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**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION CONTINUES WORK AFTER FIRST-EVER FEDERAL
SUMMIT ON BULLYING**

New Website Launched, Civil Rights Enforcement Reinvigorated, Inter-Agency Collaboration Continued

Though the U.S. Department of Education's first-ever bullying summit may be over, the real work continues. The launch of a new Website, www.bullyinginfo.org, allows for an easy, more centralized and accessible location of federal resources, and a reinvigorated Office for Civil Rights means complaints of bullying and harassment will be vigorously investigated. In addition, the collaboration between federal agencies will continue.

"As educators, as state and local officials, and at the federal level, we simply have not taken the problem of bullying seriously enough," U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan said. "It is an absolute travesty of our educational system when students fear for their safety at school, worry about being bullied or suffer discrimination and taunts because of their ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability or a host of other reasons. The fact is that no school can be a great school until it is a safe school first."

The Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools hosted the summit in conjunction with the departments of Justice, Health and Human Services, Agriculture, Defense and Interior. It focused on three areas: Research (what we know and additional gaps we need to fill); Programs (which programs work in combating bullying and areas where further programmatic development is needed); and Policy (how can policy at the local, state and federal levels help prevent bullying).

"The summit exceeded our highest expectations as our partners came prepared with brilliant ideas and boundless imagery," said Kevin Jennings, assistant deputy secretary for the Department's Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools. "We will compile those ideas and use them as a framework to map out a national anti-bullying strategy in the coming weeks and months." Jennings hopes that school officials will take immediate action as the 2010-2010 school year begins.

Over the past year, the U.S. Department of Education has stepped up its efforts to address bullying to include a new \$27 million Safe and Supportive Schools (S3) grant program, a pilot that will enable states to measure school safety at the building level and to provide federal funds for interventions in those schools with the greatest needs. In addition, the Department's blueprint for reform of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act calls for a dramatic increase in funding for its Successful, Safe and Healthy Students grants program, which is an expansion of the Safe and Supportive Schools pilot.

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