

Lucio Honors Brownsville's Ortiz Elementary for National Recognition

Austin, TX – Senator Eddie Lucio (D-Brownsville), was present to honor the staff and students of Solomon P. Ortiz Elementary School in Brownsville for being awarded the National Excellence In Education Silver Award.

Ortiz Elementary congratulated for winning Excellence in Education Silver Award

The Brownsville Independent School District on Monday congratulated students, teachers, staff and parents at Solomon Ortiz Elementary School for a job well done after the school won its second National Excellence in Education Silver Award.

The award is given by the National Center for Urban School Transformation. Ortiz also won silver in 2014.

Ortiz staff gathered students from all grade levels into the school cafeteria to be congratulated for their achievement. The NCUST National Excellence in Education Award follows a rigorous application process for which many schools do not even qualify. Those that do must submit videos or two teacher lessons, undergo rigorous analysis of their data and receive site visits in the process leading up to selection.

“We are a national NCUST winner,” Principal Patricia Garza told the students. “That means we are one of the top schools in the entire country.” Garza presented at the national symposium in San Diego, Calif., where the award was announced.

“I told them we have the most wonderful students in the whole country and that you were the ones that earned the award,” Garza told the students.

BISD Superintendent Esperanza Zendejas, Board of Trustees members Sylvia A. Atkinson, Carlos Elizondo, Minerva Peña and Joe A. Rodriguez attended the celebration, along with Timothy Cuff, the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction.

“We are so proud of these two schools,” Atkinson said, referring also to Yturria Elementary, which won this year’s Excellence in Education Gold Award.

Besides the students, Zendejas recognized the entire administrative team at Ortiz including Garza, Assistant Principal Patricia Rodriguez and Dean of Instruction Jessica Todd.

Zendejas said the secret for Ortiz, and for BISD as a whole, is that it keeps its focus on the children.

“I commend Ms. Garza for her excellent presentation in San Diego,” Zendejas said. “Everybody is focused on the children and engaging the parents. They do an outstanding job.”

The silver award includes a \$2,500 stipend. In addition, student Jacob Garza received a \$200 award for his essay presentation about how his school influenced him.

Texas State Sen. Eddie Lucio Jr. also spoke at the event. He urged everyone there to work together.

“We should come together as one country under God,” Lucio said, referring to recent divisions in the country.

· Long, Garry. "Ortiz Elementary congratulated for winning Excellence in Education Silver Award." *The Brownsville Herald*. 16 October 2018, https://www.brownsvilleherald.com/news/local/ortiz-elementary-congratulated-for-winning-excellence-in-education-silver-award/article_d96bcf36-d158-11e8-9bd0-6b709ada4775.html