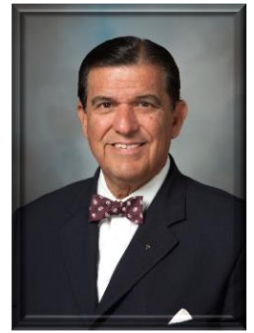




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In the Midst of Difficulty, You Inspire Our Children: Thank You Teachers *05-06-20 - Opinion Editorial by Senator Eddie Lucio, Jr. (D-Brownsville)*

Almost everything about the way we live our lives has changed by the COVID-19 pandemic; fortunately, one important part of our lives remains constant: the hard work, determination, and impact of our Texas educators. During the week of May 4 through May 8, we honor and thank the courageous role models who continue to provide life-changing lessons to our children. This year, as our state perseveres to overcome the life-altering COVID-19 public health threat, we take a moment on this special week to thank our teachers for their invaluable service as they educate our children during these uncertain times.

Although the spread of COVID-19 temporarily closed our public schools for the remaining of the school year, it could not prevent our dedicated teachers from relentlessly working to provide our children with the education they need. Remarkably, on short notice, our educators worked tirelessly to overcome the public health crisis and completely rebuilt our school system. Guided by their "can-do spirit" and love for our students, they developed new and innovative procedures to continue to provide an education to our children. Through virtual classes, take-home packets, and with occasional friendly phone calls to check in, our Texas teachers demonstrated their tenacious character and steadfast determination to continue to mentor and educate our children against seemingly insurmountable odds.

As vice chair of the Senate Education Committee, I publicly thank our teachers for never giving up on our students, for understanding the bond that they have with our children, and for insisting on being the educators that our students need. Thank you for enlightening our students with the love for your profession, for lighting their path with your meaningful lessons, and for touching their lives with the warmth of your care which will all help during these difficult times. I join thousands of parents and state leaders in honoring you as amazing teachers who have a lasting and meaningful impact in the lives of our children. Your commitment to doing what is best for our children -- even in the face of the coronavirus pandemic -- brings out the best in them and ignites their potential to help transform their tomorrow. Having been "Principal for the Day" in many schools in District 27, I have personally seen how the heartfelt encouragement that you provide every single day nourishes the minds of our children. As a father, grandfather, and lawmaker, I am eternally thankful for the profound positive impact of your influence on the lives of our students, which goes well beyond the classroom.

Every adult that I know can recall a teacher from their youth who had a positive influence in their lives. This week is more than a celebration of our teachers; it is a recognition of the profound impact they have in helping transform and build the lives of our children, our future leaders. It is a recognition of the help you are providing our families, especially during this challenging time in history, by working harder than ever to enrich the minds of our children with meaningful lessons and education.

As this school year nears its end, and as we begin to prepare for the next one, please rest assured that you have -- and will always continue to have -- my steadfast support. Coming from a family with many teachers, I thank you for answering the call of educators, and for teaching from the heart. The lessons you entrust to our children are teachings that will help our children throughout their lifetime, and well into their future. Thank you for helping make this a better world, one child at a time.

In these most difficult of times, we all need our everyday heroes that inspire hope, ignite imagination, and empower the spirit of determination for a better tomorrow. That is why, being a former educator and as your Senate Education vice chair, I cannot be more thankful to you today for being true role models that our children can look up to, and I pledge my support to you in the days and years to come.

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Senator Eddie Lucio, Jr. (D – Brownsville) represents Cameron, Hidalgo, Kenedy, Kleberg, and Willacy Counties. He is the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Intergovernmental Relations; Vice Chairman of the Senate Committee on Education; Member of the Senate Committees on State Affairs; Veteran Affairs & Border Security; and of the Select Committees on Redistricting; and, Texas Ports. He is member of the Sunset Advisory Commission and has been an ex-officio member of the DSHS Task Force of Border Public Health Officials since 2017. Elected in 1991, Lucio is third in seniority in the Texas Senate.