

smart, right? So you've got underutilized resources—buses in the evening—you put the routers on, disperse them, and suddenly, everybody is connected. Now it's not just students who can get online, it's their families as well.

So I know a lot of superintendents have stories like these. You've found innovative ways to reach your students and improve your schools. And today, the best news of all is you're taking the next step—along with 1,200 other superintendents nationwide—by signing the “Future Ready District Pledge.” Don't sign yet. [Laughter] Because we're all going to do it together, and it will be fun. [Laughter]

So it's a vision for digital learning in classrooms across America: helping schools and families make the leap to high-speed Internet, supporting teachers and principals who use technology in innovative ways, and helping every student gain access to digital devices and high-quality digital content. And it's a promise to help other school districts do the same. That's key. This can't stop with you. Every kid needs every superintendent in America to sign this pledge and then follow through on the pledge. Our kids need every school district to make these commitments. Every child—whether they live in a big city, quiet suburb, the furthest reaches of rural America, poor districts, rich districts—every child deserves a shot at a world-class education.

That's the promise we make as a nation. That's what makes our Nation great: this fundamental belief that no matter who you are, where you come from, what you look like, you can make it in this country if you work hard. You have access to the tools to achieve. If we keep working at this, that's a promise we can make real for this generation and generations to come.

All right. So with that, I think all the superintendents are ready to sign this pledge for our

kids. Everybody, get your tablets out. You ready? All right, go at it. [Laughter]

[At this point, school superintendents in the audience signed the “Future Ready District Pledge” on tablet computers.]

You're being tested. [Laughter] All right. You've got 10 more seconds. I see some people lagging behind. [Laughter] All right, time. [Laughter] Everybody get it?

Audience members. Yes.

The President. Okay. If you didn't, if you're still figuring it out—[laughter]—I won't tell. [Laughter]

But let me just close by saying this. I—we're so inundated, I think, with news of mayhem and mishap and war and disease. I think sometimes we forget how much good work is just being done day in and day out by a lot of good people who just care about their kids, care about their communities. In your districts, I know there are just extraordinary teachers and principals who are putting everything they've got into making sure our kids are getting a great education. And you've got parents who are stepping up and volunteering and helping to make those schools work. So, as you disperse, one message I want you to deliver to all of them from the White House, from the President of the United States, is even if you're not getting a lot of attention, even if you're not making a lot of headlines, what you're doing every single day is making the biggest possible difference in the life of this country. And I couldn't be prouder of you. All right?

Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:24 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Alberto M. Carvalho, superintendent, Miami-Dade Public Schools.

Remarks on Signing the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014 November 19, 2014

The President. Well, as many of you know, one of my top priorities is making sure that we've got affordable, high-quality childcare

and early childhood education for our young people across the country. Today I am pleased to sign a bill into law that will—is going to

bring us closer to that goal. That's the reauthorization of the Child Care and Development Block Grant program. I want to thank bipartisan Members of Congress who are here today.

This law is going to do several important things. It's going to improve the quality of childcare by requiring more training for caregivers and more enrichment for children. It's going to improve child safety by instituting background checks for staff and better inspection of facilities. It's going to give working parents a little more peace of mind. If you receive subsidies to pay for your childcare, you know that if you get a raise on your job or you find a job, your kids aren't automatically losing their care because your status has changed mid-stream.

I first proposed legislation to accomplish some of these goals back in 2010. When we couldn't get it through Congress, we began a rulemaking process to try to do this through executive efforts, and Sylvia Burwell, the HHS Secretary, is here. Because the legislation has now passed, we are actually ending the rule-making process because we've now got a law, and we're going to be able to focus on implementing the law.

And I want to thank all the legislators here. It's a good step forward. It shows that Democrats and Republicans, when it comes to making sure our kids are getting the best possible

education, are united. And that's good for our kids, and that's good for our country.

So with that, I'm going to make sure that I sign this properly, using all these pens. [Laughter]

[At this point, the President began signing the bill.]

The President. I love signing bills. I'd like doing it more often. [Laughter] What do you say, guys? [Laughter] Yes, it's good.

[The President continued signing the bill.]

Senator Thomas R. Harkin. Well, I would note for the record that this is the 21st bill from the Committee that Lamar and I chair and have ranking membership on—21st bill that you've signed into law in the last 2 years.

The President. Well, the—that's because you and Lamar are some pretty productive legislators who actually are focused on getting stuff done. And we're very proud of you, and we're proud of all the legislators who are here today. So congratulations, everybody. Good. Good job. [Applause] Great job, guys.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:58 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Sen. A. Lamar Alexander, Jr. S. 1086, approved November 19, was assigned Public Law No. 113–186.

Remarks on Presenting the National Medal of Science and the National Medal of Technology and Innovation November 20, 2014

The President. Thank you, everybody. Please, please, have a seat. Well, hello, everybody. Welcome to the White House.

If you've ever been in a situation where you're a little self-conscious because you feel like maybe everybody in the room is a little smarter than you—[laughter]—today you are right. [Laughter] That's how I'm feeling, because it—today it's my pleasure to welcome a truly extraordinary group of men and women, some of the world's greatest scientists and re-

searchers, and I've got the extraordinary honor of presenting them with our Nation's highest honor for scientific and technological achievement, the National Medals of Science and the National Medals of Technology and Innovation.

Now, to join us in celebrating these innovators, I want to welcome the Members of Congress who are here with us. We also have Interior Secretary Sally Jewell. We've got my Science Adviser, John Holdren; National Science