Statement: AASA on President Bush’s 2009 Proposed Budget

February 4, 2008

ARLINGTON, Va. – The American Association of School Administrators, the professional organization for school superintendents and other school system leaders, issued the following statement on the 2009 proposed budget released today by President Bush:

"In his 2009 budget plan, President Bush once again has short-changed school districts across the nation by failing to provide sufficient funding for education. The president has proposed level-funding for education in 2009, following three years of cuts.

"The president proposed only a minimal increase in Title I to assist districts in reaching low-income students. His proposal would eliminate the Educational Technology State Block Grants (Title II, Part D) and the Perkins Career and Technical Education program and would cut the Safe and Drug Free Schools program by more than two-thirds. These funding decisions will have a negative impact on students nationwide.

"Once again, because the federal government has failed to fully fund No Child Left Behind, school districts will be forced to steal from state and local funds to cover the federal funding shortfall.

"The lack of federal funding for special education continues to strain school district budgets. The meager increase proposed by the president for 2009 will result in a $15 billion shortfall in special education funding. Under the 2009 proposed budget, the federal government would pay just 17 percent instead of the promised 40 percent of the national average per-pupil expenditure for every child in special education.

"At the same time the president has proposed reducing the federal investment in public education, he has also proposed diverting scarce resources to private school voucher programs. Vouchers do not hold private schools accountable to the same standards required for public schools under NCLB.

"AASA urges Congress to reject the president’s education funding proposals for 2009 and make public education the high priority the administration’s rhetoric says it is. We urge Congress to focus federal funds on students with the greatest need and leave the details about the structure and content of education to states and local school districts, which supply 93 percent of the funds for public education.”

About AASA
AASA, founded in 1865, is the professional organization for more than 13,000 educational leaders across the United States. AASA’s mission is to support and develop effective school system leaders who are dedicated to the highest quality public education for all children. AASA’s major focus is standing up for public education.