



ASIAN AMERICANS AND PACIFIC ISLANDERS AND EDUCATION

BARACK OBAMA AND JOE BIDEN'S PLAN TO GIVE EVERY CHILD A WORLD CLASS EDUCATION TO COMPETE IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

“When I'm president, we'll give our kids everything they need to have a fighting chance...Let's rebuild our crumbling schools and recruit an army of new teachers because what makes the most difference in any child's education is the person standing at the front of the classroom. And we also have to make sure that every child who wants to learn English has the resources to learn English. And that any child who comes here and studies here and does well in school has the same chance to attend a public college as anyone else.”

– BARACK OBAMA, LOS ANGELES, OCTOBER 20, 2007

AT A GLANCE

THERE ARE 2.4 MILLION AAPI CHILDREN ENROLLED IN K-12 SCHOOLS – AND THEY ALL DESERVE ACCESS TO A HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION.

CONTRARY TO POPULAR STEREOTYPES, AAPIs ARE NOT UNIVERSALLY SUCCESSFUL IN ACADEMICS AND FACE UNIQUE CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC CHALLENGES AS BASIC AS JUST LEARNING ENGLISH. THE “MODEL MINORITY” MYTH ABOUT AAPIs IS MISLEADING AND INACCURATE WHICH HAS RESULTED IN POLICY MAKERS FOCUSING LESS ATTENTION ON THEIR NEEDS AND THE DISPARITIES IN THE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES PROVIDED TO THEM. AAPIs ALSO CONFRONT THE SAME SHORTCOMINGS IN OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS AS OTHER AMERICANS.

ALTHOUGH A RELATIVELY HIGH PERCENTAGE OF AAPIs WHO ARE 25 OR OLDER HOLD A BACHELOR'S DEGREE, CERTAIN AAPI ETHNIC GROUPS ARE FAR LESS SUCCESSFUL AND ATTAIN COLLEGE DEGREES AT A RATE FAR BELOW THE REST OF THE POPULATION.

THE PROBLEM

Barriers to Learning English: IN 2000, JUST UNDER 5 PERCENT OF AMERICANS AGED 18-64 SPOKE ENGLISH “NOT VERY WELL” OR “NOT AT ALL”, COMPARED TO APPROXIMATELY 16 PERCENT OF ASIAN AMERICANS OR PACIFIC ISLANDERS.

Linguistic and Cultural Barriers to Parent Engagement: WIDELY PUBLICIZED RESEARCH HAS SHOWN THAT STUDENTS WITH PARENTS INVOLVED IN THEIR EDUCATION ACHIEVE MORE, REGARDLESS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS, RACIAL OR ETHNIC BACKGROUND, OR THE PARENTS' EDUCATION LEVEL. YET OVER HALF OF THE AAPI POPULATION WAS BORN OUTSIDE OF THE UNITED STATES, AND OVER HALF OF ALL AAPI STUDENTS ARE NON-NATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKERS, WHICH FOR MANY AAPI FAMILIES RESULTS IN *cultural and language barriers to parental involvement.*

BARACK OBAMA AND JOE BIDEN'S PLAN

Early Childhood Education

- **High-Quality Zero-to-Five Early Education:** OBAMA AND BIDEN WILL LAUNCH A CHILDREN'S FIRST AGENDA THAT PROVIDES CARE, LEARNING AND SUPPORT TO FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN FROM BIRTH UP TO FIVE YEARS OLD. UNLIKE OTHER EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PLANS, THEIR PLAN PLACES KEY EMPHASIS ON EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION FOR INFANTS, WHICH IS ESSENTIAL FOR CHILDREN TO BE READY TO ENTER KINDERGARTEN. OBAMA WILL CREATE EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGE GRANTS TO PROMOTE STATE "ZERO TO FIVE" EFFORTS AND HELP STATES MOVE TOWARD VOLUNTARY, UNIVERSAL PRE-SCHOOL.
- **Expand Early Head Start and Head Start:** OBAMA AND BIDEN WILL QUADRUPLE EARLY HEAD START, INCREASE HEAD START FUNDING AND IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF BOTH.

K-12 Education

- **Support English Language Learners:** OBAMA AND BIDEN SUPPORT TRANSITIONAL BILINGUAL EDUCATION AND WILL HELP LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT STUDENTS GET AHEAD BY HOLDING SCHOOLS ACCOUNTABLE FOR MAKING SURE THESE STUDENTS GRADUATE. OBAMA AND BIDEN WILL SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT OF APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENTS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS AND PROGRAMS THAT MONITOR THE PROGRESS OF STUDENTS LEARNING ENGLISH AND HOLD SCHOOLS ACCOUNTABLE FOR MAKING SURE THESE STUDENTS GRADUATE.
- **Reform No Child Left Behind:** OBAMA AND BIDEN WILL FUND NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND AND IMPROVE ITS ASSESSMENTS AND ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEMS FOR AAPI CHILDREN. OBAMA BELIEVES TEACHERS SHOULD NOT BE FORCED TO SPEND THE ACADEMIC YEAR PREPARING STUDENTS TO FILL IN BUBBLES ON STANDARDIZED TESTS. HE WILL IMPROVE THE ASSESSMENTS USED TO TRACK STUDENT PROGRESS TO MEASURE READINESS FOR COLLEGE AND THE WORKPLACE AND IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING IN A TIMELY, INDIVIDUALIZED MANNER. OBAMA AND BIDEN WILL ALSO IMPROVE NCLB'S ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM SO THAT WE ARE SUPPORTING SCHOOLS THAT NEED IMPROVEMENT, RATHER THAN PUNISHING THEM
- **Recruit, Train, Support and Reward our Teachers:** OBAMA AND BIDEN WILL IMPROVE OUR SCHOOLS BY RECRUITING WELL-QUALIFIED TEACHERS TO EVERY CLASSROOM IN AMERICA. OBAMA AND BIDEN WILL IMPROVE TEACHER COMPENSATION BY REWARDING EXPERT, ACCOMPLISHED TEACHERS FOR TAKING ON CHALLENGING ASSIGNMENTS AND HELPING TEACHERS SUCCEED.
- **Make Math and Science Education a National Priority:** OBAMA AND BIDEN WILL RECRUIT GRADUATES WITH DEGREES IN MATH AND SCIENCE TO THE TEACHING PROFESSION AND WILL SUPPORT EFFORTS TO HELP THESE TEACHERS LEARN FROM PROFESSIONALS IN THE FIELD. THEY WILL ALSO WORK TO ENSURE THAT ALL CHILDREN HAVE ACCESS TO A STRONG SCIENCE

CURRICULUM AT ALL GRADE LEVELS.

- **Address the Dropout Crisis:** OBAMA ALSO WILL REDUCE THE HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT RATE FOR AAPIs BY PASSING HIS LEGISLATION, THE “SUCCESS IN THE MIDDLE ACT,” TO PROVIDE FUNDING TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO INVEST IN INTERVENTION STRATEGIES IN MIDDLE SCHOOL - STRATEGIES SUCH AS PERSONAL ACADEMIC PLANS, TEACHING TEAMS, PARENT INVOLVEMENT, MENTORING, INTENSIVE READING AND MATH INSTRUCTION, AND EXTENDED LEARNING TIME.
- **Expand High-Quality Afterschool Opportunities:** OBAMA AND BIDEN WILL DOUBLE FUNDING FOR THE MAIN FEDERAL SUPPORT FOR AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS, THE 21ST CENTURY LEARNING CENTERS PROGRAM, TO SERVE ONE MILLION MORE CHILDREN.

Higher Education

Make Community College and College Education Affordable: OBAMA AND BIDEN WILL CREATE A NEW AMERICAN OPPORTUNITY TAX CREDIT THAT WILL MAKE TUITION AT THE NATION’S COMMUNITY COLLEGES COMPLETELY FREE AND WILL COVER UP TO TWO-THIRDS THE COST OF TUITION AT THE NATION’S PUBLIC COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES. THIS \$4,000 TAX CREDIT WILL BE FULLY REFUNDABLE AND AVAILABLE AT THE TIME OF ENROLLMENT IN COLLEGE – WHEN FAMILIES NEED THE MONEY. RECIPIENTS OF THE CREDIT WILL BE REQUIRED TO CONDUCT 100 HOURS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE.

- **Simplify the Application Process for Financial Aid:** FORTY PERCENT OF ASIAN AMERICAN FRESHMAN ARE MORE LIKELY TO COME FROM FAMILIES WITH A HOUSEHOLD INCOME OF \$40,000 OR LESS. AAPI FAMILIES TEND TO BE LESS INFORMED ABOUT FINANCIAL AID AND ARE LIKELY TO OVERESTIMATE THE COST OF TUITION AND UNDERESTIMATE AVAILABLE AID. OBAMA AND BIDEN WILL STREAMLINE THE FINANCIAL AID PROCESS BY ELIMINATING THE CURRENT FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID APPLICATION AND ENABLING FAMILIES TO APPLY SIMPLY BY CHECKING A BOX ON THEIR TAX FORM, AUTHORIZING THEIR TAX INFORMATION TO BE USED, AND ELIMINATING THE NEED FOR A SEPARATE APPLICATION.
- **Support College Outreach Programs:** OBAMA SUPPORTS OUTREACH PROGRAMS LIKE GEAR UP, TRIO AND UPWARD BOUND TO ENCOURAGE MORE YOUNG PEOPLE FROM LOW-INCOME FAMILIES TO CONSIDER AND PREPARE FOR COLLEGE.

OBAMA’S RECORD

Illinois Advocacy: OBAMA HAS BEEN A LEADER ON EDUCATIONAL ISSUES THROUGHOUT HIS CAREER. AS A COMMUNITY ORGANIZER, OBAMA LED THE FIGHT ON BEHALF OF ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS FOR DROPOUTS. IN THE ILLINOIS STATE SENATE, OBAMA WAS A LEADER ON EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION, HELPING CREATE THE STATE’S EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL.

U.S. Senate: IN THE U.S. SENATE, OBAMA HAS BEEN A LEADER IN WORKING TO MAKE COLLEGE MORE AFFORDABLE. HIS VERY FIRST BILL SOUGHT TO INCREASE THE MAXIMUM PELL GRANT AWARD TO \$5,100. AS A MEMBER OF THE HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS COMMITTEE, OBAMA HELPED PASS LEGISLATION TO ACHIEVE THAT GOAL IN THE RECENT IMPROVEMENTS TO THE HIGHER EDUCATION ACT. OBAMA HAS ALSO INTRODUCED LEGISLATION TO CREATE TEACHER RESIDENCY PROGRAMS AND TO INCREASE FEDERAL SUPPORT FOR SUMMER LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more on Barack Obama and Joe Biden's Education Plan:

[HTTP://WWW.BARACKOBAMA.COM/ISSUES/EDUCATION/](http://www.barackobama.com/issues/education/)

Speech on Pre-K to 12 Education:

[HTTP://WWW.BARACKOBAMA.COM/2007/11/20/REMARKS_OF_SENATOR_BARACK_OBAMA_34.PHP](http://www.barackobama.com/2007/11/20/REMARKS_OF_SENATOR_BARACK_OBAMA_34.PHP)

Speech on College Affordability:

[HTTP://WWW.BARACKOBAMA.COM/2007/11/07/REMARKS_OF_SENATOR_BARACK_OBAMA_31.PHP](http://www.barackobama.com/2007/11/07/REMARKS_OF_SENATOR_BARACK_OBAMA_31.PHP)



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