

Subject: Boozman Bulletin: Teacher Appreciation Week
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From: Senator John Boozman

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Honoring Arkansas's Teachers

This week has been National Teacher Appreciation Week, a time to thank our teachers for all the hard work they do in the classroom on behalf of our students, pouring into them and helping them learn and prepare for whatever comes next for kids all across the Natural State and our country.

This last year has been one unlike any other in our lifetimes, and that was certainly true for educators. But they overcame unimaginable obstacles, and their tireless efforts continued to help our children grow, learn, dream and achieve.

To mark this special occasion, I delivered a speech on the Senate floor highlighting and applauding our teachers for everything they do and what they represent. In Arkansas, most of our kids have been back in school for this entire academic year and that's because our teachers thought creatively and did what they had to do in order to welcome students back to the classroom in a safe and supportive environment.

Click on the image to watch my National Teacher Appreciation Week speech



Here's what I said on the Senate floor in celebration of our educators:

I rise today to recognize the extraordinary work of teachers in Arkansas and across the country.

As we prepare to celebrate Teacher Appreciation Week, it is clear that educators are in a

class by themselves when it comes to resilience. Over the last 12 months, they have shown us what it means to be selfless and brave at a time when both were critically necessary.

I am especially proud of teachers in Arkansas who rose to the challenge of leading classes 100 percent virtually for the first time and then embraced re-opening our schools in August 2020. The sudden transition to virtual learning was an extraordinary hurdle as educators had to learn new technology and new teaching techniques overnight.

For all of us who have learned to use Zoom, it is worth taking a moment to imagine an online classroom with 30 wiggling first graders who want to show you their pets. Or that you are teaching Calculus to high school students who are preparing for an AP exam while attending class from their car at a Wi-Fi hotspot.

Somehow, with great creativity and dedication, teachers embraced this mission and continued to do everything they could to reach each child. And when Arkansas schools reopened in the fall, they were faced with tremendous new challenges from masks and social distancing, to teaching classes where some students were at their desks and others on a screen. Arkansas teachers once again did the impossible for their students.

Over the last year, I've heard from educators who worried for their own health and safety, but said their dedication to their students was stronger than fear. They learned new skills overnight, overhauled curriculum and re-imagined every aspect of their classroom to comply with COVID-19 guidelines. Somehow, they also made kids feel safe enough to learn, set an example with their positive attitudes and let students know how important they were, whether in a classroom or on a computer screen.

As they worked to maintain the academic progress of each child, they also provided a lifeline in an otherwise chaotic time. It is amazing to see the smiles on the faces of kids when they see their teachers. Even though nothing was normal, they gave students an escape back to normalcy by being there and continuing to do what they do best – teach.

When we look back at the heroes of this tumultuous time, it is clear that teachers will be among those we honor as our society's most valuable players.

On behalf of the people of Arkansas, I want to thank our teachers for their great work this year, and every year, to bring out the best in each child and pave the way to a brighter future.

Visits to Arkansas Schools for Teacher Appreciation Week

This week, I had the honor of visiting several schools across the state to share my gratitude for our educators and present them with an official copy of the Congressional Record with my remarks.



I joined teachers, staff and students at Ozark High School to share my appreciation for these wonderful examples of dedicated educators.



Presenting a copy of the Congressional Record to Ozark HS.



Sharing some encouraging thoughts with and thanking teachers at Vilonia High School.



Visiting a Vilonia HS classroom and observing live instruction.





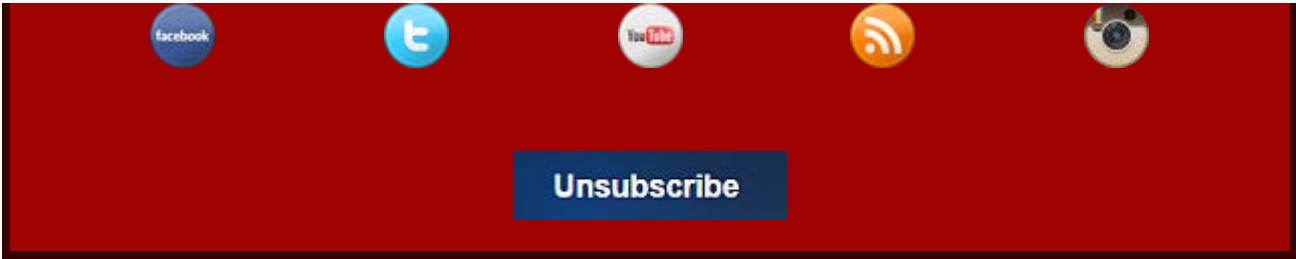
Presenting Paragould High School with a Congressional Record and thanking teachers and staff for all their efforts.



Meeting with the Superintendent of Harrisburg Schools and reiterating my thanks to the entire HPS staff for their hard work.

Connecting on Social Media

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