

## Supreme Education Council Symposium Highlights Powerful Role Parents Play In Education

### *Secretary General and Harvard Professor Lead “Parents: Partners in Education” Symposium*

Doha, Qatar – Parents can have a tremendous impact on the educational success of their children according to speakers at the Supreme Education Council’s annual symposium, “Parents: Partners in Education.” The event, which took place today at the Sheraton Doha, focused on the impact of parental engagement in education, the role parents can play in the children’s education and how schools can better engage parents.

“Parents are an important part in helping their children realize their full potential, both inside and outside of the classroom. Moving reform forward requires a partnership with parents and the Supreme Education Council is committed to make this happen,” said Sheikha Ahmed Al-Mahmoud, Secretary General of the Supreme Education Council in her remarks at the symposium.

Keynote remarks at the symposium were delivered by Dr. Heather Weiss, the Founder and Director of the Harvard Family Research Project. An expert in helping create more effective practices, interventions and policies to support children’s successful development from birth to adulthood, Dr. Weiss shared her research on the impact of parental involvement in education and practical ways for parents and schools to partner for success.

“Decades of research show that parent involvement in children’s learning and education from birth through secondary school, at home and at school, is vitally important to their school and life success,” said Dr. Weiss. “Evidence is accumulating that demonstrates that when parents and schools develop systematic, continuous and comprehensive school-wide parent involvement plans that build strong family-school partnerships to support children’s learning and school achievement, children are more likely to succeed.”

The symposium was attended by more than 800 people, including parents, teachers, leaders in education and regional and international educational experts. Her Excellency Sheikha Mahmoud discussed the current state of education reform in Qatar.

“The wise leadership of this country continues to confirm its commitment to reform and recognizes that we must keep moving forward. I am confident that *Education for a New Era* is making progress and that we will succeed in making Qatar a center for knowledge. While we will continue to face obstacles along our journey, we can and must succeed,” said Al-Mahmoud.

Following the event, Dr. Weiss met with members of the independent school Boards of Trustees to continue the dialogue and discuss the role Boards could play in engaging parents. Dr. Weiss will also visit an independent school and meet with School Support Organizations, teacher trainers at Qatar University and independent school operators and principals as part of her visit to Qatar.

This was the fifth symposium held by the Supreme Education Council since *Education for a New Era* was launched. The annual symposium brings together leading international experts from around the world, with Qatari experts, to address the most important, timely and cutting-edge education issues. Previous symposiums have focused on creativity, technology in education and international assessments.

Materials distributed at the symposium, including tip sheets for parents and teachers, will be available on the Supreme Education Council website. Video and photographs from the event will also be available.

*The Supreme Education Council was established by Emiri decree in 2002. It serves as the primary authority on education policy in Qatar and, with its three Institutes, is leading the effort to transform the nation's schools into a modern, world-class education system. More information about Qatar's education reform effort, Education for a New Era, is available at [www.education.gov.qa](http://www.education.gov.qa).*