

PHILIPPE LE HOUÉROU
Executive Vice President and Chief Executive Officer

April 28, 2017

To: AFL-CIO
American Federation of Teachers (USA)
Australian Education Union
CAMPE (Bangladesh)
Coalition for Transparency and Accountability in Education
Confederación de Trabajadores de la Educación de la República Argentina
Danish Union of Teachers
Federação Nacional de Educação (Portugal)
GEW (Germany)
Global Campaign for Education
Global Campaign for Education-US
Kenya National Union of Teachers
Libraries Without Borders
NASUWT-The Teacher's Union (UK)
National Education Association (USA)
National Union of Teachers (UK)
New Zealand Educational Institute
Program on Human Rights/Global Economy
Public Services International
South African Democratic Teachers Union
STUNAM (Mexico)
Sudanese Coalition for Education for All
Uganda National Teachers' Union
Union of Education Norway
University and College Union (UK)

c/- American Federation of Teachers
555 New Jersey Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for sharing your views on how best to ensure that every child has access to quality education in your letter to Dr. Kim dated April 21, 2017. The International Finance Corporation (IFC), together with the World Bank, shares the conviction that education is the pathway out of poverty, and this is why the World Bank Group (WBG) has invested \$51 billion in education between 2000 and 2016. We also believe that high-quality education is a public good. As the world's largest provider of external development financing for education, the WBG continues to be deeply committed to working with governments to strengthen their leadership in the education sector and to deliver equitable services through their public education systems. The vast majority—more than 95 percent of the WBG's funding for education—goes to the public sector.

April 28, 2017

The IFC is devoted to private sector development, holding an active education portfolio of \$700 million, about three-fourths of which is in university, vocational education and training, reflecting IFC's focus on promoting employment and productivity as a means to reducing poverty.

Needs are acute, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and in South Asia where two-thirds of people still live in extreme poverty. While the majority of WBG investments in education support the public sector, we believe the private sector can play a supportive role in bringing much needed new funding and innovation toward the objective of expanding access to education that can lead to employment and better quality of life, and contribute to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals for employment and education.

We owe it to the roughly 60 million primary school-age children in the world who currently do not attend school, as well as the 250 million children who attend school but cannot read or write, to consider innovations and models that improve access and quality of education.

IFC invested in Bridge International Academies because of its potential for bringing, on a large scale, quality, low-cost basic education to children living in poverty. There is evidence that Bridge's education programs and use of technology are effective, notably in the strong performance of Bridge pupils in Kenya's national primary school exit exams last year.

We are seeking data on what approaches to education work and why. The World Bank is overseeing a large-scale impact evaluation of Bridge International Academies. This will be the first study to offer an objective view into the causal impacts of a low-cost private school chain on student learning, and it will help public officials better regulate the low-cost private school market, which currently provides education for a significant share of primary school children in developing countries. This research is being conducted by leading scholars of impact evaluations in education—Michael Kremer (Harvard University), Anthony Keats (Wesleyan University), Owen Ozier (World Bank), and Isaac Mbiti (University of Virginia)—and the results will be published in top-tier academic journals, as well as disseminated to governments and partners.

We look forward to sharing this data with you as it becomes available later this year, and we remain available for a continuing dialogue on how best to expand access to quality education for children in developing countries.

Sincerely,



Philippe Le Houérou
Executive Vice President and Chief Executive Officer
International Finance Corporation

cc: Dr. Jim Yong Kim, President, World Bank Group