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School board leaders disappointed by deal between the state and feds on No Child Left Behind Act

(Sacramento) – The number of school districts identified for sanctions under the No Child Left Behind Act was cut almost in half under a recent agreement between the U.S. Department of Education and the California Department of Education. The deal, however, is deeply flawed, according to education leaders across the state.

“This compromise, although it identifies fewer districts than originally targeted, is riddled with problems,” said CSBA Executive Director Scott P. Plotkin. “Rather than addressing NCLB’s fundamental defects, the deal simply offers more short-sighted, convoluted quick-fixes that do much to penalize schools but little to support them. Any system that labels high-achieving districts like Cupertino Union Elementary – one of the highest-achieving districts in the country – as ‘failing,’ is clearly dysfunctional.

“Our school boards are committed to accountability,” Plotkin added, “but NCLB, as currently written, is proving unworkable at the local level. We need to continue working with federal officials to fix NCLB so that it actually helps schools provide each and every child with a quality education as originally intended. As is, the law is cumbersome and counterproductive. We look forward to working with the new U.S. Secretary of Education, Margaret Spellings, and her staff and hope this is only the beginning of a long-term collaborative effort to make NCLB successful at the local level.”

For more information, or to schedule an interview, contact CSBA Media Relations Specialist Matt Nichols at (916) 669-3243 or (916) 607-8449 or CSBA Assistant Executive Director, Communication Mina Fasulo at (916) 425-0109.

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