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**KENNEDY JOINS OLYMPIC GOLD MEDALIST APOLO OHNO TO PROMOTE MATH  
AND SCIENCE EDUCATION**

Washington, D.C. – Today, Senator Edward M. Kennedy joined Olympic Gold Medalist Apolo Ohno and 100 middle school students to demonstrate the importance of math and science education and discuss his plan for keeping America Competitive through math and science education. At the event, Apolo Ohno helped launch the Hippest Homework Happening program to give students an opportunity to do their math homework with sports legends such as Mia Hamm, Lisa Leslie, and Dave Mirra. Thousands of students will go to [mathmovesu.com](http://mathmovesu.com) and do their homework with sports celebrities, motivating them to get excited about math and science.

Senator Kennedy's American Competitiveness plan will move the country forward and restore America's advantage in the workforce, education, health care and research. Kennedy's initiatives, such as making college and graduate school tuition free for low or moderate-income individuals who study science, math, engineering, technology, or a critical-need language, are a part of his plan to get the country back on track. His plan also doubles funding for National Science Foundation education programs, and invests in math, science, engineering and technology textbooks and laboratories for high-need schools.

Senator Kennedy's bill, the Right TRACK Act (The Right Time to Reinvest in America's Competitiveness) seeks to:

- 1) **Create high quality jobs**
- 2) **Educate Americans to fill the jobs of the future**
- 3) **Preserve good jobs in the US**
- 4) **Level the Playing field for US workers and businesses abroad**
- 5) **Help those harmed by globalization, workers and communities**
- 6) **Modernize U.S. Labor and Employment Laws**

Below are Senator Kennedy's remarks and a summary of his American Competitiveness plan:

**Remarks of Senator Edward M. Kennedy at Raytheon's  
"Math Moves U" Hippest Homework Happening Event  
(AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY)**

Thank you, Bill, for that warm introduction. It's great to see you here today. What many of you don't know is that Bill used to work for me on Senate Armed Services Committee issues before he went on to become comptroller of the Pentagon. Bill, they obviously need you there more than ever today. This isn't the first time Bill has gone to bat for children. Bill and I worked together in his

Senate days to establish the Department of Defense Child Care Program, which is now widely regarded as the best in the nation. It's great to be here with you, Bill.

It's an honor to be here today with representatives from Raytheon, students and teachers from Freedom Middle School in Fredericksburg, to kick off the first-ever Hippest Homework Happening. I commend Raytheon for establishing the Math Moves U project and the Hippest Homework Happening event. I'm especially proud that a company from Massachusetts is helping students across the nation to become interested in math.

Recent reports have emphasized the urgent need for American students to become better skilled in both science and math. We're falling behind other countries. Our youngest students perform well on international tests, but by the end of elementary school, we're losing out. Currently, China is graduating over two and a half times the number of engineers and computer science majors as the United States. In today's shrinking world, it's vital for both our economy and our national security that a new generation of students excels in these fields. Most of the jobs of the future will require a college degree, and the jobs that will help keep America first in the world will require math and science skills. We have real work to do to get us there.

A Raytheon survey found that 84 percent of middle school students would rather eat their vegetables or clean their room instead of doing math homework. More than four out of five middle school students think math is boring. If we can't get students interested in math and science when they are 12 or 13, it will be difficult for them to excel in those subjects once in high school and college.

But there is also some good news. In the same survey, a third of middle school students said that math is the subject they get the most excited about.

Across the United States today, 13,000 students will log on to the Math Moves U website to work on their math homework with celebrities such as soccer great Mia Hamm and basketball star Lisa Leslie. Each of these celebrities uses math in their work and they know just how important and enjoyable it can be.

I commend these celebrities and athletes for helping students become more involved in their math coursework.

We know that one of the key components in helping students succeed in any subject is a teacher who is well prepared and has the resources needed for the classroom. I understand that about 500 teachers across the U.S. have already registered for the Hippest Homework Happening. I commend Crystal Beatley, the seventh grade teacher from Freedom Middle School whose class is here today, because she entered the Celebrity Substitute Teacher contest. I hope that teachers across the country hear about the Math Moves U program and visit the website for useful resources and information.

We need to strengthen math and science teaching at every level to guarantee that America stays on the cutting edge of innovation and progress. Private initiatives like Raytheon's are extremely important, but the federal government must step up to the plate too. Congress and the President need to do more to help schools and students meet this challenge, and I'm hopeful that we can work together in Washington to see that the nation's students, schools, and colleges adapt to this new age of global competition and rise to new heights.

I commend Raytheon for the Math Moves U initiative and for committing two million dollars for its implementation. Countless students around the country will be inspired by the program to pay more attention in class, work harder, and learn how far math can take them in whatever career they choose. To all of the students here today, I say stay involved in Math Moves U and spread the word

about how math affects our common future.

## **THE RIGHT TRACK FOR EDUCATION**

### **Senator Edward Kennedy**

Spurred into action by launch of Sputnik, Congress passed the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) in 1958. The law declared a national “educational emergency” and led to the doubling of the federal education budget in four years. The programs authorized under the Act helped the United States to improve rapidly in math, science, engineering, technology, and critical foreign languages and led to our dominance in the arms race and global economy.

Today, our nation once again faces an international education challenge in education. The United States ranks ninth in the world in the number of 25-34 year-olds with high school diplomas. Third in the world in 1975, America now ranks 15th in the production of new scientists and engineers. These trends pose a threat to our national and economic security. To help America meet the global challenge, we must invest in every individual by ensuring access to the highest quality educational opportunities. The Right TRACK Act includes a New NDEA that:

#### **Arms Americans with 21st Century Knowledge and Skills**

- ...Makes college and graduate school tuition-free for low- or moderate-income individuals who study science, math, engineering, technology, or a critical-need language, doubles funding for NSF education programs, and invests in math, science, engineering and technology textbooks and laboratories for high-need schools.
  - ❖ ...*In 2004, only 19% of Massachusetts students who took the SAT expressed interest in studying science, math, technology or engineering.*
- ...Improves global knowledge and skills through significant investment in programs to increase the study and mastery of critical-need foreign languages and international cultures from the early grades through graduate school.
  - ❖ ...*73 schools in Massachusetts have expressed interest in the Chinese Language and Culture AP class.*
- ...Augments existing formula funds for job training with competitive grants to support innovative strategies to meet emerging labor market needs.
  - ❖ ...*There are now 72,800 job vacancies in Massachusetts. Last year, for the first time ever, there were more vacant jobs requiring higher education than there were jobs requiring just a high school diploma or job training. Yet Massachusetts ranks 49th in the nation in terms of investment in higher education.*

#### **Modernizes America’s Education System**

- ...Helps states increase academic rigor to meet national and international benchmarks and prepare students to succeed in college, the 21st century workforce, or the Armed Services.
  - ❖ ...*Massachusetts students are first or tied for first in the nation in reading and math in both 4th and 8th grades. But there is work to do: Massachusetts ranks 47th in the nation in the percentage of low-income 4th graders scoring proficient in reading.*
- ...Invests in attracting high quality math, science, and critical-need foreign language teachers to high-need schools through scholarships, loan forgiveness, tax incentives, grants for innovative postsecondary programs; and invests in NSF teacher training programs.
  - ❖ ...*University of Massachusetts Boston was recently awarded a \$500,000 NSF grant to increase the number of qualified science, technology, engineering, and mathematics graduates who are also qualified to teach.*
- ...Ensures cost is not a barrier to college for any student by creating state-based “Contract for Educational Opportunity” grants to cover students’ unmet need.

❖ *...Massachusetts is first in the nation in the percentage of high school graduates enrolling in and graduating from college, but it is becoming increasingly difficult for families to afford their children's education. In Massachusetts, 31% of the average family income is required to pay for annual expenses at a 4 year public university – after accounting for financial aid.*

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