

**THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION**  
**WASHINGTON, D.C. 20202**

May 2, 2006

**TO OUR NATION'S TEACHERS**  
**IN HONOR OF**  
**CELEBRATING TEACHERS WEEK**  
April 30 - May 6, 2006

It is my privilege to honor this nation's outstanding and dedicated teachers during Celebrating Teachers Week. We are eternally grateful for our teachers' efforts to build character, instill knowledge, and make dreams come true.

While recognition is appropriate, it is not enough. We must support teachers in their important work. They need to be given accurate and timely data about academic performance, and the resources and flexibility to improve it. They must be encouraged in their efforts to take on the toughest assignments in the most challenging schools and communities. And they need to know that positive results will be rewarded.

The *No Child Left Behind Act* has brought out the best in our teachers. And they have brought out the best of this law, turning high standards and accountability into real results for our children. Across the country, test scores are rising while the decades-long achievement gap is beginning to narrow.

As we expand these successful reform principles, we must not forget the vital role our teachers play. The course they set now will determine our nation's success in the future. As Secretary of Education -- and the mother of school-aged children -- I see the results every day. I join all Americans in thanking our teachers for all they are doing on behalf of young people.

Sincerely,

Margaret Spellings