

Letter to President Obama in Support of the Global Partnership for Education

Dear Colleague:

I would like to invite you to join me in sending a letter to President Obama in support of a robust commitment from the United States at the upcoming pledging conference for the Global Partnership for Education, the only multilateral organization exclusively focused on ensuring all children have access to a quality education. Strong U.S. support in June will help the Global Partnership achieve its goals of supporting quality education for 29 million children in poor and fragile states, and will help leverage millions of dollars in education financing from donor and developing country governments. For additional information or to sign on please contact Waverly Gordon in Congresswoman Schakowsky's office at Waverly.Gordon@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,

Jan Schakowsky

The Honorable Barack Obama
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

As members of Congress who support United States leadership on global education, we urge your administration to commit \$250 million over two years at the upcoming pledging conference for the Global Partnership for Education on June 26 in Brussels.

Despite efforts by the U.S. and the international community, 57 million children do not attend primary school and 250 million children – nearly 40 percent of the world's children of primary school age – cannot read, write, or count. We know that we cannot end extreme poverty without education. If all students in low-income countries left school with basic reading skills, 171 million people could be lifted out of poverty.

The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) is the only international organization exclusively dedicated to ensuring all children have access to a quality education and are learning. The Partnership focuses on building strong, lasting education systems, not just the separate elements that make them up. It is the only global entity that brings all partners, including international donors, the private sector, and community groups, together around a single national education plan. Thanks to this model, countries like Somalia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and post-conflict Afghanistan are now implementing their first-ever national education plans.

If donors fulfill the Global Partnership's replenishment target of \$3.5 billion at the June pledging conference, the organization will be able to support 29 million children in primary and secondary school and help increase the number of children completing primary school with literacy and numeracy skills by 25 percent by 2018. Importantly, donor contributions have the power to leverage an additional \$16 billion in developing country partners' domestic financing for education.

To date, the Global Partnership for Education has allocated \$3.7 billion to nearly 60 low-income countries. In the last ten years, the Partnership has assisted these partner countries to enroll 22 million children in school, construct over 53,000 classrooms, and train more than 300,000 teachers. Primary school net enrollment rates in GPE developing country partners rose from 66 percent in 2000 to 81 percent in 2011, a higher rate of improvement than developing countries not a part of the Partnership.

Once low-income countries join the Global Partnership, they demonstrate their commitment to educating their own people – on average, domestic financing to education as a share of the GDP in GPE countries increased by 10 percent after they joined the Global Partnership. Even now, more than 90 percent of education financing today comes from developing country governments themselves. It is up to the U.S. and other donors to help bridge the gaps that remain in poor and conflict-affected countries.

June's pledging conference is a key opportunity to leverage other donors and developing countries through a U.S. pledge of \$250 million over two years to the Global Partnership for Education. We urge you to demonstrate U.S. commitment to ensuring that all children have access to a quality basic education and are learning, and we look forward to working with you to ensure funding for this important initiative.

Sincerely,

cc: The Honorable John Kerry, Secretary of State,
The Honorable Rajiv Shah