

## A New College Education Plan

*By Shaileja Mammen*

Senator and presidential candidate Chris Dodd has proposed a new, comprehensive education plan. The proposed plan ensures access to quality and affordable education from preschool to college for all American students.

Senator Dodd, in a speech to the National Education Association of New Hampshire, said, “By creating universal preschool, enacting desperately needed reforms to NCLB, and providing free community college, I will make sure that American students, regardless of their backgrounds, are receiving the best educations in the world.”

Some of the proposals of the K-12 plan for high-quality schools include:

- Providing universal preschool so that every parent has access to high-quality, affordable preschool
- Making No Child Left Behind more flexible, allowing states to use multiple measures to calculate student achievement, and allowing schools to allocate resources to the students who need them the most
- Ensuring that experienced, qualified teachers are at every school and providing incentives for them to go where they are needed the most
- Improving quality of education by modernizing schools and reducing class sizes
- Implementing individualized graduation plans for every 9th grader to keep them on track for college and the workforce
- Supplementing curriculums with advanced and specialized online courses

Dodd’s plan to make college affordable and accessible intends to:

- Reform the student loan system to ensure it benefits students, not lenders
- Providing an opportunity for community college to every American
- Publishing a yearly index of college tuition increases
- Protecting students from unscrupulous loan companies

- Raising Pell Grants and reducing the costs of student loans

Dodd's proposal has many supporters among parents of college students, educators, and educational institutions. Some of the leaders in the field of education describe the plan as "a bold, detailed, and serious plan," "by far the best and most ambitious and enlightened education plan of the Democratic presidential candidates," and "a thoughtful and cutting-edge contribution to the national debate on reforming and improving our public schools."

One person also said that the plan would help with "providing world-class standards for all American students, together with more learning time, especially for core academics."

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