April 30, 2003

The Honorable Russell Feingold
506 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC  20510

Dear Senator Feingold:

On behalf of the National Association of Secondary School Principals—the preeminent leadership organization representing the nation’s middle level and high school principals, assistant principals, and aspiring principals—thank you for proposing the “Student Testing Flexibility Act of 2003.”

As you know, NCLB proposes an ambitious agenda to improve student achievement through increased accountability. While the law’s intended goals are positive, many schools, districts, and states will undoubtedly be challenged to meet NCLB’s requirements unless appropriate flexibility and support are provided.

Your draft legislation not only allows existing state assessments to be utilized as long as Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) provisions in the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) are achieved, and achievement gaps are narrowed; it also provides important findings related to the realities of funding and federal mandates. Middle level and high school leaders are prepared to be held accountable, but must receive the resources necessary to accomplish the job.

NASSP supports initiatives that provide flexibility without compromising accountability, which your proposed legislation appears to deliver. We look forward to working with you and others in Congress to improve NCLB requirements and ensure that appropriate resources are made available to meet the needs of all students.

Sincerely,

Gerald N. Tirozzi, Ph.D.
Executive Director