"This week, the nation celebrates American Education Week – an opportunity to honor educators for their selfless work creating learning environments for our children to grow and thrive. Early on, parents and community members recognized the importance of honoring educators – too often underpaid, undervalued and underappreciated. In recent years, the significance of American Education Week has come into clearer view, as the teaching profession in particular and public education in general have come under intense scrutiny. Politicians and pundits, some misguided, others malicious, have called for reforming public schools, but leave educators out of the reform plans. Rather than being the target of reform, teachers should be the leaders of change in their own profession that will ultimately affect their classrooms, schools and districts. In districts across the country – in partnership with their unions – educators are active agents of change, elevating the profession and improving educational opportunities for students."