September 9, 2003

Member of Congress
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC  20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) – the preeminent organization and the national voice for middle level and high school leaders – I am writing to express our strong opposition to the voucher amendment currently being considered within the D.C. Appropriations bill.

Voucher programs are often proposed as a means to respond to low academic achievement, with the thought that competition between public and non-public schools would bring about improved academic achievement. However, there is little evidence to support this theory. In reality, vouchers serve only to detract from the goal of comprehensive improvement of public schools.

At a time when the United Stated Department of Education (USDE) is strenuously promoting the implementation of NCLB—with its explicit mandates and accountability measures for improving student achievement—it is difficult to fathom why public tax dollars would be devoted to private and parochial schools without the same requirements and accountability measures that public schools must face for the use of such funds.

With limited new resources being provided by states and the federal government to cover the rising cost of educating students, the last thing that is needed is for more public resources to be diverted from public schools. I urge you to work with your colleagues and vote against the voucher amendment show your support for strong public schools.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Gerald N. Tirozzi, Ph.D.
Executive Director