



Great Public Schools for Every Student

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NEA welcomes spotlight on education during president's State of the Union *Investing in education and economic prosperity go hand in hand*

WASHINGTON—NEA President Dennis Van Roekel tonight thanked President Barack Obama for shining a spotlight on education during his second State of the Union.

“We thank President Obama for shining a spotlight on education and for recognizing the remarkable work of the nation's teachers. Our students’ futures and the economic well-being of our nation are at stake. We know that the road to the American dream runs directly through our nation’s classrooms.

“Our members—millions of talented teachers, education support professionals, and higher education faculty—are ready to contribute to this discussion, to roll up their sleeves and keep working hard to improve our public schools one student at a time, one school at a time, one community at a time.

“President Obama is tackling the pressing issues of our times head on. His priorities—putting more Americans back to work and getting our fiscal and economic house in order—are indeed essential to the long-term economic well-being of our nation.

“Policymakers need to make tough choices to restore fiscal discipline, but we hope they do not jeopardize our students’ education, which is tied to all of our futures.

“We welcome the president’s call to fix No Child Left Behind. We agree that it is time to right-size the role of the federal government in education. However, we remain concerned that competitive grants such as Race to the Top create winners and losers among our students. We need to give more students access to an education that will prepare them for the challenges of the 21st century and open new opportunities for children, especially minority children and those in low-income families.

“NEA is committed to the success of all students and ensuring that education remains the engine that moves America forward. We look forward to working with this Congress and the administration to continue the important work of transforming the nation’s public schools.”

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The National Education Association is the nation's largest professional employee organization, representing 3.2 million elementary and secondary teachers, higher education faculty, education support professionals, school administrators, retired educators and students preparing to become teachers.