



A Union of Professionals



Great Public Schools for Every Student

June 21, 2010

The President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As the twin G8 and G20 Summits in Canada fast approach, we are anticipating robust debates and resolutions on the best ways to guide the world's nations out of recession. The theme "Recovery and New Beginnings" could not be more appropriate. We are pleased to have your leadership—and that of others in your Administration—because we know you share our strongly held opinion that any nation's tomorrow lies in its children's today.

We are taking this rather unusual action of sending you a joint letter because of our concern that premature reductions and, in some cases, drastic cuts in public expenditures for education are being made by governments around the globe. We request that you exercise your leadership role at these international meetings to impress upon fellow world leaders that education must not be seen as an expensive drain on their economies, but as a high-return investment—the heart and soul of recovery and new beginnings. You have often aligned yourself with these sentiments and we implore you to speak out not only for the rights of children and educators, but also in the interest of the economic recovery and growth.

In order to give nations around the globe a chance to emerge from this recession we need highly trained and capable teachers. To achieve this goal, a focus on teacher training and development is crucially important. We support a new Global Partnership for Teacher Education and Professional Development, aimed at ensuring a sufficient number of qualified teachers to achieve quality education for all children by 2015.

It is clear that the way to rebuild our world economy is to increase funding for education, not cut it. Investing in education will spur innovation that will produce solutions to the many problems we confront. At the same time, expanding access to education provides an alternative for children whose frustration with being left behind and uneducated is too easily channeled in unproductive and dangerous ways. We must lead in this area and work to transform the world's hope into clear action. We must not one day look back at the financial and economic crisis as the reason why we lost an entire generation to despair. We hope that you agree and will capitalize on the opportunity presented by these summits for realizing the Millennium Development Goals' promise of education for all by 2015—through preparing and deploying high quality, professional teachers for those who need them most.

Sincerely,

Randi Weingarten  
President  
American Federation of Teachers

Dennis Van Roekel  
President  
National Education Association

cc: Secretary of State Hillary Clinton  
Secretary of Treasury Timothy Geithner  
Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis