

when we focus on the greater good, we can get a lot done.

So I want to congratulate the members of both political parties on this anniversary for working so hard to accomplish a significant and meaningful piece of legislation. And now we've got to get to work. Now we've got to do the job that's expected.

We can say that the work of reform is well begun. And that's—that's a true statement. The work will be complete, however, when every school—every public school in America is a place of high expectations and a place of achievement. That is our national goal.

And there are a lot of good people working on that goal. We've got good people here at the Federal level working on it—no better advocate than—excellence in public schools than Laura. She was a schoolteacher. She's a schoolteacher. She's a reading expert. She is a public school librarian. She's very knowledgeable, and she is passionate. And so this year she's going to spend a lot of time working with the local folks to achieve excellence for every single child.

And so is our—so is Rod Paige, who is running the Department of Education. I like to tease Rod a little bit. When I was looking for somebody to run the Department of Education, I wasn't interested in anybody who was good on the theory. I wanted somebody who was good on actually doing the job of being a superintendent of schools. And he ran the toughest school district in our State of Texas, which was the Houston Independent School District. And he did a great job, because he believed in high standards, accountability, and local control for the schools in the district. And Rod is the right man to be the Secretary of Education at this time in our Nation's history, and he has not let us down.

*Secretary Paige.* Thank you.

*The President.* Appreciate you.

If you follow schools and if you follow public education, you know that you can find excellence in schools where you've got

a good principal. Obviously, it requires good teachers. But if you've got a good principal, an innovative, smart, capable person who is motivated and dedicated and who believes every child can learn, you'll find excellence in that particular school. And we've got eight such principals with us today, and it is my honor to herald them.

Bernice Wheelchel, who is the principal of City Springs Elementary School right here in Baltimore, Maryland, or right close here in Baltimore, Maryland. I want to thank you.

Mary Ann Hawthorne is the principal of the Samuel Gompers Vocational and Technical High School in Bronx, New York. Appreciate you, Mary Ann. Thank you.

Keith Owens, who is from Beulah Heights Elementary School in Pueblo, Colorado. Keith. Yes, thank you.

Keith Posley is from Clarke Street Elementary in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

J.R. Guinn, Del Valle High School, El Paso, Texas.

Lorraine Fong, who is the principal from Kew Elementary in Inglewood, California. I appreciate you, Lorraine. Good to see you again.

Patrick Galatowitsch, who is the principal of Rolling Hills Elementary School, Orlando, Florida.

Beth Hager, principal of the Whitney M. Young Middle School in Cleveland, Ohio.

I appreciate you all. I'm glad you're here. I want to thank you for standing up here with Laura and me and Rod. It is a chance for us to remind our fellow citizens that when you find a good principal, thank him or her from the bottom of your heart for doing one of the toughest jobs in the country. But I hope it's one of the most rewarding jobs for you. Because, after all, you're achieving what a lot of people say can't happen, and that is you've taken some tough schools and converted them to little centers of excellence. And you can truly say that because of your efforts and your love and your energy, no child in your