

other words, this act isn't expiring; it just needs to be reauthorized.

And what are some of the things we can do? Margaret has been listening to Members of Congress, but equally importantly, she's been listening to Governors and local school boards. We need to increase the flexibility for our States and districts. We don't want the No Child Left Behind Act to be viewed as something that hamstring innovation. There ought to be flexibility in the system. We're going to provide help for struggling schools—extra help. We want to make sure that a high school degree means something. We don't want people getting out of high school and it's not meaning something.

She's been talking with Members of Congress to give schools credit for growth and achievement that individual students make from year to year—in other words, flexibility in the accountability system without undermining the core principle of accountability. We're going to implement a more accurate system for measuring high school dropout rate and make it easier for our students to enroll in the tutoring programs. There are things we can do, and must do, by working together.

I am optimistic about the country because I come to places like Horace Greeley Elementary School, a little center of excellence; a place where, you know, some might say, "Well, these kids can't possibly achieve such high standards." But, in fact, they are. This is a school that's got a significant number of Latinos whose families may not speak English as a first language. This is a school where there's some newly arrived to our country here. This is a school that is exceeding expectations because of high standards and using the accountability system as a tool to make sure that no child is left behind.

It is my honor to be with you. Thank you for letting me come and share our philosophy about how to achieve educational excellence for every student. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:46 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Carlos G. Azcoitia, principal, Horace Greeley Elementary School; Mayor Richard M. Daley of Chicago, IL; Rufus Williams, president, Chicago Board of Education; and Arne Duncan, chief executive officer, Chicago Public Schools.

Remarks Following a Meeting With the Chicago 2016 Bid Committee and United States Olympic Committee Members in Chicago

January 7, 2008

I want to thank the members of the 2016 Chicago bid to get the Olympics. Listen, Mr. Mayor, you and your committee have put together a great plan. It's a plan that will make America proud.

They say that the Olympics will come to Chicago if we're fortunate enough to be selected, but really it's coming to America. And I can't think of a better city to represent the United States than Chicago.

This is a well-thought-out venue. There will be—the athletes will be taken care of. People who will be coming from around the world will find that this good city has got fantastic accommodations and great restaurants. It will be safe.

And so I—this country supports your bid strongly. And our hope is that the judges will take a good look at Chicago and select Chicago for the 2016 Olympics.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:35 a.m. at the Union League Club of Chicago. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Richard M. Daley of Chicago, IL.

Remarks on the National Economy in Chicago

January 7, 2008

Thank you all. Thank you all very much. Thanks for coming. I'm glad to be here with the members of the Illinois Chamber. Mr. Mayor, thank you very much. You've given me a lot to do today. [*Laughter*]

First thing is, the mayor runs the school system. And I went by Horace Greeley Elementary, and the reason I did is because Horace Greeley is a blue ribbon school. I remember awhile back, everybody was a blue ribbon school. But that's not the way it is these days because we're judicious in who gets awarded a blue ribbon school. A blue ribbon school is one which sets high standards and measures and achieves results.