

Statement on International Education Week 2013
Secretary of Education Arne Duncan
Washington, DC

I encourage you to celebrate the 14th annual International Education Week, a joint initiative of the U.S. Departments of Education and State. The week will highlight the benefits and value of a high quality education and study abroad. This year's theme is *International Education: Learning Matters Around the World*.

As all of you know, children today live in a very different world from their parents, and it's our obligation to educate them for it. Today's challenges are increasingly borderless, and education is the best and greatest investment that anyone can make. We must provide our students with an education that includes knowledge and understanding about other cultures, the acquisition of world languages and area expertise.

Both President Obama and I firmly believe that we are living in an age where jobs know no borders. And, if we don't prepare our children for this global competition, we will put them at a competitive disadvantage, unfortunately, for decades to come. As President Obama said, "Countries that are passive in the face of a global economy...will lose the competition for good jobs [and] for high living standards."

However, our young people will have a genuine opportunity to succeed if they get a world-class education – one that prepares them for college and for jobs that they aspire to, and for a meaningful place in our inter-connected, knowledge-based world. Here at the U.S. Department of Education, we are working to equip children to become globally competent and internationally successful citizens.

Here at home, we want to strengthen U.S. education by making high-quality preschool available to every child. We want to raise standards, support great teaching and make college affordable so every student can have the opportunity to learn 21st century skills for global success. And abroad, we want to engage in education diplomacy with our international partners. We want to share experiences, learn from each other and increase global competencies of all of our children.

The world is enriched and we all win when everyone gets globally smarter. International Education Week 2013 is a fantastic opportunity for us to focus on how we can all work together to increase global competence. I hope you have an enjoyable week celebrating both our uniqueness and our similarities.