



**NAESP PLATFORM: RESOLUTIONS  
2010-2011**

## **PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP AND PREPARATION**

### ***LEADING***

The expanding role of the principal demands a high level of professional preparation and continuing growth. NAESP believes all states should require all principals to be licensed or certified according to recognized standards, as in the second edition of *Leading Learning Communities: Standards for What Principals Should Know and Be Able to Do* (NAESP, 2008), and adhere to the NAESP Code of Ethics.

NAESP strongly recommends districts establish elementary schools of no more than 400 students. Where circumstances dictate larger or specialized school populations, NAESP endorses the employment of an assistant principal. NAESP believes the assistant principal is essential to achieving the mission of the school.

NAESP believes standards for the preparation, certification, selection, and professional development of principals should result from cooperative efforts among state and local principals' associations, state departments of education, higher education institutions, and local school districts. NAESP encourages the development of partnerships with the private/business sectors to support these efforts.

NAESP strongly recommends that persons entering the principalship have at least five years of successful elementary and/or middle school teaching experience. Training programs or certification components should require a master's degree, with academic preparation focusing on those administrative competencies that have been identified and validated through research.

NAESP believes it is the professional responsibility of every principal to identify, encourage, recruit, and nurture educators with outstanding talent, leadership, knowledge, and interpersonal skills to consider the principalship as a career.

NAESP encourages local and state organizations to offer and promote association memberships, professional development, and exploration of the principalship for those who aspire to school leadership.

NAESP recommends that districts and preparation programs, including higher education partners, provide opportunities for internships, peer coaching, job shadowing, networking, and mentorships for aspiring principals.

NAESP urges its board of directors and state and local associations to promote national reciprocal agreements to affect an exchange of certification and full benefits, including retirement, and to seek legislation to secure such reciprocity among states for administrators. ('86, '96, '01, '06, '10)

## **CURRICULM CONTENT**

### ***LEARNING***

NAESP believes that elementary and middle school curricula should include best practices in language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, technology, arts education, career, and health. NAESP believes that students learn best when curricula and instruction are related and relevant. (\*10)

## **STUDENT HEALTH** ***LEARNING***

NAESP believes that children can overcome or avoid issues such as communicable diseases and school-age pregnancies that can interrupt the educational process and should be addressed by parents, educators, social agencies, community groups, and health professionals with early interventions.

Every school should have a full-time school nurse to ensure proper health care and enforce required immunizations.

Every school should have a full-time certified school counselor to ensure age-appropriate guidance for students' emotional and social needs. ('10)

## **FOCUS ON THE WHOLE CHILD**

### ***LEADING***

NAESP believes that children must be the nation's number one priority and the focal point of education. NAESP has always supported the concept of the whole child. As educators, we have consistently addressed the health, safety, social, emotional and educational needs that are components of every child's success. NAESP urges principals to eagerly partner with all agencies (local, state and federal) to develop transition plans among preschool, elementary, middle, and high schools. NAESP encourages principals to refer to *Leading Early Childhood Learning Communities: What Principals Should Know and Be Able To Do* (NAESP, 2005) and the second edition of *Leading Learning Communities: Standards for What Principals Should Know and Be Able To Do* (NAESP, 2008).

The benefits of quality after-school programs are evident in student achievement, social interaction, and safety. NAESP believes federal, state and local leaders, including principals, should provide vision and support for effective extended-day learning that includes a variety of enrichment opportunities. programs should follow the standards identified in *Leading After-School Learning Communities* (NAESP, 2006).

NAESP recognizes the individual accountability and collective responsibility of all school staff, parents, and other community members for the education of the child.

NAESP will continue to work in partnership with all involved for the total development of the whole child. ('71, '72, '86, '94, '95, '00, '05, '06 '09, '10)

## **THE CHILD AND THE AMERICAN CULTURE *COMMUNITY***

NAESP believes public schools must work to assure that every child understands good character, problem solving, and compassion as well as democracy, citizenship, and the significance of living in a global society.

NAESP encourages principals to foster an environment that honors and respects diversity by exerting leadership in the development of instructional programs. NAESP believes schools play a key role in encouraging students to participate in programs that foster good citizenship and develop a sense of responsibility to the community. NAESP endorses the principles of democracy found in a strong and active elementary or middle school student council or similar student leadership opportunities.

NAESP recommends strong home/school partnership programs be developed that encourage positive citizenship and good character.

NAESP believes all schools should embrace curriculum-linked service learning as a proven methodology that promotes academic achievement, character, and citizenship.

NAESP encourages building a strong American identity by promoting children's understanding of our nation's shared culture. ('02, '03, '08, '10)

## **EDUCATIONAL EQUITY**

### ***LEADING***

NAESP supports the removal of all barriers that inhibit the right of every child to an equal educational opportunity. NAESP understands that the responsibility of public education lies within the states but it remains a national priority.

NAESP believes that it is each state's responsibility to make decisions that provide equitable educational opportunities for all children including gifted and talented students; global language learners; special education students; diverse socio-economic students; and diverse ethnic and religious populations. All educational opportunities should foster recognition and respect of all groups of people within our local, state, national, and global communities. ('82, '92, '00, '10)

## **STUDENT DISABILITIES**

### ***LEARNING***

NAESP endorses and supports the basic concepts embodied in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, with emphasis in early identification beginning at birth, guaranteeing that all youngsters, irrespective of disabilities and/or other health impairments, are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. NAESP urges legislators to review idea and establish clear and reasonable parameters that focus on providing appropriate educational services for individual students with disabilities by funding the law at the authorized 40 percent federal share to meet the needs of all students.

NAESP supports inclusion of students with disabilities in regular classrooms with their peers in their neighborhood schools, when appropriate. To facilitate the successful inclusion of students with disabilities, NAESP believes that appropriate financial resources, staff development, and support services must follow the child with disabilities.

NAESP also recognizes that compliance with legal mandates presents additional managerial and administrative duties that can impede the orderly and efficient delivery of educational services to all students. NAESP believes that the rights of students with disabilities to an appropriate education are commensurate to those of other students.

NAESP supports continuation and expansion of related services to local districts by appropriate state and community service agencies. Full and expedient funding from the state and federal levels is imperative for local school districts to be able to comply with the provisions of these laws. ('76, '77, '79, '90, '91, '93, '94, '99, '01, '02, '07, '10)

## **STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### ***LEADING***

NAESP believes that the rights of all students should be protected. NAESP believes students have the right to learn in school without undue interference, including that resulting from seriously disruptive students. NAESP recommends appropriate disciplinary measures for all students who engage in a pattern of violent or seriously disruptive behavior. NAESP recommends that individually appropriate alternative options, within the scope of state and local regulations, be available for all students whose ongoing dangerous or seriously disruptive behavior requires their removal from the regular classroom.

NAESP believes that school discipline is a shared responsibility of students, parents/guardians, educators, and the community. All students should be held consistently to school and district codes of conduct.

NAESP believes the practice of corporal punishment as a form of discipline must be abolished and supports legislation that would prohibit all forms of corporal punishment in schools.

Principals must be involved on the local level to assist boards of education in the design of discipline policies that are developmentally and educationally appropriate, are consistently applied, and follow due process. ('73, '75, '77, '90\*, '00\*, '05, '10)

## **SAFETY, CRISIS, AND DISASTER PLANS**

### ***LEADING***

NAESP believes an important role of principals is to provide leadership in preserving the safety and welfare of students entrusted to their care during the school day. To that end, NAESP advocates the development and dissemination of routine safety practices along with specific contingency plans for situations that may threaten student and staff safety and welfare during natural or man-made disasters.

NAESP believes that all school systems should establish safety, crisis and disaster plans. ('86, '89, '90, '94, '95, '01, '06, '10)

TAGS:           safety, crisis, disaster, plan, leadership, principal, welfare, student, care, school day, routine, contingency plan, threaten, staff, natural, man-made

## **SAFE SCHOOLS** *LEADING*

NAESP believes that schools must be safe and secure and that all stakeholders and agencies must be vigilant to develop and implement policies, procedures, and plans that foster a safe, secure, and orderly environment.

NAESP encourages schools and school districts to develop policies and procedures to eliminate conditions that are environmentally harmful to the school community and supports legislation that funds these initiatives. ('84, '93, '94, '96, '01, '03, '08, '09, '10)

TAGS:           safe, school, secure, stakeholder, develop, policy, policies, procedure, plan, orderly, environment, environmental, harmful, legislation

## **WHAT PRINCIPALS SHOULD KNOW AND BE ABLE TO DO** ***LEARNING***

NAESP believes that principals are the primary instructional leaders in the schools and communities in which they serve. Because of the magnitude of this responsibility, it is imperative that principals have authority in the decision-making process as it involves personnel assignment and staff evaluation, expenditure of funds, discipline, curriculum design, program/staff development and evaluation, and other areas affecting this role.

Principals are strongly urged to use the NAESP document, *Leading Learning Communities: Standards for What Principals Should Know and Be Able To Do, Second Edition* (NAESP, 2008).

NAESP believes that it is incumbent upon school principals to continue their professional growth in order to improve instructional leadership and model lifelong learning. We further believe that the evaluation of principals must be connected to their roles, responsibilities, and professional growth.

NAESP endorses full funding and/or support of ongoing professional growth opportunities and active participation in professional organizations.

NAESP recognizes the recruitment, selection, and retention of staff as an integral component in quality schools. Principals are encouraged to select staff using an identified process involving relevant school personnel. The final recommendation regarding staff selection must remain with the principal.

NAESP believes the principal is responsible for continuous staff observation and evaluation. Observations and evaluations should use established instruments and procedures that are directed toward improved professional performance that enhances student learning and academic achievement.

NAESP believes that school districts provide professional development opportunities for principals to develop and enhance effective staff evaluation techniques.

NAESP believes that successful implementation of school-based decision making will enhance instructional programs for children. The success of school-based decision making is improved when responsibility, authority, and accountability both within schools and districts are accompanied by appropriate staff development and a long-term commitment by the administration and policy-makers.

NAESP urges federal, state, and local leaders to ensure that the leadership of the building principal is maintained in all school-based programs.

NAESP further urges elementary and middle school principals to actively participate in studies of school-based decision-making and in continuing professional development programs that enhance their ability to implement necessary restructuring within their schools.

NAESP urges that educational reform be based on the findings and recommendations of current research.

NAESP encourages school principals and local and state associations to exert leadership in:

1. Seeking solutions appropriate to the evidence-based needs of local schools and districts;
2. Opening and maintaining dialogues on issues addressed in research;
3. Building consensus among school, community, and district personnel on appropriate actions for the improvement of public education; and
4. Maintaining education as a high priority in the nation's conscience by collaborating with other professional organizations, soliciting the support of business and other community groups, and enlisting legislative support for public education.

NAESP maintains that the instructional leadership role of the principal and assistant principal is vital to sound educational programs in each elementary and middle school. Responsibilities created by state and federal mandates place tremendous demands on the principal; the principal must have sufficient time to plan, coordinate, and provide instructional leadership.

NAESP strongly urges the employment of a full-time, certified principal for each elementary and middle school. Furthermore, NAESP recommends the employment of full-time assistant principals in schools with more than 400 students. ('02, '07, '10)

## **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE *LEARNING***

NAESP recognizes parents/guardians as the primary caregivers for their children. NAESP also recognizes the increasing need for quality education child care services outside the home.

Quality early childhood experiences provide the foundation for higher levels of student achievement, future success in school, and economic benefits to society. NAESP believes that early childhood programs should be school-connected and available for all children on a voluntary basis. NAESP recommends, supports, and encourages schools to implement developmentally appropriate programs that provide social, physical, emotional, and academic experiences for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten children. NAESP urges states to offer full-day kindergarten programs. NAESP further believes early childhood educators and programs should meet the standards recommended in *Leading Early Childhood Learning Communities: What Principals Should Know and Be Able to Do* (NAESP, 2005).

NAESP believes that federal and state funding for school-connected early childhood programs must be a legislative priority and urges principals to advocate for the financial support necessary to implement such programs. ('60, '62, '67, '68, '84 '85, '88, '90, '93, '98, '01, '05, '08, '09, '10)

## **CENSORSHIP AND ACADEMIC FREEDOM RELATED TO SELECTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS**

### ***LEADING***

NAESP believes that while choosing what students shall read and learn can never be free from controversy, principals must uphold the rights of freedom of responsible expression and of free access to information. Principals must affirm the right of the student and the teacher to use a wide variety of curriculum and literary materials and to explore divergent points of view.

To avoid portraying people in stereotyped roles, NAESP urges principals to promote instructional materials that reflect various career and personal roles as acceptable and attainable for people in today's society. NAESP believes that educational materials should be sensitive to the varying family structures and the contributions of adults and children from all ethnic backgrounds, both in the past and in the present.

The media center should provide the learner with a richness of resources and technology that will enable the learner to access, evaluate, and utilize current resources to enhance student learning. NAESP encourages principals to demonstrate leadership at the local, state, and national levels to secure funding for the establishment and continuation of a strong media program with a full-time certified media specialist and additional technical support personnel in every elementary and middle school.

NAESP believes the selection of instructional materials should be locally controlled. NAESP urges principals to provide leadership in the selection and adoption of instructional materials, including technology-based resources.

NAESP will take a leadership role to encourage the adoption of procedures ensuring that the process for selecting educational materials, including mechanisms for challenge and review, will be carried on professionally and equitably, and that the range of materials and learning experiences available to students will reflect established professional criteria, as well as the values and needs of the community.

NAESP believes the full funding of instructional materials is the shared responsibility of federal, state, and local governments. ('82, '92\*, '02\*, '10)

## **EDUCATIONAL REFORM**

### ***LEADING***

Principals, as instructional leaders, must be calculated risk takers and entrepreneurial reformers of education. As part of that role, NAESP urges principals to investigate and determine the legitimacy of change to ensure that the change is designed according to research-based best practice for student learning. ('85, '92, '02, '07, '10)

## **RELATIONSHIPS AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL GROUPS** ***COMMUNITY***

The mission of NAESP is to lead in the advocacy and support for elementary and middle-level principals and other national and international education leaders in their commitment to all children.

As NAESP strives to accomplish its mission, it is essential to enlist support from, and to work consistently with, other education groups. NAESP encourages the development of processes and structures that will ensure continued cooperation among professional organizations. NAESP believes the autonomy of each association must be preserved. ('73, '74, '90\*, '00\*, '05, '10)

## **PRINCIPAL'S ROLE IN DEVELOPING STATE AND FEDERAL POLICIES**

### ***LEADING***

NAESP recognizes the unique role of principals in implementing and communicating the decisions of policy-makers and urges all federal- or state-funded agencies, committees, and other groups to include practicing principals in the development of education policies, guidelines, rules, and regulations. NAESP believes that all stakeholders, agencies, and governing bodies are collectively responsible for the successful performance of each student on local, state, and federal accountability measures.

NAESP urges principals to become informed about, involved in, and to advocate for policies that enhance and ensure quality education in our nation's schools. ('78, '81, '91\*, '01\*, '06, '10)

## **RETIREMENT LEGISLATION**

### ***LEADING***

NAESP believes that former educators should be encouraged to continue participation in professional activities of principals' associations and that local, state, and national education organizations should utilize the expertise and talents of retired principals to further their goals.

NAESP believes principals and their spouses should receive full benefits from all retirement systems into which contributions are made on their behalf. NAESP supports legislation that protects full benefits for principals and their spouses.

NAESP further urges that all retirement plans include a cost-of-living adjustment. As a minimum, retirement benefits without penalty should be provided after completion of 25 years' service. ('80, '86, '89, '99\*, '04, '09, '10)

## **DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES**

### ***LEADING***

NAESP believes prejudice, bigotry, and discrimination should be eliminated in classroom assignments, school admission practices, professional association membership, and appointment or promotion to principalships and other administrative positions.

NAESP values diversity in our culture and urges the recruitment of ethnically diverse persons for administrative positions. The diversity of our culture must be represented throughout education systems in order to establish positive role models for all students.

NAESP promotes strategies that address this issue at the local, state, and national levels. ('70, '71, '72, '73, '75, '90\*, '00\*, '05, '10)

## **CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS**

### ***COMMUNITY***

NAESP recognizes that changing demographics have a critical impact on the delivery of educational programs and the ability of schools to meet state and federal standards.

NAESP believes the federal government should provide adequate financial assistance for programs and services for these students. Special consideration should be given to those districts with the highest density of immigrant students. This increased federal funding is needed, with flexibility, for individual districts to design appropriate programs.

NAESP urges that principals be involved in careful planning with boards of education, staff, parents, and members of the community to meet the challenges of changing enrollments and the resulting budget implications. Principals should exercise a leadership role in devising alternative ways of utilizing staff and maintaining local school programs to meet the needs of students, regardless of family patterns. ('74, '75, '84, '94\*, '04, '09, '10)

## **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES** ***COMMUNITY***

NAESP believes that there should be a strong collaborative relationship between the school, the community, and local businesses.

Community and business members should be encouraged to participate in the educational process as it will result in stronger educational opportunities for elementary and middle-level learners.

NAESP believes that schools are community-based and school facilities should be utilized for instructional, child care, civic, social and recreational programs as deemed acceptable by individual school district policies and procedures. Principals should provide leadership in the utilization of community resources within their school buildings. ('83, '92, '02, '10)

## **CONTRIBUTION OF PRIVATE SCHOOLS**

### ***LEADING***

NAESP recognizes the contributions of private schools and believes that all personnel and curriculum should be held to the same level of accountability and licensure required for public schools. ('72, '75, '85, '95, '05, '10)

## **PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND THE MEDIA**

### ***LEADING***

NAESP believes that an important way to strengthen confidence in public education is through sound media coverage that celebrates school successes and builds public understanding in times of crisis. NAESP urges principals to establish open relationships with the media by inviting coverage of school events while being mindful that student confidentiality must be protected.

NAESP, therefore, urges local, state, and national leaders to become active in publicizing the achievements of public education through media reporting, presentations to groups of parents and citizens, and other communications with the public. NAESP further encourages local, state, and national education organizations to promote dissemination of the accomplishments of their organizations.

NAESP encourages principals to focus on longitudinal data and better communications to avoid negative coverage that results from the release of isolated data. In reporting test scores principals are also encouraged to present an accurate interpretation of data including its limitations and implications.

NAESP believes that by building their own communications, public relations, marketing, and promotional skills, principals will strengthen public confidence in schools. NAESP urges principal preparation programs to include public relations strategies. NAESP urges principals to work closely with district, local, state, and national school public relations professionals to acquire these skills for themselves and for their staffs.

NAESP urges all principals to be assertive in publicizing the interests, activities, and successes of public schools across America.

NAESP recommends that educators, parents, other community members, agencies, and associations seek to influence media and marketing policies and practices. ('82, '88, '97, '03, '08, '10)

## **PROFESSIONAL NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE PRINCIPALSHIP** *LEADING*

NAESP strongly supports the right of principals on the local school district level to organize and negotiate in matters affecting their conditions of employment, whenever they deem it appropriate. NAESP urges that district officials and boards of education formally recognize the representatives selected by principals in all negotiations dealing with the professional service of principals.

NAESP believes all public school administrators should be employed underwritten contracts and a defined hold-harmless clause.

In addition to a written or continuing contract, NAESP urges school boards to provide principals with conditions of employment such as: salary and benefits, methods used in determining salary, due process, and length of contract. ('70, '71, '72, '81, '91\*, '96, '06, '10)

## **PRINCIPAL COMPENSATION**

### ***LEADING***

NAESP believes principals at all levels should receive equitable compensation.

Principals should be compensated based on multiple indicators such as professional preparation, school culture surveys, parent satisfaction surveys, peer evaluations, size of school, performance reviews, goal attainment, experience, complexity of job requirements, and length of contract year.

NAESP supports incentive pay, also known as pay for assignment, for principals and teachers who commit to working in hard-to-staff schools.

Due to the complexities of the job, principal compensation should never be based primarily on student achievement. Principals must have a role in the evolving discussion on principal compensation. ('76, '85, '95, '05, '10)

## **SANCTIONS AND WORK STOPPAGES**

### ***LEADING***

NAESP believes impasses in employment negotiations can be resolved by use of mediation and arbitration and does not condone strikes and other work stoppages. ('71, '72, '90, '00\*, '05, '10)

## **SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION** *LEADING*

NAESP believes federal and state legislators must provide adequate funding to assist local communities in the construction and modernization of school facilities.

Construction and/or renovation of school buildings is necessary to ensure safe environments, maintain appropriate class sizes, and provide appropriate and functional space with current technology to support instruction.

Principals, teachers, students, and community members must be involved in the design of school buildings. ('00, '05, '10)

## **GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY FOR STUDENT WELFARE *LEARNING***

NAESP values the public trust placed in schools to provide each student an appropriate education and to remove barriers to learning. However, schools cannot accomplish these tasks alone.

NAESP is concerned about the derogatory political portrayal of schools as inadequately addressing problems facing students.

NAESP implores government officials and agencies to assume accountability and take aggressive action to address social and economic issues arising from such factors as unemployment, immigration, poverty, drugs and alcohol, and other challenges facing the American family.

A system of coordinated services, in which health and human services agencies work to support schools and students, should be established in every state and funded by state and federal resources. ('08)

## **LEGAL STATUS AND RIGHTS OF THE PRINCIPAL** *LEADING*

NAESP believes job security and protection of rights and personal welfare are essential for an educational leader to carry out professional responsibilities without fear of reprisal.

NAESP believes rating and ranking based on student test scores should not be the sole criterion in the dismissal, reassignment or compensation of principals.

NAESP urges all administrators' associations to seek the enactment of legislation, regulations, and policies that provide security in the principalship and legal status for school principals. Such policies must prevent their transfer or removal without just cause and due process, not impairing any of their rights already in effect. ('72, '74, '90\*, '96, '01, '06)

## **SCHOOL AND CLASS SIZE *LEARNING***

NAESP recognizes the research that indicates small schools are more likely to foster a sense of nurturing, belonging, and school community. NAESP endorses elementary school populations of not more than 400.

NAESP advocates that appropriate state agencies and school districts develop plans to facilitate the implementation of a class-size ratio of not more than 15:1 in the elementary grades. This ratio is in compliance with the NAESP document entitled *Leading Learning Communities: Standards For What Principals Should Know and Be Able To Do* (NAESP, 2001). Research shows that, with effective instruction, more learning takes place when class enrollment does not exceed the recommended ratio. ('90, '98, '01, '06)

## **DRUG AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

### ***LEARNING***

NAESP recognizes serious effects of substance abuse by students and others who influence those students.

NAESP recommends increased efforts to improve existing drug and substance abuse prevention programs in schools that provide information about the harmful effects of drugs, including performance-enhancing drugs, tobacco products, alcohol, and other substances.

NAESP further urges cooperative action by appropriate groups to prevent access to and use of these substances by students. NAESP strongly encourages the media to eliminate any glorification of substance use and abuse portrayed in programming and advertising. ('78, '86, '88, '93, '98, '03, '08)

## **HEALTH, WELLNESS, AND NUTRITION** ***LEARNING***

NAESP believes that health and wellness are lifelong pursuits that contribute to overall well-being. Childhood is the time to begin the development of an active, healthy lifestyle. NAESP recognizes the importance of instruction on fitness, nutrition, use of leisure time, and stress management.

NAESP recognizes the importance of good nutrition. The school meal program should provide nutritious, well-balanced breakfasts and lunches in accordance with state and federal regulations. Principals should take an active role in promoting participation in federal free/reduced lunch programs for eligible participants, but should not be responsible for determining eligibility.

NAESP believes the sale of snack foods and beverages in schools should reinforce proper nutrition habits and should not be in competition with the school meal programs.

NAESP believes that students should participate in supervised structured and unstructured physical activities. Daily physical education and recess are important components of a child's physical and social development. NAESP recognizes that the amount of time allocated for physical activity must be developmentally appropriate.

NAESP encourages elementary and middle-level principals to work with parents, teachers, and local community groups to promote health, wellness and nutrition.

NAESP urges principals to continue a leadership role in the development of good school nutrition practices and supports all efforts to see that sufficient state and federal monies are provided for school meal programs. ('93, '97, '02, '07, '08, '09)

## **ASSESSMENT** ***LEARNING***

NAESP believes that, for assessment information to be valid and useful, educational standards specifying what students are expected to know and be able to do must be clearly defined through a broad-based consensus process before assessment procedures are developed.

Assessment focused on student performance has as its primary purpose the advancement of student learning and the improvement of instruction. This process must be fair, flexible, and authentic in that it reflects the students' demonstration of competence. The procedures utilized must be valid and appropriate representations of the expectations placed on students. NAESP recognizes that assessment is an integral part of curriculum and instruction, which includes the teaching and learning of test-taking skills. NAESP encourages the alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment to maintain a balance between teaching and formal assessment.

The assessment process must involve educators in its design and use, and include procedures that ensure accessibility, data analysis, continuous review, and improvement. Test results must be accessible and reported in an understandable, timely manner within the context of other relevant information affecting the school.

NAESP urges its members to become involved in state and local activities establishing the design and implementation of assessment processes. ('92, '94, '01, '06)

## **STANDARDS-BASED EDUCATION**

### ***LEARNING***

NAESP believes principals must have a role in the evolving discussion of the issue of national standards.

NAESP stresses the need for a high-quality public education for every student that aligns instruction with effective standards.

NAESP believes effective standards should be content based. These standards should be created by independent commissions of qualified practitioners which must include Pre-K-12 principals and teachers. ('77, '89, '99, '01, '02, '07, '09)

## **NATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAMS**

### ***LEARNING***

NAESP believes the purpose of national testing programs, such as National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), is to gather longitudinal data to inform educational decision making related to student achievement, professional development, and allocation of resources for state school systems and not to be used for comparative purposes, promotion and retention of staff, or determination of salary. ('88\*, '98, '02, '07, '09)

## **RETENTION AND SOCIAL PROMOTION** ***LEARNING***

NAESP believes that retention and promotion should be considered on the basis of individual student needs. NAESP opposes the use of test results as the sole criterion for the retention or promotion of students. NAESP believes that the progress of students must be measured using multiple criteria.

NAESP urges state and local associations to work cooperatively with legislative bodies, state departments of education, local school boards, and local administrators to provide the programs, resources and time students need to demonstrate success. ('91, '92, '00, '01, '06)

## **STANDARDIZED TESTS**

### ***LEARNING***

NAESP believes children have diverse abilities and learning potential that should be identified and developed. Educators, parents, and children need multiple, fair, and effective assessment opportunities that can be used for determining the needs of children in order to design appropriate instruction.

NAESP opposes the use of standardized test scores as the sole criterion to measure student performance; to rate, grade or rank school effectiveness; to allocate funds; or to take punitive measures against schools and/or school personnel.

NAESP recognizes that some uses of standardized testing are detrimental to education.

It is imperative that the limitations of standardized tests are clearly understood by decision makers:

1. Standardized tests, by design, generate data that are valid for specific purposes.
2. Interpretation and use of the data must be limited to those purposes.

Therefore, multiple, non-discriminatory, and longitudinal measures must be employed if the data are used to:

1. Make educational decisions for each student;
2. Adequately assess the achievement level of student subgroups; or
3. Monitor student progress and/or program effectiveness over time.

NAESP also believes that, in reporting assessment results to the public, explanations of the proper interpretations of the data must be included.

NAESP urges principals and their local, state, and national associations to use assessment data to improve instruction and help students learn.

NAESP also urges principals to actively educate policy-makers and the public about the proper interpretation and use of standardized test data. ('72, '76, '85, '89, '97, '01, '02, '07)

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
***LEADING***

NAESP believes that the United States Department of Education should strongly support and promote public education as the cornerstone of American democracy. NAESP believes in sustaining the Cabinet-level status of the U.S. Department of Education.

NAESP recognizes that elementary education is the foundation for all formal education and therefore believes educators with experience and training in elementary and middle school administration should staff a representative number of decision-making positions in the U.S. Department of Education including the principals in resident program.

NAESP is committed to a reciprocal relationship with the U.S. Department of Education with an increased focus on research and develop to collaboratively meet the educational needs of our nation's children and the concerns of elementary and middle school administrators. ('80, '84, '94\*, '04, '09)

## **NATIONAL SPECIAL OBSERVANCE DAYS** ***COMMUNITY***

NAESP encourages principals to support the planning of programs and curricular experiences commemorating people and events of historical and cultural significance to the United States. These may include but are not limited to:

1. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
2. Presidents' Day
3. Memorial Day
4. Independence Day
5. Labor Day
6. September 11
7. Constitution Day
8. Columbus Day
9. Veterans' Day
10. Thanksgiving Day  
( '78, '84, '94\*, '02, '07)

## **PARENT/GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT** ***COMMUNITY***

NAESP believes parents/guardians bear the primary responsibility to assist children in developing their full potential.

NAESP maintains that principals should take an active role in assisting parents/guardians with the acquisition of skills and knowledge of resources that support children's intellectual reasoning abilities and personal, social, and emotional development.

NAESP advocates that parents/guardians be active participants in the education of their children at home and at school. Parents/guardians and school personnel must work cooperatively in fostering a deep respect for achievement and learning.

NAESP commends the efforts of volunteers and parent/teacher groups and alliances within America's schools. These individuals and groups serve as child advocates and provide valuable support to the success of all learners. ('84, '92, '95, '05, '08)

## **PRAYER IN PUBLIC SCHOOL**

### ***LEADING***

NAESP recognizes that the public schools include students and staff who embrace a plurality of religious beliefs, as well as those who hold no religious beliefs. NAESP contends that public schools must respect the rights and beliefs of all students, staff, and patrons.

Based on the constitutional doctrine of separation of church and state and related court decisions, NAESP supports the position that prayer and other religious practices are family responsibilities and should be left to the home and church. ('84, '94\*, '04\*)

## **VOLUNTEERS** ***COMMUNITY***

NAESP believes that the community school partnership is a unique and vital feature of American education and that there is a need for volunteers in every school. NAESP encourages school districts and individual schools to provide access and opportunity for community members to participate in a network of services, resources, and support for the total educational process.

Therefore, NAESP recommends that principals actively support coordinated local efforts for community involvement. Further, NAESP urges principals to ensure that volunteers work under the direct supervision of appropriate school personnel, but do not diagnose, prescribe, or formally evaluate the work of children.

NAESP urges all of its members to reexamine the status of their own schools and take steps toward revitalizing and extending the effectiveness of volunteer groups, including providing appropriate training. NAESP recommends background checks be required for volunteers working in our schools. ('85, '95, '02, '07)

## **CHARTER SCHOOLS**

### ***LEADING***

NAESP realizes that many states allow the development of charter schools. Charter schools should not supplant a comprehensive school reform program.

NAESP believes that in order for a charter school to receive public funds, it must:

1. be led by a certified principal who has teaching experience;
2. employ qualified staff who are appropriately certificated;
3. be nonprofit and tuition free;
4. be supported by a funding source that does not divert funds from other public schools;
5. be governed by an elected board;
6. be accountable to the public, adhering to the same accreditation/approval standards to which all public schools must adhere, i.e., health and safety, fiscal responsibility, curriculum content, academic achievement, testing accountability, and disclosure;
7. be nondiscriminatory with regard to students and staff;
8. be required to serve students with disabilities in the same ways as are other public schools;
9. provide the same level of support services required of other public schools; and
10. provide its employees the same state benefits as other public schools. ('00, '05)

## **“CYBER SCHOOLS”**

### ***LEADING***

NAESP recognizes that technology is expanding educational options, including online learning.

While definitions of the term “cyber schools” vary, NAESP strongly opposes online education programs that bypass the teacher/student relationship, lack accountability, and divert funds from public schools. NAESP believes that integrating future technology into effective educational practices and options can be beneficial. At the same time, any school receiving public funds must maintain proven elements of quality education. These elements include but are not limited to:

1. certified principals and instructors who support and guide the learning process;
2. educator-developed curricula based on current research and practice;
3. human relations skills developed through social interactions and communication within a diverse population; and
4. assessments that are valid, reliable, and appropriate to the curricula. ('02, '07)

## **HOME SCHOOLING**

### ***LEADING***

NAESP is concerned with the increasing number of individuals and groups choosing home schooling in lieu of public education. When alternative options such as home schooling have been authorized by state legislation, resources and authority should be provided to make certain that those who exercise these options are held strictly accountable for the academic achievement and social/emotional growth of children. NAESP believes it is the responsibility of the state education agency to be accountable for monitoring the education of the home-schooled child.

When home schooling options are exercised, NAESP strongly recommends that state governments establish safeguards to ensure each child:

1. Learns in a healthy and safe environment;
2. participates in appropriate social experiences;
3. interacts with students from other social/racial/ethnic groups;
4. receives the full range of curricular experiences and materials aligned with state standards;
5. is guaranteed instruction by certified and highly qualified persons; and
6. is required to participate in state-mandated assessments. The results of these assessments should not be included in the local public school scores.

NAESP strongly urges states to require home schools to comply with state and federal laws addressing children with special needs. ('93, '03, '04, '09)

## **PRIVATIZATION AND OUTSOURCING**

### ***LEADING***

NAESP acknowledges that private, for-profit corporations have been engaged to direct the educational programs and school services for children attending public schools. When privatization occurs, local, state, and federal laws and guidelines must be followed. Supplemental service providers must be held to the same level of accountability as public schools. ('95, '05, '06)

## **PROGRAMS OF CHOICE**

### ***LEADING***

NAESP believes public schools are the cornerstone of American democracy. In order to guarantee an enlightened electorate capable of governing itself, the American people must ensure quality education for each citizen. NAESP believes that students learn most effectively in a school setting that reflects American society and culture.

NAESP believes that programs of choice should not be federally mandated nor draw resources from public education funding.

Programs of choice should:

1. be locally developed, locally controlled, and carefully constructed;
2. have a clear statement of guidelines, procedures, and academic goals;
3. include parent involvement in the planning and development of local programs;
4. be an opportunity for local schools, given sufficient and equitable funding, to provide unique programs;
5. take into account “equal access” for all students in a district;
6. not exceed class size limits;
7. not negatively impact racial or socioeconomic balance;
8. not divert money from public schools to private schools;
9. have as their foundation the approval of the state and local boards of education and be staffed by licensed teachers and principals; and
10. be subject to the same laws and regulations as are all public schools in the state. ('93, '97, '02, '07)

## **TUITION TAX CREDITS AND VOUCHERS**

### ***LEADING***

NAESP believes that the welfare of this nation is dependent on a strong public education system. Tuition tax credits reduce gross tax revenues designed to support public education for all. Both vouchers and tuition tax credits adversely affect financial support for public education.

NAESP strongly opposes tuition tax credits and education voucher plans that divert public monies to private institutions.

While recognizing the contribution and unique value of private schools, NAESP rejects all proposals that would reduce financial support, and consequently the potential for achieving a high quality of education, in public schools. ('82, '92\*, '94, '04\*)

## **LEGAL PROTECTION FOR SCHOOL PERSONNEL**

### ***LEADING***

NAESP acknowledges that lawsuits are filed against school personnel as they carry out their assigned responsibilities as agents of the state or school district in interpreting and implementing policies and regulations.

NAESP urges school districts to provide adequate liability protection, financial support, and legal representation for school personnel.

NAESP urges local and state associations to work cooperatively with state legislative bodies to pass appropriate legislation to penalize those who file frivolous lawsuits. ('79, '90\*, '96, '06)

## **PROFESSIONAL NEGOTIATIONS LAWS**

### ***LEADING***

NAESP believes that final determination of professional negotiation laws and procedures affecting principals and other educational personnel should be determined by each state. ('77, '90\*, '00\*, '10\*)

## **REDUCTAION OF ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL**

### ***LEADING***

NAESP recognizes that declining enrollment, diminishing financial resources, and other factors may cause reductions of administrative personnel.

The Association urges its members to develop and secure the adoption of criteria and procedures to be used in a reduction of administrative personnel. Criteria should include such considerations as seniority, non-discrimination, objectivity, uniformity of application, and professional preparation. Procedures should include timely notification, access to all pertinent records and materials, and an opportunity to respond. Reassignment should include the option of moving to a comparable administrative assignment or to a teaching position. ('82, '92\*, '97, '02)

## **DISRUPTION OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES**

### ***LEADING***

NAESP believes the disruption of educational services to children brought about by either decision or indecision of legislatures, courts, or policy-making bodies is unacceptable.

NAESP urges all members, state associations, and other concerned groups to work together to maintain services and keep schools in regular session without interruption. ('78, '90\*, '00\*, '05)

## **FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR EDUCATION**

### ***LEADING***

NAESP believes that financial support for public education must be shared by local, state, and federal governments. However, NAESP urges an increase in the amount of federal support with greater local and building-level flexibility in the allocation and use of federal funds.

While recognizing the need for reform in the methods of financing educational expenditures, NAESP strongly opposes any reduction of public school funding.

NAESP urges local, state, and federal governments to reexamine tax structures and revise allotment formulas to equalize and increase financial support for education among school districts.

NAESP also urges local, state, and federal governments to provide funding that is predictable and continuous so that educational leaders have the opportunity to plan for the future of public schools. ('82, '92, '94, '96, '01, '06)

## **FUNDS FOR MANDATED PROGRAMS**

### ***LEADING***

NAESP believes any federal or state legislation requiring schools to provide programs, services, and/or facilities must provide full forward funding for those mandates and guarantees funding at the school level.

NAESP urges legislative bodies to consult with local, state, and national associations to determine program costs and provide requisite funding.

Principals should be granted the authority to allocate resources to address individual school needs. ('80, '90, '94, '04, '09)

## **TAX REFERENDA**

### ***LEADING***

NAESP believes sufficient funding for public education is essential to the well-being of our nation and its citizens. Moreover, NAESP opposes referenda, initiatives, and other governing actions that reduce funding for public education.

NAESP urges principals; national, state, and local leaders; and other interested groups to promote public awareness of the detrimental effects of reducing public education funding. ('82, '91, '01\*, '06)