



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Nick Manetto (202) 312.7499 / nick.manetto@bakerd.com
Jacqueline Grady (202) 312.7009 / jacqueline.grady@bakerd.com

Obama Budget Perpetuates Nation's Neglect of Gifted Learners

NAGC Urges Congress to Restore Javits Funds and Develop Comprehensive National Strategy

WASHINGTON (February 1, 2010) – Despite increasing education funding overall by six percent, President Obama's Fiscal Year 2011 budget released today eliminates the sole federal program dedicated to addressing the needs of America's high-potential students.

Under the guise of "program consolidation," the President's budget request slashed the 22-year-old Jacob Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Program, which supports applied research and development into teaching strategies to address the needs of gifted learners, particularly those from disadvantaged and underserved backgrounds, including low-income, limited English proficient, minority, and children with disabilities.

"All gifted learners will lose if the Administration fails to provide Federal leadership to meet the learning needs of academically talented students," said Nancy Green, Executive Director of the National Association for Gifted Children. "Unless we strive for the day when every high-potential student is identified and served by properly prepared teachers, we will lose the race to the top."

The proposed elimination of the Javits program is a further blow to gifted learners from a U.S. educational system that largely neglects and under-invests in these students. The biennial *State of the States in Gifted Education*, released this past fall, found that nearly a quarter of all states provide no state funding for gifted students and that most gifted students are taught by teachers with little to no training in gifted education.

"This budget fails to include any specifics to directly meet the needs of gifted and talented students and does not provide incentives for States and districts to fill the void. We urge Congress to restore the Javits program and to develop a comprehensive national strategy to build a pipeline of talent," Green said.