

Bob Martinez, State chair, Colorado Republican Party; pro football Hall of Famer John Elway; Bruce Benson, chair and president, Benson Mineral Group, Inc.; and former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan.

**Proclamation 8063—Leif Erikson Day, 2006**

*October 4, 2006*

*By the President of the United States of America*

**A Proclamation**

Leif Erikson Day honors a great son of Iceland and grandson of Norway who became one of the first Europeans known to reach North America. This day is also an opportunity to celebrate the generations of Nordic Americans who have contributed to our country and strengthened the ties that forever bind the United States with Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden.

Like the crew of risk takers that Leif Erikson boldly led on a quest to find new lands, Americans have always valued the ideals of exploration and discovery. A desire to seek and understand inspired their voyage more than a millennium ago, and it remains a central part of our national character as a new generation pursues great new goals today. Nordic Americans continue to make valuable contributions to our society that have expanded human knowledge and helped make our world a better place.

To honor Leif Erikson and to celebrate our citizens of Nordic-American heritage, the Congress, by joint resolution (Public Law 88–566) approved on September 2, 1964, has authorized the President to proclaim October 9 of each year as “Leif Erikson Day.”

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 9, 2006, as Leif Erikson Day. I call upon all Americans to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs to honor our rich Nordic-American heritage.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this fourth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of

the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., October 6, 2006]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on October 10.

**Remarks at the Department of Education**

*October 5, 2006*

I want to thank Secretary Spellings and her fine team for welcoming me here to the Department of Education. I have just reassured the Secretary and the folks who work here that the reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act is a priority of this administration. And the reason I say it's a priority is because this act is working. We strongly believe in setting high standards for all students, and we strongly believe that in order to make sure those standards are met, we must measure to determine whether or not the schools are functioning the way we expect them to function and the way the parents expect them to function and the way the taxpayers expect them to function.

No Child Left Behind is working, and we've been strategizing here as to how to make sure we not only defend it during the reauthorization process but how we strengthen the law.

And so I want to thank you all for your work. I particularly want to thank the teachers and principals who have taken the No Child Left Behind Act and have implemented it and have seen the dramatic results that can be achieved by rigorous academics and strong curriculum and hard work in the classroom.

The most important function of Government at home is to make sure that a child receives an excellent education, and that's particularly important in a world that is becoming more globalized. I'm optimistic we can achieve our objectives. I know this law is working, and I look forward to working with Congress in the next legislative session to reauthorize and strengthen the No Child Left Behind Act.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:03 a.m. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

### Remarks at Woodridge Elementary and Middle Campus

October 5, 2006

Thank you all. Thank you for the warm welcome. Thank you for inviting Madam Secretary and me to your school. It's nice to be introduced by somebody with a Texas accent. [Laughter] She's a good buddy, and she is doing a fine job as the Secretary of Education. And so, Margaret, thank you very much for your service.

I'm glad to be at Woodridge as well. I'm here because this is one of America's fine public charter schools. I'm here to remind people that charter schools work, and they can make a difference in the lives of our children. So I want to thank you for letting me come. I want to thank the teachers and the administrators and the principals—and the principal for setting high expectations. I know that sounds simple, but you know what happens when you set low expectations? You get low results. And so a center of excellence is always a place of learning where people believe the best. And I want to thank the folks here for setting high expectations. I want to thank you for achieving results.

I applaud the parents of the students who are here for being—and I applaud you for being involved in the life of your children, particularly when it comes to one of the most important aspects of their development, and that is school. And I want to thank the students for letting me come too.

I want to thank Mary, the principal. You know, one of the things I have found, and I've spent a lot of time in schoolhouses as a result of being the Governor and the President, is that a good school always has a good principal. And Mary Dunnock must be a good principal, because this is a good school. And I applaud you for being an educational entrepreneur. An educational entrepreneur is somebody who is willing to challenge failure and mediocrity if she finds it, because

failure and mediocrity are unacceptable in any classroom anywhere in the United States.

I thank Donald Hense for joining us, founder and chairman of the board of trustees of the Friendship Public Charter School. Mr. Hense told me he had the opportunity of meeting my mother one time, and I said to him, "Well, you met the A-team then"—[laughter]—"Now you met the B-team." [Laughter] But thank you for your leadership. I welcome the members of the Friendship Public Charter School Board. Thank you for coming.

Being on a school board is difficult work, I know. Being on a school board that challenges the status quo is important work, and I thank you for that. It means a difference—I was in Lyle Brown's class. Lyle is not here. He's still teaching. But one of the things I saw was a teacher who loves being a teacher. And I applaud the teachers in this school and teachers all around the country who are adding to the great future of our country.

I was in Max Brooks' class. He's not here either, but he is the facilitator in what's called a SmartLab. They didn't have SmartLabs when I was going to elementary or junior high school. They've got one here. And it's an innovative program that teaches people practical skills.

You know, one of the interesting questions I like to ask to students when I go into the classroom is, how many of you are going to go to college? You'll be pleased—there you go—you'll be pleased to hear the hands went up. See, that's a good sign, when the principal and students and parents have encouraged our children to set a goal. Going to college is an important goal for the future of the United States of America, and I'm please to report that when I asked that question in both classrooms I was invited to go to, there was unanimity.

The students have set a goal to go to college, and I reminded them that now is the time to work hard so you get to go; like, take advantage of the SmartLab; read more than you watch TV; practice your math and science. I want to applaud you, Madam Principal, for encouraging our students to aim high, and I thank the teachers for helping them achieve those dreams.