The Honorable Lourdes A. Leon Guerrero
Maga’hågan Guahån
MONTHLY ADDRESS
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“Back to School”

Håfa Adai!

In just a few days, thousands of students, support staff, and teachers will return to their classrooms. It will be a busy time for parents and our island. But it is also an exciting time for us, with a fresh start to work toward new goals.

For the thousands of families who place their trust in us, Josh and I are committed to helping you and your families build something solid so that your children can grow, establish a family and provide a quality of life and it starts with education.

As we continue to advance our Administration’s vision of change, we remain committed to working with the Guam Department of Education to rebuild Simon Sanchez High School so that one day the first day of school at the campus is not mixed with unease. And our mission should always focus on the successful education of the student so that we can address the struggle we face in reaching educational benchmarks.

As the FY2020 budget process moves forward, know that I am committed to a budget that works for teachers and students. Our FY2020 budget proposal includes funding for a wage study for teachers and nurses. No one who says children are Guam’s future can deny the role and influence a good teacher can have in that child’s life.

But education is about more than adequate funding. It’s also about making schools a safe space for our children to learn. Earlier this year, we created the school safety task force, bringing parents, educators and law enforcement together to combat crime in and around our schools and to stand up to bullying. Parents and educators, and students themselves, are the experts on the daily atmosphere in schools. They know how to look for signs of bullying, abuse, illegal substances, and threatening or suspicious activity. So we took your feedback and suggestions because we value your input. I look forward to the task force’s final report and making these solutions real for our school communities.

Serving as your Governor has taught me many things. Progress is achievable but it is certainly not easy. It takes more than just hard work. It takes dedication, focus, knowledge, sacrifice, and creativity. It takes passion and compassion. It takes steadfast courage to take risks but it also takes humility.

We have taken crucial steps to help GDOE build a new Simon Sanchez High School, pay teachers what they’re worth, build affordable homes, put more officers in our villages, help struggling small businesses, create jobs in both the trades and technology industries, get more healthcare funding, and help families on the edge of poverty or living in poverty.

We have so much to do and the path has been cleared. And as long as Josh and I, and the leaders of our beautiful island, remember that the work we do is just as much for the future as it is for the present, I believe we can all live in a happy, safe and healthy community now and well into the future.
Our Administration is committed to our vision of an island that is prosperous, safe, compassionate, and fair for all people in our island.

*Si Yu'os Ma'åse* and God Bless Guam.