

A better educated world—for all of us

Making the case locally for the Global Partnership for Education

At a time when nearly 40 percent of primary school age children worldwide still can't read, write, or count, there's no question that it's time for action on global education. But with many U.S. schools struggling and many U.S. newspapers increasingly focused only on local issues, how can we get the media to also take notice of the global education crisis?

As we advocate for global education, we all recognize that there's also real work to do on education in this country. Support for local and global education go hand-in-hand. Investing in one doesn't mean neglecting the other. Our support for the Global Partnership for Education is about building a better educated world—for all of us. Below are some ideas for driving that point home with editors.

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Draw parallels: Ignoring local education when we pitch global education is sure to raise questions—but presenting them in contrast risks accidentally pitting them against each other. By focusing on the similarities between local and global challenges, we can present improved education as a common goal, not a competition over resources. Check out the opening of this [Dallas Morning News](#) piece:

“As odd as this may sound, some of the worries we have about our schools right here in Dallas are not so different from the anxieties that education advocates face in Afghanistan.”

By drawing the two different realities together from the outset, the article makes global education feel close to home. A narrative of shared challenges invites readers to consider shared solutions. Here's how the article ends:

“We are separated by distance and culture, but the desires we have for our kids here in Dallas are no different than the hopes families have for their children in Afghanistan. If it takes joining a global fund to bring about a holistic education solution, let's do it.”

Tell a story: Stories of individual lives touched by access to education are more powerful than any statistic. If someone in your community can speak first-hand to the impact of investments in global education, great, but there are other creative ways to make this connection as well.

GPE Board Chair Julia Gillard, the former Australian Prime Minister, had [her own family story](#) about education profiled in *Bloomberg*, proving that you don't have to be a beneficiary of GPE resources to tell a story showing why they're so important!

Highlight a specific country: Does your local area have particularly strong ties to another country through geography, immigration patterns, or culture? Much like with a personal story, by zeroing in on a specific country, the idea of support for international education feels less theoretical and more personal. Check out the list of [GPE developing country partners](#) and these [success stories](#).

Demonstrate the local payoff: Research shows that a better educated world has far-reaching benefits. Supporting education is not just the right thing to do; it's also the smart thing to do. Use this [state-by-state index](#) to see how investments in foreign aid, including education, impact your area.

Education is a prerequisite for economic growth, and as countries succeed economically, they become better trade partners. The Global Business Coalition on Education brings together hundreds of companies that support global education. Are any of your hometown companies on [the list](#)?

Countries with higher primary schooling rates tend to enjoy greater democracy and stability. That's why [U.S. military leaders](#) also support investments in "soft power" like education.

Put things in context: Discussions about global education involve numbers that are hard for most of us to imagine. Try to find ways to make those numbers relevant locally. Here are some examples:

With a modest U.S. contribution, the Global Partnership for Education will support quality education for 29 million children over the next 4 years. 29 million children would fill every public primary school in a city like San Francisco 1,000 times over!

\$250 million over two years seems like a lot of money. But here's another way to look at it: about 40 cents per year, per person in the United States. That's roughly the cost of a single Crayola marker per person to help support quality education for 29 million children in nearly 60 countries.

Recruit local allies: With the right person joining your editorial board meeting or the right co-signer for your op-ed, you can up your chances of success with the media and potentially build a powerful long-term ally. See if someone in your community is willing to lend his or her name and voice to this cause alongside you. Get creative! Here are a few ideas to get you started:

Universities – Most colleges and universities have ties to educational institutions overseas through visiting faculty, exchange programs, research, or other partnerships. If there's a university near you, someone there can likely speak to the value of global education.

Girl Scouts – Last July, Girl Scouts nationwide hosted "[Malala Day](#)" events in honor of the renowned education advocate. Did a local troop get involved? Young girls in our communities make the case better than anyone that we should be supporting young girls everywhere.

Girl Rising – Were there any [Girl Rising](#) screenings in your area this year? Contact the organizers, who are sure to support you!

School Leaders – Is there a well-respected local teacher or school board member who might be willing to speak on this issue? A teacher supporting investment in international education immediately helps move the conversation from "local versus global" to "local and global."

Exchange Students – Are there exchange students in your community who could speak firsthand to their educational experiences growing up? See if they'd like to share their story.

Know the facts: Any perceived trade-off between local education and global education is, quite simply, unfounded. It is not a zero-sum game, and federal financing couldn't be diverted from one to the other this year even if we wanted it to be! Check out resources from the [U.S. Global Leadership Coalition](#) for more on why any choice between local and global investment is a false dichotomy.