

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 Atlantic 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.●

CAL 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 CAL 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 CAL Community School District received a 1999 Harkin grant totaling \$205,000 which it used to help build an addition to the elementary school and a 2004 Harkin grant totaling \$162,250 to provide space for pre-kindergarten programs, before and after school programs, vocational agriculture programs and science. The district also received fire safety grants totaling \$99,978 to improve emergency lighting, install fire alarms and make other

safety improvements throughout the district. 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 the entire staff, administration, and governance in the CAL Community School District. In particular, I would like to recognize the leadership of the board of education—Mark Johansen, Beth Eddy, Shawn Elphic, Steve Muhlenbruch and Therron Miller and former board members Roy Plagge, Darwin Hill, Jacki Anderson, Craig Johnson and Lee Schaefer. I would also like to recognize superintendent Steven Lane and former superintendents Dr. James Jess, Charles Stalker and Lyle Schwartz and the CAL Education Foundation.

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CENTRAL CITY 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 Central City Community School District, and to report on their participation in a unique Federal partnership to repair and modernize school facilities.

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The Central City Community School District received a 2004 Harkin grant totaling \$500,000 which it used to help build a new high school building and expand curricular offerings and after-school programs, improve available technology, and improve accessibility for students with disabilities. 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. The district also received a fire safety grant in 2002, totaling \$30,000, which was used to install a new fire alarm system and to make ventilation improvements in the multipurpose and high school buildings.

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 Central City Community School District. In particular, I would like to recognize the leadership of the board of education—David Goodlove, Neil Mattias, Crystal Murphy, Leanna Palmer and Eric Rauch and former board members Kirk Hayes, Teresa Uhlenkamp and Sue Pillard. I would also like to recognize superintendent John Dotson, former superintendent Bill Mertens, high school principal David Glynn and business manager Karla Hogan.

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