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Contact: David Griffith
703/684-4000

State Education Leaders Join with US Army to ‘Build Strong Futures Together’

Columbia, South Carolina— Joe Higgins, a member of the Nebraska State Board of Education, and other State Board of Education members from around the country are meeting with high-ranking Army officers this week in Fort Jackson, South Carolina to explore opportunities to bolster public schools and the military. The conference, entitled *Building Strong Futures Together*, is being held from September 16-19, 2008.

“America’s public schools and the United States Army are the two most egalitarian institutions in the country—founded on the shared ideals of access, high standards, merit, and knowledge. A partnership is a natural development given our common interests in promoting student achievement, a well-educated citizenry, and a strong national defense. Together we can learn about each other’s successes and needs and begin to address these education and training issues for the benefit of students and the country,” said Brenda Welburn, NASBE Executive Director.

State board of education members will discuss K-12 education policies and pending reforms to increase academic performance, accountability, and life-long learning. Army officers, including the Commanding Generals of Recruiting Command, Accessions Command, and Cadet Command, will review their recruiting efforts, personnel needs, and training programs. Leaders will identify synergistic opportunities and begin planning follow up activities to implement them across organizations.

NASBE is a leader in national high school reform efforts to ensure that graduates are best prepared to meet the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century. “NASBE and state boards of education are committed to providing students with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed,” said Welburn. “The input of educational experts, parents, business executives and military leaders is invaluable as we continue to implement comprehensive strategies that allow students to consider and pursue every post-high school option available to them, whether it be college, work, or enlistment in the armed forces.”

NASBE represents America’s state and territorial boards of education. Its principal objectives are to strengthen state leadership in education policymaking; advocate equality of access to educational opportunity; promote excellence in the education of all students; and assure responsible lay governance of education.