

New Obama plan to help math, science teacher prep

February 7 2012, By KIMBERLY HEFLING , AP Education Writer

(AP) -- President Barack Obama called on Tuesday for millions of dollars in new funding to improve math and science education, an effort he said would be crucial to the nation's long-term success.

Obama said his upcoming [budget proposal](#), set to be released next week, would include a request for \$80 million from Congress for a new Education Department competition to support math and [science](#) teacher preparation programs. Obama made a similar request to Congress last year but the measure didn't pass.

Separately, he announced \$22 million in investments from the private sector to support math and science efforts. Among the organizations committing fresh funding are Google and the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

Obama said a renewed focus on math and science education should be an American imperative.

"The belief that we belong on the cutting edge of innovation, that's an idea as old as America itself," Obama said. "We're a nation of thinkers, dreamers, believers in a better tomorrow."

Obama has set a goal of preparing more than 100,000 math and [science teachers](#) and training a million additional math, technology, engineering and science graduates over the next decade.

Seeking to highlight the benefits of math and [science education](#), Obama hosted a White House science fair earlier Tuesday, featuring projects designed by over 100 students from across the country. The projects included a robot that helps [senior citizens](#) connect with their families via Skype and a portable disaster relief shelter that could be used to house people who have been displaced from their homes.

"It's not every day you have robots running all over your house," Obama said of the science fair. "I'm trying to figure out how you got through the metal detectors."

The president said the students participating in the science fair were an inspiration, and made him confident that the nation's best days were yet to come.

"You're getting America in shape to win the future," Obama said.

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