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National PTA Statement on President Obama's 2011 Budget Proposal

Education Budget Eliminates Sole Federal Parent Engagement Program

WASHINGTON, D.C. (February 4, 2010) – The National PTA®, the nation's largest and oldest volunteer child advocacy association, issued the following statement on President Obama's 2011 budget proposal:

“PTA applauds the historic investment in education in President Obama's 2011 budget proposal. The substantial increase in funding for the Department of Education's reform initiatives is a critical step in transforming schools to prepare all students for college and career.

“However, the consolidation and proposed elimination of the Parental Information and Resource Centers program included in the budget request is of great concern to PTA. This program is the sole federal initiative dedicated to supporting family engagement in education. In its absence, schools and districts would not have the tools necessary to meaningfully partner with families to improve student success, particularly in struggling schools where family involvement is most essential.

“Research has demonstrated that family engagement in education raises student achievement regardless of the parents' education level, ethnicity, or socioeconomic background. In fact, family engagement is so cost-effective that schools would have to spend \$1000 per pupil to gain the same results. Eliminating this critical program that serves over 16 million parents annually runs counter to the Department's goal of directing funds to cost-effective, proven approaches.

“PTA urges both Congress and the administration to safeguard this critical program and direct funding toward research-based strategies that engage families in their children's education. States, districts, and schools rely on this program to provide leadership, training, and technical assistance to engage the most powerful drivers of student achievement and education reform—parents.”

About National PTA

National PTA® comprises millions of families, students, teachers, administrators, and business and community leaders devoted to the educational success of children and the promotion of parent involvement in schools. PTA is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit association that prides itself on being a powerful voice for all children, a relevant resource for families and communities, and a strong advocate for public education. Membership in PTA is open to anyone who wants to be involved and make a difference for the education, health, and welfare of children and youth.