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NAFIS Executive Director Nicole Russell to Step Down After Three Years of Transformational Leadership

Washington, D.C. – April 28, 2025 — The National Association of Federally Impacted Schools (NAFIS) has announced that Executive Director Nicole Russell has resigned from her role, effective May 5, 2025, following three years of dedicated service and leadership.

During her tenure, Russell played a pivotal role in advancing the mission of NAFIS, strengthening its advocacy for Impact Aid, and building a dynamic team and strategic framework to support the organization's long-term success.

"It has been a true honor to lead NAFIS," said Russell. "As a military-connected spouse and parent, this work is deeply personal. I'm incredibly proud of what we've accomplished together—strengthening bipartisan support for Impact Aid, growing our membership, and building a strong, mission-driven team. I leave with heartfelt appreciation for the relationships, progress, and impact we've made, and I will continue to champion the mission of NAFIS and the schools and students it represents."

The NAFIS Board of Directors has initiated a search for the next Executive Director and engaged a professional consultant to support a successful transition.

"Over the past three years, Nicole has guided NAFIS through a period of transformation—expanding our reach, deepening our impact, and cultivating a high-performing team grounded in the values of our association," said NAFIS Board President Quincy Natay. "Her passion, perspective, and unwavering advocacy for federally impacted school districts have made a lasting contribution to NAFIS and the communities we serve. We are sincerely grateful for her leadership and wish her continued success as she embarks on her next chapter."

The NAFIS Board, staff, and subgroup leaders are working closely together to ensure a smooth transition and continued alignment with the organization's strategic vision. Leadership is confident in the current team's ability to sustain operational excellence, advance key priorities, and carry forward the mission of advocating for the Impact Aid program and serving federally impacted school districts across the country.

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The National Association of Federally Impacted Schools (NAFIS) represents more than 1,000 federally impacted public school districts that together educate nearly eight million students across the nation. Federally impacted school districts are those located on or near nontaxable Federal property—including military installations; Indian trust and restricted lands; Federal low-income housing facilities; and national parks, national laboratories and other Federal buildings and property. These school districts receive Impact Aid, a Federal education program that reimburses school districts for the lost local revenue and additional costs associated with the presence of Federal property. To learn more, visit www.nafisdc.org.