

VETERANS' DAY AND THE PRICE OF FREEDOM

Veterans' Day is a time that is, and should be, very special in the hearts of all Americans because, on Veterans' Day, we pause to remember those who have fought to make America great and to keep America free. For many, perhaps even in this community, that will mean a parent, child, close relative and even grandparents who may have served in a war that you now only read about in your textbooks. That's what our veterans fought for – for you, their sons and daughters – to learn of war from a schoolbook rather than having to experience it firsthand on an actual battlefield. They did not want their children to fight as they did. They have come to know how bad war is, and they fought so that it might not be part of your lives.

Every veteran who fought for this country did so at a price – at a very great price! They paid the price of having to uproot their homes and families and relocate to unfamiliar places. Some of our soldiers were wounded, carrying their scars to the present day. Some of our soldiers lost their lives, paying a price that can never be matched. Yes, all of our veterans paid a price, a mighty price, to defend the land of their families, the land that they cherished, the land that they loved.

On this special day, we honor those veterans, and we honor them publicly – just as many of us continue to honor them in our hearts each and every day of the year. What's more, we are aware of a responsibility that this honor places on each of us who are part of this great country – the responsibility to see it that our veterans' sacrifices, their heartfelt, selfless sacrifices might not be in vain.

For those of us in education, that means teaching our students in such a way that our veterans are never forgotten. We must teach about what they did and gave up for America to the children who will follow so that these children may fully understand and appreciate the opportunities they have, and we must teach about the dedication with which our veterans have given in the past to preserve the future.