

I would like to take just a few minutes today to salute the dedicated teachers, administrators, and school board members in the Logan-Magnolia Community School District and to report on their participation in a unique Federal partnership to repair and modernize school facilities.

This fall marks the 10th year of the Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant Program. That is its formal name, but it is better known among educators in Iowa as the program of Harkin grants for Iowa public schools. Since 1998, I have been fortunate to secure a total of \$121 million for the State government in Iowa, which selects worthy school districts to receive these grants for a range of renovation and repair efforts everything from updating fire safety systems to building new schools or renovating existing facilities. In many cases, this Federal funding is used to leverage public and/or private local funding, so it often has a tremendous multiplier effect in a local school district.

The Logan-Magnolia Community School District received a 2002 Harkin grant totaling \$1 million which it used to help build additional classrooms. These additional classrooms allowed the district to provide preschool, special education, and afterschool programs. This school is a modern, state-of-the-art facility that befits the educational ambitions and excellence of this school district. Indeed, it is the kind of school facility that every child in America deserves.

Excellent schools do not just pop up like mushrooms after a rain. They are the product of vision, leadership, persistence, and a tremendous amount of collaboration among local officials and concerned citizens. I salute the entire staff, administration, and governance in the Logan-Magnolia Community School District. In particular, I would like to recognize the leadership of the board of education—president Dennis Alvis, vice-president Kevin Mann, Kelly Gochenour, Mike Branstetter and Dan Cohrs, and former members, president Randy Koenig, Kris Earlywine, and Jim Noneman. I would also like to recognize superintendent James Hammrich, former superintendent Ed Gambs, principal Jim Makey, principal Katy Sojka, board secretary and business manager Karen Jacobsen, and secretaries Mary Johnsen, Cheryl Greenwood, and Margaret Straight.

As we mark the 10th anniversary of the Harkin school grant program in Iowa, I am obliged to point out that many thousands of school buildings and facilities across the United States are in dire need of renovation or replacement. In my State of Iowa alone, according to a recent study, some 79 percent of public schools need to be upgraded or repaired. The harsh reality is that the average age of school buildings in the United States is nearly 50 years.

Too often, our children visit ultra-modern shopping malls and gleaming

sports arenas on weekends but during the week go to school in rundown or antiquated facilities. This sends exactly the wrong message to our young people about our priorities. We have to do better.

That is why I am deeply grateful to the professionals and parents in the Logan-Magnolia Community School District. There is no question that a quality public education for every child is a top priority in that community. I salute them and wish them a very successful new school year.●

NEVADA COMMUNITY EDUCATION

● Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, in Iowa and across the United States, a new school year has begun. As you know, Iowa public schools have an excellent reputation nationwide, and Iowa students' test scores are among the highest in the Nation.

I would like to take just a few minutes, today, to salute the dedicated teachers, administrators, and school board members in the Nevada Community School District, and to report on their participation in a unique Federal partnership to repair and modernize school facilities.

This fall marks the 10th year of the Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant Program. That is its formal name, but it is better known among educators in Iowa as the program of Harkin grants for Iowa public schools. Since 1998, I have been fortunate to secure a total of \$121 million for the State government in Iowa, which selects worthy school districts to receive these grants for a range of renovation and repair efforts everything from updating fire safety systems to building new schools or renovating existing facilities. In many cases, this Federal funding is used to leverage public and/or private local funding, so it often has a tremendous multiplier effect in a local school district.

The Nevada Community School District received several Harkin fire safety grants totaling \$ 154,000 which it used to install fire alarm systems at the elementary, middle and high schools as well as emergency lighting at the high school. The Federal grants have made it possible for the district to provide quality and safe schools for their students.

Excellent schools do not just pop up like mushrooms after a rain. They are the product of vision, leadership, persistence, and a tremendous amount of collaboration among local officials and concerned citizens. I salute superintendent James Walker, the entire staff, administration, and governance in the Nevada Community School District. In particular, I would like to recognize the leadership of the board of education—president Curt Hoff, Marcia Engler, David Laird, Marty Chitty and Mike Bates, as well as former members president Carol Holstine, Dan Morrical, Renee Larsen, Laura Lillard, Bill Van Sickle, Jim Niblock and Marty

Mortvedt. Building and grounds director Richard "Scottie" Scott, business manager Brian Schaeffer, and former superintendent Harold Hulleman were all instrumental in the application and implementation of the grant.

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That is why I am deeply grateful to the professionals and parents in the Nevada Community School District. There is no question that a quality public education for every child is a top priority in that community. I salute them, and wish them a very successful new school year.●

OTTUMWA COMMUNITY EDUCATION

● Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, in Iowa and across the United States, a new school year has begun. As you know, Iowa public schools have an excellent reputation nationwide, and Iowa students' test scores are among the highest in the Nation.

I would like to take just a few minutes today to salute the dedicated teachers, administrators, and school board members in the Ottumwa Community School District, and to report on their participation in a unique Federal partnership to repair and modernize school facilities.

This fall marks the 10th year of the Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant Program. That is its formal name, but it is better known among educators in Iowa as the program of Harkin grants for Iowa public schools. Since 1998, I have been fortunate to secure a total of \$121 million for the State government in Iowa, which selects worthy school districts to receive these grants for a range of renovation and repair efforts—everything from updating fire safety systems to building new schools or renovating existing facilities. In many cases, this Federal funding is used to leverage public and/or private local funding, so it often has a tremendous multiplier effect in a local school district.

The Ottumwa Community School District received several Harkin grants totaling \$3,129,313 which it used to help modernize and make safety improvements throughout the district. Harkin