement was consolidated into #6 in July 2008.

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150 **Position Statement 8:            OPPOSITION TO VOUCHERS**

151

152 AASA absolutely opposes undermining universal equal educational  
153 opportunity for all, supports the separation of church and state in  
154 public school funding, and opposes increasing the segregation of  
155 America's children by diverting public funds in support of vouchers and  
156 related initiatives.

157

158 AASA supports the application of public school academic accountability  
159 standards and regulatory requirements to all non-public schools  
160 receiving public funds.

161

162 AASA opposes local, state, and federal financial incentives that reward  
163 private corporations for supporting non-public school entities.

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165 \* *First Adopted: 2004; Re-Adopted: July 2007*  
166 *Scheduled Review: 2010*

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176 **Position Statement 9: PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE AND**  
177 **CHARTER SCHOOLS**

178  
179 AASA supports public school choice and charter schools that operate  
180 under the auspices of local public school boards. We believe that there  
181 should be a level playing field, including non-discriminatory and  
182 unconditional enrollment for all children. Therefore, the same  
183 regulations and accountability should apply to all schools receiving  
184 public funding. How charter schools are financed must be addressed so  
185 that their creation does not have an adverse effect on the quality of  
186 existing public schools.

187  
188 \* *First Adopted: 1999; Re-Adopted: July 2007*  
189 *Scheduled Review: 2009*

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192 **Position Statement 10: SCHOOL FINANCE SYSTEMS**  
193 **FOCUSED ON PROFICIENCY FOR ALL**  
194 **STUDENTS**

195  
196 AASA supports litigation and legislation in states that will result in  
197 schools where the resources match the challenge of bringing every  
198 student to a high level of achievement called proficiency.  
199 AASA supports creating a stable, equitable, and adequate funding  
200 stream for schools based on local, state and federal revenues that will  
201 meet the challenges of universal proficiency and provide the stable  
202 funding base needed to support the changes from a system focused on  
203 access to a system focused on proficiency.

204  
205 \* *First Adopted: 2004; Re-Adopted: July 2007*  
206 *Scheduled Review: 2010*

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209 **Position Statement 11: VOUCHERS AND TUITION TAX**  
210 **CREDITS**

211  
212 AASA opposes vouchers and all forms of tuition tax credits for private  
213 or sectarian schools. We believe government financed vouchers divert  
214 funds from public schools.

215  
216 \* *First Adopted: 1999; Re-Adopted: July 2007*  
217 *Scheduled Review: 2009*

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221 **Position Statement 12:      **ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN****

222

223 AASA is an advocate for the health and well-being of our nation’s  
224 children. Research demonstrates that learning is enhanced when  
225 children feel safe and have their physical and emotional needs met in a  
226 healthy school environment. This includes access to healthy foods,  
227 opportunities for physical activity, clean air to breathe, access to  
228 preventive care and health services, including mental health.

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230 \* *First Adopted: 2006; Re-Adopted: July 2007*

231 *Scheduled Review: 2010*

232

233 **Position Statement 13:      **APPROPRIATE EDUCATION****  
234 **PROGRAMS FOR ALL CHILDREN—**  
235 **BEGINNING AT AGE 3**

236

237 A high percentage of a child’s development and learning occurs by age  
238 5. All children should enter school ready to learn, and every adult in  
239 the community must assume a measure of responsibility for the  
240 education, welfare and safety of each child. Therefore, AASA believes  
241 that communities should offer developmentally appropriate educational  
242 programs for all children beginning at age 3. The future success of all  
243 children requires such an investment.

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245 \* *First Adopted: 1995; Re-Adopted: July 2007*

246 *Scheduled Review: 2010*

247

248 **Position Statement 14:      **EQUITY FOR ALL CHILDREN****

249

250 AASA supports educational experiences that foster a respect for  
251 diversity and an understanding of individual differences and cultures in  
252 an environment viewed by all as safe and orderly. AASA supports  
253 engaging families and community members to promote student  
254 success with programs that sustain effective collaboration. AASA  
255 promotes equity and excellence for students, educators and  
256 administrators by implementing continuous improvement and  
257 research-supported best practices. AASA advocates for policies that  
258 address the unique needs of persistently underserved and, thus,  
259 underachieving populations of poor, minority, disabled and English-  
260 language learners. AASA endorses collaboration with other educational  
261 organizations and institutions to offer learning experiences designed to  
262 promote innovation, independent initiative, leadership development  
263 and creativity.

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265 \* *First Adopted: 1996, 1997; Re-Adopted: July 2007*

266 *Scheduled Review: 2008 Completed; Next Review: 2011*

267

268 **Position Statement 15: FACILITIES**

269

270 AASA recognizes the important role of school facilities in creating an  
271 appropriate learning environment for all children. AASA believes that  
272 facilities must not only be conducive to learning, but must also provide  
273 a safe place to learn.

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275 \* *First Adopted: 1998; Re-Adopted: July 2007*

276 *Scheduled Review: 2010*

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279 **Position Statement 16: LOCAL FUNDING**

280

281 AASA encourages and endorses the efforts of local administrators and  
282 boards of education to challenge funding systems that result in  
283 inequitable and inadequate funding.

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285 \* *First Adopted: 1998; Re-Adopted: July 2007*

286 *Scheduled Review: 2010*

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289 **Position Statement 17: UNFUNDED MANDATES**

290

291 AASA strongly advocates that federal mandates such as IDEA and  
292 ESEA, as well as state mandates, be fully funded in order to establish  
293 stable and equal support for all students.

294

295 Based on the literal meaning of Section 9527 (a) of No Child Left  
296 Behind, AASA supports action to obtain required funds to implement  
297 NCLB.

298

299 \* *First Adopted: 2004; Re-Adopted: July 2007*

300 *Scheduled Review: 2008 completed; Next Review: 2011*

301

302 **Position Statement 18: PROVIDING SAFE AND NURTURING**  
303 **ENVIRONMENT FOR CHILDREN**

304

305 Children have a right to live in a safe and nurturing environment.  
306 Therefore, the opportunity to learn in a safe and nurturing place is a  
307 fundamental right of every child in America. Students cannot learn  
308 without it.

309

310 \* *First Adopted: 2000; Re-Adopted: July 2007*

311 *Scheduled Review: 2009*

312

313 **Position Statement 19:**      **TECHNOLOGY**

314

315 AASA recognizes the importance that technology must play in the  
316 education of our nation’s youth. We strongly endorse federal, state  
317 and local efforts to provide funding for the support, maintenance and  
318 upgrading of technology to enable each classroom to achieve full  
319 state-of-the-art global connectivity.

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321 \* *First Adopted: 1996, 1997; Re-Adopted: July 2007*

322 *Scheduled Review: 2010*

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325 **Position Statement 20:**      **STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS**

326

327 Children live in a highly mobile and globally oriented world; therefore,  
328 AASA recognizes the need for the highest standards for all children.  
329 AASA supports the establishment of standards for student  
330 performance, curriculum content, certification and professional  
331 training. The standards should include the mastery of basic skills and  
332 higher-order thinking skills. AASA supports accountability of students  
333 for these standards and the use of valid and reliable assessment  
334 programs for reporting progress to the students and the general  
335 public.

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337 \* *First Adopted: 1997; Re-Adopted: July 2007*

338 *Scheduled Review: 2009*

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341 **Position Statement 21:**      **SCHOOL AND DISTRICT**  
342 **ACCOUNTABILITY**

343

344 A system of accountability must clearly demonstrate the level of  
345 progress attained by schools or school districts in fulfilling their  
346 mission of increasing student achievement. The responsibility for  
347 student learning demands that measures of success include multiple  
348 indicators and timely interventions which are understood and  
349 acceptable to the many publics served by the schools, especially  
350 students and their families.

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352 \* *First Adopted: 2000; Re-Adopted: July 2007*

353 *Scheduled Review: 2008 completed; Next Review: 2011*

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358 **Position Statement 22: EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

359

360 AASA supports efforts to increase the use of early childhood education  
361 as a way to prepare children for learning at the earliest stages.

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363 \* *First Adopted: 2002; Re-Adopted: July 2007*  
364 *Scheduled Review: 2010*

365

366 **Position Statement 23: EQUITY IN ACCOUNTABILITY**

367

368 AASA supports application of the state public school accountability  
369 system to all who receive state funding including virtual schools,  
370 charter schools and parents who home school their children.

371

372 \* *First Adopted: 2004; Re-Adopted: July 2007*  
373 *Scheduled Review: 2009*

374

375 **Position Statement 24: NATIONAL TESTING**

376

377 AASA supports national testing, which samples student performance  
378 such as NAEP, and assessment to promote learning and provide  
379 accountability. AASA supports tests that measure improvement. We  
380 oppose the use of limited federal funds for additional federal tests,  
381 especially those that test all students at given grade levels.

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383 \* *First Adopted: 1998; Re-Adopted: July 2007*  
384 *Scheduled Review: 2009*

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387 **Position Statement 25: ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY  
388 EDUCATION ACT (ESEA)**

389

390 (replaced the previous Position Statement #25 No Child Left Behind (NCLB))

391 AASA recommends that ESEA move from the 93 disconnected and disjointed  
392 programs added between the original passage of the law in 1965 and the  
393 most recent reauthorization in 2001, toward a more systemic continuum of  
394 services and supports based on poverty, special student populations and  
395 special conditions. We need to return to the original goal of ESEA, which was  
396 to promote equal educational opportunity. ESEA should be revised to provide  
397 a continuum of services and support based on a continuum of need. Need  
398 should be primarily defined by eligibility for free and reduced cost meals  
399 under the federal nutrition program, but should also consider special groups  
400 of students and special circumstances for school districts.

401 AASA believes that a high-quality public education is a basic civil right for all  
402 children. Equal access to educational opportunity is a cornerstone of  
403 American democracy. State and local school system leaders are dedicated to  
404 helping students reach high levels of learning and to preparing students to be  
405 active participants in a global society.

406 AASA believes the primary responsibility for determining educational  
407 methods and strategies resides at the state and local level, consistent with  
408 the 1979 U.S. Department of Education Organization Act. States have a  
409 constitutional responsibility to establish, fund and support public education.  
410 Local school districts have a responsibility to ensure student learning in the  
411 context of their state's constitutional requirements for education.

412  
413 AASA believes the role of the federal government in education is to help  
414 ensure equal opportunities to learn for each child by assisting states and  
415 school districts in their efforts to develop capacity, by providing leadership  
416 and by providing resources. The federal government should supplement and  
417 support rather than dictate state efforts in education.

418  
419 AASA members know that the devastating effects of poverty have a  
420 significant impact on student achievement. While school systems do address  
421 the effects of poverty, they cannot eliminate the causes of poverty. Federal  
422 efforts to improve student achievement should coordinate with other relevant  
423 systems, such as health care, housing and judicial systems, to alleviate the  
424 fundamental inequities that perpetuate poverty.

425  
426 AASA believes that states and school systems should not be required to  
427 spend state and local funds to implement federal program mandates.

428 AASA believes ESEA should provide coherent goals, assumptions and  
429 methods to improve learning for all students, especially for low-income and  
430 minority students. These goals, assumptions and methods should be based  
431 on evidence gained from research and practice.

432 \* **First Adopted: 2008**  
433 **Scheduled Review: 2011**

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445 **Position Statement 26:**      **PROFESSIONAL COMPENSATION**

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447 AASA supports professional compensation for superintendents and  
448 middle management members that is consistent with educational  
449 preparation, performance, position, and responsibility.

450

451 \* *First Adopted: 1993; Re-Adopted: July 2007*

452 *Scheduled Review: 2010*

453

454 Educational leaders' effectiveness is enhanced by multi-year contracts  
455 which attract and retain high quality leadership for the public schools.

456

457 \* *First Adopted: 1994; Re-Adopted: July 2007*

458 *Scheduled Review: 2010*

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461 **Position Statement 27:**      **EDUCATOR SHORTAGE--**  
462 **RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION**

463

464 AASA supports the efforts to develop new models designed to identify,  
465 attract, hire, train, support and retain highly-qualified educators and  
466 school leaders from diverse backgrounds.

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468 \* *First Adopted: 2000; Re-Adopted: July 2007*

469 *Scheduled Review: 2008 completed; Next Review: 2011*

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472 **Position Statement 28:**      **HEALTH & WELLNESS**

473

474 The members of the American Association of School Administrators  
475 (AASA) are the leaders of the nation's schools and should model  
476 behaviors that are important to the health and wellness of their  
477 students, staff, and communities.

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479 \* *First Adopted: 1996, 1997; Re-Adopted: July 2007*

480 *Scheduled Review: 2010*

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489 **Position Statement 29:**      **PERSONNEL SHORTAGES**

490  
491 AASA recognizes the impact of critical personnel shortages on the  
492 quality of educational programs and services in America’s public  
493 schools. Attracting and retaining properly certified classroom teachers,  
494 school administrators and central office administrators, including  
495 school superintendents, should become a primary goal for all  
496 stakeholders including our professional organizations, our state  
497 legislators, the federal government and the business community. AASA  
498 also recognizes that without comprehensive intervention by all of these  
499 stakeholders, the emerging shortage will continue to be a crisis in  
500 public education. AASA supports the adoption and use of the National  
501 Board for Professional Teaching Standards and the Interstate School  
502 Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) as national standards for school  
503 personnel and endorsement of these standards as a “national  
504 passport.”

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506 \* *First Adopted: 2002; Re-Adopted: July 2007*  
507 *Scheduled Review: 2009*

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510 **Position Statement 30:**      **PORTABILITY OF PROFESSIONAL**  
511 **CREDENTIALS AND PENSIONS**

512  
513 AASA supports pension portability and licensure reciprocity because  
514 the free flow of professional leadership is necessary for all school  
515 systems to deliver on the new mission of universal proficiency.

516  
517 Every state ought to provide educators with a means to transfer from  
518 state to state with experience, licensure and pension plan intact.  
519 AASA supports complete mobility within public education for educators  
520 and their families through the creation of national initiatives that ease  
521 the movement between states.

522  
523 AASA supports states’ rights to establish compensation terms that  
524 align to the unique socio-economic conditions of the respective states.

525  
526 \* *First Adopted: 2004; Re-Adopted: July 2007*  
527 *Scheduled Review: 2010*

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534 **Position Statement 31:**      **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

535

536 Effective professional development programs for school administrators  
537 lead to educational improvement at all levels. AASA encourages a  
538 systemic and coordinated effort among state education agencies and  
539 other professional organizations to support professional development  
540 programs designed to improve the knowledge and skills of teachers,  
541 administrators, and others.

542

543 \* *First Adopted: 2006; Re-Adopted: July 2007*

544 *Scheduled Review: 2010*

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547 **Position Statement 32:**      **TEACHER SHORTAGES**

548

549 Attracting and retaining properly certified classroom teachers is a  
550 primary goal for all stakeholders including our professional  
551 organizations, our state legislators, the federal government and the  
552 business community. AASA supports efforts to increase high-quality  
553 alternative certification programs and to provide tax credits for  
554 teachers and principals as incentive to enter high-poverty and low-  
555 performing schools.

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557 \* *First Adopted: 2003; Re-Adopted: July 2007*

558 *Scheduled Review: 2010*

559

560 **Position Statement 33:**      **COMMUNITY COLLABORATION AND**  
561 **PARTNERSHIPS**

562

563 Communities are responsible for the health, safety and education of  
564 each child. Schools are but one partner in the arena of public and  
565 private agencies.

566

567 AASA urges and supports collaborative, community-wide programs and  
568 the delivery of full service programs to address the needs of all  
569 children.

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571 \* *First Adopted: 1994; Re-Adopted: July 2007*

572 *Scheduled Review: 2009*

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624 **Position Statement 37:** **LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

625

626 AASA supports professional development for superintendents and  
627 boards, standards to hold both administrators and their boards  
628 accountable, and financial incentives to encourage individuals to enter  
629 educational administration.

630

631 \* *First Adopted: 2002; Re-Adopted: July 2007*

632 *Scheduled Review: 2009*

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635 **Position Statement 38:** **HIGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

636

637 AASA should consider these elements of high school improvement:

638

639 • All high school improvement must be rooted in the larger context of  
640 Pre K -16 programming.

641

642 • High schools should be judged by the number of students who  
643 graduate, with flexibility to allow more time for those students who  
644 need it. There must be an accurate data system that provides a  
645 common definition of dropouts and includes the flexibility to translate  
646 graduation rates in three, four, five, or six years, similar to data  
647 collected for college graduation.

648

649 • Improvement efforts should focus on high-quality curriculum that is  
650 thorough, rigorous, robust, and relevant to the real world. Equally  
651 important is a focus on the relationships among students and between  
652 students and adults in the school. Indicators of success should not be  
653 limited to state assessments.

654

655 • High schools should develop strategies for teaching literacy, which  
656 includes reading and writing across content areas.

657

658 • Schools should identify and address the varying needs of students as  
659 they transition into and out of high school. Programming at these  
660 junctions should reflect learning beyond minimum standards.

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662 \* *First Adopted: 2007*

663 *Scheduled Review: 2008 Completed; Next Review: 2011*

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673 **Position Statement 39:**

**INTEGRATION TO CORRECT  
RACIAL AND ECONOMIC  
ISOLATION IN SCHOOLS**

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677 AASA believes schools and school districts which correct racial and economic  
678 isolation provide the best preparation for participation in America's multi-  
679 ethnic society and the global society for which we are educating children.

680 School administrators have a moral and ethical responsibility to provide  
681 affirmative leadership and to advocate for integrated, high- quality schools.  
682 School leaders must work with other organizations and agencies to establish  
683 open, affordable housing, equal employment opportunities, economic security  
684 and full social participation.

685

686 We encourage local superintendents to develop solutions that achieve the  
687 goal of an integrated society, and we also encourage nonpublic school  
688 administrators to diversify the student population of their schools.

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690 \* **First Adopted: 2008**

691 **Scheduled Review: 2008**

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694 **Position Statement #40:**

**Public Education is a Civil Right**

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696 Public education is the cornerstone and heart of our democracy. Without a  
697 viable and effective public education system, the citizens of the United States  
698 will not be able to exercise the rights granted to them by the Constitution of  
699 the United States. Every student has a right to be educated and that right  
700 cannot be infringed by race, religion, ethnicity, disability, economic status or  
701 any other factor.

702

703 Therefore, AASA believes that Public Education is a Civil Right.

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705 \* **First Adopted: 2008**

706 **Scheduled Review: 2011**

707