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To: NCSS
From: Della Cronin
Re: President Bush's FY2007 Budget Proposal

On February 6, 2006 President Bush released his FY2007 Budget Proposal. The President is requesting \$54.4 billion in discretionary appropriations for the Department of Education. This represents a \$3.1 billion decrease from the 2006 level. The Administration's supporting materials for the ED request note, however, "Even with the proposed decrease, discretionary appropriations for the Department will have grown by almost \$12.2 billion, or 29 percent, since fiscal year 2001."

As was evident in the President's State of the Union address last week, this budget emphasizes the new American Competitiveness Initiative, and requests \$380 million for FY 2007 for the program's components. In addition, the Administration is requesting \$1.475 billion for its High School Reform initiative, and significant resources for its new foreign language efforts (a multi-agency campaign).

The Administration has proposed the elimination of 42 programs at the Department of Education. Many of these have been targeted before. The Administration asserts that these programs have "achieved their original purpose," "duplicate other programs," "may be carried out with flexible State formula grant funds," or "involve activities that are better or more appropriately supported through State, local or private resources." The Administration relied once again on the government-wide Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) to "focus funding on Department of Education programs that generate positive results for students and that meet strong accountability standards."

Relative to No Child Left Behind, the Administration points to its successes to date, asserting, "NCLB reforms are beginning to take hold and produce better results in America's public schools." The Administration's request "would maintain the positive momentum generated by NCLB." As part of this request, the Administration seeks \$2.9 billion for Improving Teacher Quality State Grants and \$99 million to maintain support for the Teacher Incentive Fund. Improving Teacher Quality State Grants provides flexible formula grants to help State and schools meet "highly qualified" teacher requirements under NCLB.

This memorandum is intended to give you an overview of the funding request, including proposed eliminations and funding levels. Programs of particular interest that the Administration requests receive no funds in FY 2007 include:

- Academies for American History and Civics
- Arts in Education
- Civic Education
- Close Up Fellowships
- Excellence in Economic Education
- National Writing Project
- Underground Railroad Program
- Higher Education Act, Title II, Teacher Quality Enhancement Grants

The following are funding requests for other programs of interest:

Teaching American History

The budget request for this program in FY 2007 is \$50.0 million. In FY 2006, the program received \$119.8 million. The program makes competitive grants to school districts for professional development to strengthen the teaching of traditional American history as a separate subject in elementary and secondary schools. The request notes,

“The Administration recognizes the importance of American history in preparing future generations of students to become responsible citizens and to fully participate in our democracy. However, the number of quality applications for assistance under this program in recent years does not justify the current level of funding. The reduced request reflects the anticipated number of high-scoring applicants in fiscal year 2007, and would fund up to 52 new awards.

“A PART analysis completed in 2004 for the program produced a Results Not Demonstrated rating, primarily due to the absence of long-term and annual performance targets and data unavailability. In response, the program is collecting data for targets and measures, and developing a strategy for making the data available to the public.”

Character Education

The Administration requests \$24.2 million for the program—the same amount it received in FY 2006. The program makes competitive awards to States and school districts for developing character education curricula, implementing model programs, and training teachers to incorporate character-building lessons and activities into the classroom. According to the supporting materials, “Elements of character include such qualities as caring, civic virtue and citizenship, justice, respect, responsibility, trustworthiness and giving.”

Additional details of the Department of Education’s budget request are available at <http://www.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/budget07/summary/07summary.pdf>.