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CORRECTED STATEMENT

Statement of Education Industry Association Executive Director Steven Pines On the U.S. Department of Education's Plans for a Reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act

WASHINGTON, DC—March 16, 2010 – In its blueprint for the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the US Department of Education has taken a nuanced approach to school accountability which the Education Industry Association (EIA) certainly supports. But over half a million low-income families with students in the nation's poorest performing schools will be disappointed to learn that the Department has also proposed that the highly successful Supplemental Education Services (SES) program become an "option" rather than continued as a required student support intervention. If the ultimate aim is to narrow the gap between the educational opportunities available to higher income families and their lower income peers, this proposal appears to be a step in the wrong direction.

By making SES an optional program for only the poorest-performing 5% of the nation's schools, the Department will essentially cut off an education lifeline which has delivered educational equity and hope to more than one million students – a goal the Administration deems essential in other parts of its reform plan.

EIA is disappointed that the Department would deny more than 500,000 low-income families the high-quality tutoring assistance they need to reach challenging college-ready standards – the kind of after-school support which is used extensively by higher income families in the US and worldwide. EIA's disappointment, however, surely pales in comparison to that of the economically disadvantaged students – many of whom are struggling to overcome a pernicious education achievement gap – who rely on high-quality, after-school tutoring to narrow that gap. The tutoring program continues to grow in popularity and effectiveness. Since its implementation eight years ago, more than one million students have taken advantage of it.

EIA calls on the Obama Administration and the U.S. Congress to ensure that an improved and strengthened SES program remains a core student support intervention in a reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Here's why:

- **SES has a record of success and is working for low-income families** – More than 1 million students and their families, including more than 500,000 this year alone, can attest to the positive impact SES has had on their attitude toward learning, academic skills, and achievement in school. NCES released results of a survey in November 2009 which found that 80% of low-income parents were very satisfied with the after-school tutoring program. There is a growing body of independent research that has documented the academic benefits of the program to its participants. And while SES certainly should be improved, mechanisms are in place to guide implementation by states, school districts and tutoring providers.

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- **SES represents a very real, tangible choice for families with few other choices** – The Department’s ESEA reauthorization plans signal increased support for charter schools and public school choice. SES also represents a choice, arguably one that is easier and far less disruptive than changing schools or applying to a new one. Removing SES means taking away a parent’s voice and influence over the child’s education.
- **SES has made a significant economic impact in the communities in which it operates** – EIA research among members indicates that tens of thousands of part time SES instructors – the overwhelming majority of whom are certified teachers –each received, on average, almost \$3,900 in supplemental income during the 2008-2009 school year.
- **SES provides the financing support needed to expand after-school opportunities for families --** The *America After 3pm* survey found that the economy is taking a toll on participation in afterschool programs. More than half of parents who would like to have a child in an after-school program cited costs as the main reason for not participating. Eliminating SES in the middle of a once-in-a-generation economic recession would deny opportunities to millions of students.

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About Education Industry Association

The Education Industry Association works to expand educational opportunities and improve student achievement for learners of all ages by infusing American education with market-based drivers of service, innovation, and results. Founded in 1990, EIA is the leading trade association for private providers of education services, suppliers, and other private organizations in all sectors of education. EIA currently has more than 400 individual and corporate members. For more information call EIA Executive Director Steven Pines at 800-252-3280 or visit www.educationindustry.org.