



MAKING INVESTING IN EDUCATION EASY

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OBAMA STIMULUS A BOON TO EDUCATION, BUT IS IT ENOUGH? *Linda Darling-Hammond Gives Her Insights to Educators*

SAN JOSE, CA. – Despite the grim economy everywhere, there is a bright spot for education as the Obama administration prepares to pump \$100 billion into schools across the U.S. to shore up education and spark school program redesign and reform.

Nationally-recognized educator Dr. Linda Darling-Hammond talked about the windfall and funding slated for early childhood education, technology enhancement and stepped-up teacher training at a forum this week sponsored by the Silicon Valley Education Foundation.

Joining her was Dr. Michael Kirst, professor emeritus of education at Stanford University, and a member of SVEF's board of directors.

Both educators pointed out that the federal stimulus money – the largest such investment since the 1960s – will help plug an \$11 billion hole in California's schools budget. But the funds are a one-time infusion, lasting just two years, which makes them both wary about how much of the president's sweeping plans for education reform can truly be implemented.

"A lot of this reform money will just save jobs – patch the holes – and it's just for two years," Darling-Hammond warned. "We want to make sure we implement other things, too, like technology in the classroom, creating a state data system and creating teacher incentives."

Kirst added, "Education reaped a bonanza with this stimulus package. The basic fear is this can't go on. Will we have this upshoot for a while, then go on a very bumpy ride?"

Darling-Hammond, a Stanford educator and expert on education change who led President Obama's Education Transition Team, is one of Obama's biggest cheerleaders. She joined Obama's campaign for president nearly two years ago because she was impressed by Obama's deep commitment to education and his vision for change.



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“He had a 21st century vision for education with sweeping changes that included a college education for everyone and bigger and better technology for schools long before he was elected,” she said. “He looks ahead to the system we’d like to build and sees this (stimulus) money as a down payment on future reform.”

The Obama administration is making a significant investment in early childhood education -- \$10 billion for Head Start and other pre-K-12 programs – and the president is spending twice what the Bush administration spent on education technology.

The president, she says, “believes in making an investment on the front end because of the payoff down the road” in lower school dropout rates and fewer young people entering the criminal justice system.

“The president’s stimulus plan and its focus on early childhood programs, more math and science for our kids and more technology in the classroom falls squarely in line with our mission,” said Muhammed Chaudhry, president and CEO of SVEF. “We look forward to those dollars benefitting education in Silicon Valley, the heart of technology and innovation.”

Darling-Hammond, who has written more than a dozen books on education, is founder and co-director of Stanford University’s School Redesign Network, which works to improve underperforming schools. She was named the 10th most influential educator in the U.S. by Education Week magazine in 2006.

Darling-Hammond’s talk was also sponsored by TechNet, Bay Area Council, Joint Venture Silicon Valley Network, Santa Clara County School Boards Association and the League of Women Voters.

About SVEF:

We are a non-profit organization that delivers literacy and academic enrichment programs to public school students in partnership with the private sector and education community. We focus on the needs of our constituents: students, families, teachers, community and education leaders. We listen to their needs and find innovative solutions to their challenges.