November 22, 2005

Representative
House Office Building
Washington, D.C.  20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) - the preeminent leadership organization representing middle level and high school principals, assistant principals, and aspiring principals- we would like to thank you for your vote on the Fiscal Year 2006 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education conference report.

Despite record enrollment growth, both House and Senate appropriations bills cut education more than 2% in real terms when inflation is taken into account. The Congressional leadership has called for additional cuts of at least another 2% to offset hurricane relief, cutting education funding to far below last year's level.

Both bills together eliminate more than $900 million in funding, especially in programs important to secondary schools, like comprehensive school reform, dropout prevention and smaller learning communities. In addition, the bill lowers funding for Perkins vocational and technical education, teacher quality enhancement grants, safe and drug free schools, and innovative education programs, among other vital programs. These programs address issues such as providing smaller school size for a more effective learning environment, encouraging students—especially “at risk” students—to stay in school, and supporting school wide reform.

NASSP will continue to advocate that these needs be addressed by restoring funding for these programs, especially considering that middle level and high schools receive only approximately 15% of Title I funds yet educate 52% of the nation’s students.

We encourage you to continue to take a stand for education funding as the current conference report does not represent a commitment to our nation’s students. We look forward to the passage of a FY2006 Labor, HHS, Education conference report that will meet the needs of the nation’s secondary school students.

Sincerely,

Gerald N. Tirozzi
Executive Director