



NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND EXTRA CREDIT

January 6, 2004

The Number One Domestic Priority Of This Country

President Bush visited Pierre Laclède Elementary School in St. Louis yesterday to discuss the bipartisan No Child Left Behind Act. Following is an excerpt from his remarks:

"[M]aking sure every child learns to read and making sure every child is educated is a -- the number one domestic priority of this country. It is essential we get it right. Laclède Elementary School shatters stereotypes. It shows that we can have excellence in every single classroom across this country, that it's not just suburban America where we find excellence. You can find excellence in inner city America, you find excellence in rural America. You find excellence where you've got great principals and teachers and leadership willing to raise the standards, willing to challenge every child, because you believe in every child.

"You find excellence where you're willing to measure and then correct when things aren't going the way they should. You find excellence when you've got skilled teachers carrying around a book that measures the ability of each child, not a collection of children but every child, and so that you can then qualify the curriculum to meet the needs of that child.

"And I am here for the simple reason to show what is possible all across America. And what is possible is to take reading scores from 7 percent to 80 percent in places like St. Louis, Missouri, and elsewhere. I want to congratulate you for setting the standard and keep raising the bar. Make sure that other 20 percent gets up to grade level at third grade -- I know you will -- and you will have done your duty, as educators and Americans, to make sure that our children, the very future of the country, have got the capacity to succeed in the greatest land on the face of the earth."

The complete text of President Bush's remarks can be found at:
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/01/20040105-2.html>

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If you have any questions, please contact Geoff Goodman at Geoffrey.Goodman@ed.gov.

NCLB Extra Credit provides a regular look at the No Child Left Behind Act, President Bush's landmark education reform initiative passed with bipartisan support in Congress. For more information, contact the U.S. Department of Education at (202) 401-1576.