November 16, 2004

The Honorable John Boehner  
Chairman, Committee on Education and the Workforce  
2181 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Boehner:

On behalf of 32,000 middle level and high school principals nationwide, I would like to encourage the final passage of the conference report passed yesterday on the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act.

The nation’s middle level and high school principals have long sought significant reform of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The House and Senate reauthorization bills have made substantial improvements in streamlining requirements, reforming cumbersome procedures, curtailing unproductive paperwork, and creating opportunities for early dispute resolution. Most importantly, these reforms will allow school resources to be directed to increasing services and improving educational results for students with disabilities, instead of being expended on unnecessary processes, paperwork, and litigation.

Specifically, secondary school principals support:

**Paperwork Reduction:** Provisions that seek to streamline and reduce paperwork burdens at both the state and local level. Currently, paperwork requirements are duplicative and burdensome.

**Due Process:** Provisions that seek to curb frivolous lawsuits against school districts and specifically, principals. While we understand that there will always be legitimate lawsuits, we support mediation and resolution sessions that encourage parents and school administrators to try to work out problems before resorting to litigation.

**Discipline:** Provisions that seek to eliminate the dual discipline system. We support disciplinary systems that treat children in the same manner, as long as their misconduct is not a direct result of their disability, and will allow children to continue to receive educational services.
**Funding:** Provisions that support mandatory full funding of IDEA. The federal government has not met its promise of meeting 40% of the per pupil expenditure for educating children with disabilities.

Again, we appreciate the ongoing work of both the House and Senate on the IDEA reauthorization. Your ongoing commitment to IDEA will give thousands of special education students a chance to have a better education. We look forward to the timely passage and signing into law of the conference report, as well as immediate regulatory action by the Department of Education.

Sincerely,

Gerald N. Tirozzi  
Executive Director