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I am driven by a passion to make a positive impact in children's lives — lives that are all so unique and easily affected. As a child, all I wanted was to be understood. However, my parents immigrated to America from Mexico about 20 years ago now, but I grew up in the United States. The result was a division between our understandings; there has always been both a generational and cultural gap between us. They taught me the value of hard work but believed my place as a woman was learning how to be a hard worker who would make a good wife someday. I absolutely despised that idea, but I always felt the pressure of disappointing them if I went against their beliefs. I quickly realized I'm behind the wheel; I'm in control of my life. So, I found solace in school. I felt the most understood when I was learning; I felt the most heard by my teachers. Although I was the one who chose to apply myself, to challenge myself with difficult classes, to work hard for my good grades and my 5.0 GPA, to be involved in school clubs, to be a leader, and to help the community through volunteering, they were the major support system that helped me feel confident enough to do all of it.

I want to be a teacher because I believe teachers can make a huge impact in a child's life since so many have done that for me. I want to provide a safe haven for kids where they can feel comfortable to be their true selves, to feel heard, to feel supported. My teachers, although they may not have known, supported me as I struggled through the loss of my childhood, through constraints of sexism, through finding who I am, through overwhelming amounts of homework, through my first heartbreak, through hard nights at home, even through the pandemic. I am driven to make the new generations feel as supported as my teachers made me feel. I want to be a part of educating the minds who will lead the future. But, those minds need to be nurtured, loved, and supported in order for them to believe in themselves, to know they are more than capable of accomplishing

their dreams, to know they can follow the signs telling them to steer in their own direction and create a positive change.

I can't discount my parent's efforts: they now tolerate my ambitions, although they still don't understand my passion to be an educator. It's ironic, but I do give them credit for instilling the value of hard work within me because without it, I might not have pushed myself. I am proud those values fueled my inner drive, pushing me in the right direction. I am now making a turn into the future — a future at the University of Nevada Reno getting my bachelor's in education, so I can fulfill my passions to positively impact children's lives.