

Teacher Appreciation Toolkit

In preparation for Teacher Appreciation Week, May 5-9, we have been collecting tips and strategies from districts across the state for celebrating teachers. Read in their own words how some districts are honoring their educators.

Bucket Fillers

Submitted by: Cannon County

The principal announced a staff meeting for the end of the school day, explaining that parents would be covering classes during the thirty minute meeting. When the teachers arrived to the cafeteria during the appointed time, they found it filled with signs of appreciation from parents, as well as snacks and punch. Instead of discussing typical school matters, they were given the rare opportunity to just relax and socialize as a staff.

What they didn't know was that during the meeting, the parents were busy with the students, providing paper and pencils, markers, and stickers so they could each write a bucket-filling note for their teacher. Upon the teacher's return, they were presented with a stack of beautiful personal notes from their students. All the teachers felt very loved and appreciated, and the parents and students had lots of fun planning and executing their thoughtful surprise.

T-Shirts

Submitted by: Lewis County

We will celebrate our teachers and all staff by having a t-shirt made for each person with the school name and mascot. We will also provide lunch for teachers and staff during that week.

Lunch Out for Teachers

Submitted by: Bedford County

For Teacher Appreciation Week we coordinate with our PTO and parents to cover classrooms for one hour (multiple parents covering one class). The hour overlaps with the students' lunch, and we let our teachers go eat. The PTO generally contacts a local restaurant and gets a flat rate for a few options and picks up the cost of the lunch. This is a staggered schedule all week long so generally no more than two grade levels are out per day (K-8, related arts, and TAs). This is a large undertaking but the teachers really like it as they never get to leave the building for lunch.

Special Recognitions and Banquet

Submitted by: Blount County

Many of our parent teacher organization groups provide special recognitions of teachers during teacher appreciation week. In addition, our district conducts a banquet each year recognizing teacher of the year nominees. In my department, teacher and teacher assistants of the month are recognized.

Massages and More

Submitted by: Lexington City

Over the years, we have done the following:

- brought in folks to give massages
- had coffee/dessert bar set up all day
- sent teachers to one of the local restaurants for lunch out on us
- held random drawings for personal gifts (not school related)



- asked a parent in each teacher's room to write a letter of thanks and appreciation on behalf of the class
- held a Teacher Appreciation Banquet for teacher and guest
- given a \$250.00 bonus during Teacher Appreciation Week

Involving Students

Submitted by: Jackson County

This is our fifth year to be involved with Utrust in appreciating all employees. There are eight different appreciation days set up throughout the school year with Teacher Appreciation Day falling in May. This year, Teacher Appreciation Day is set for May 8, 2014 with a "Wizard of Oz" theme. I have four School Coordinators that help with the celebrations. Students and staff alike use the theme to create all sorts of appreciation events for that certain celebration day.

This is our 4th year for our Employee Awards Program set closer to the end of the school year for all employees, including teachers. The School Board and the Director honor all employees with a reception and an awards program recognizing employees in the categories listed below: Volunteer of the Year, PTO of the Year, special awards for employees that go "Above and Beyond the Call of Duty," and Employee of the Year. We also recognize 15, 20, 25, & 30 years seniority, and retirees. The persons honored can be teachers, assistants, custodians, office personnel, etc. Also honored that night are Outstanding Students from each grade in all 4 of our schools. Employees can bring their families with them for the event.

Celebration for Gap Closure and Reward Schools

Submitted by: Smith County

The district celebrated the two schools that met all of their gap closure goals in the 2012-13 school year. The district invited all teachers from the two schools to a cake and punch celebration from 4:30 to 5:00 pm, then recognized them at the school board meeting which started at 5:00 pm. The school district led a presentation on why the schools were being recognized, and invited the local newspaper to the event. The district held a similar event for their 2012-13 Reward Schools.

In addition to the suggestions districts sent in, we have added a few ideas of our own as well.

Thank You Notes

Have each student write a thank you note to his/her teacher on an index card during lunch, afternoon pickup, or some other time when the teacher isn't around. Administrators then collect the index cards, wrap them in a bow, and place them in teachers' mailboxes. An alternative to this is to give the teacher one note each day until they are all gone.

Everything's Coming up Roses

Administrators or parent-teacher organizations put a single rose with a personal thank you note attached to it in each teacher's mailbox.

Teacher Hall of Fame

Dedicate a hallway to serve as a teacher hall of fame. Using colorful scrapbook or construction paper, create an information sheet about each teacher. The teacher's name and photo should be included at the top of the sheet. Then using cute post-it notes (i.e. stars, hearts, apples), share information about that teacher. Some nice things to include may be a quote from the teacher about his/her favorite thing to teach, a quote from a student about why the teacher is special, and a quote from a colleague about



something he/she admires about the teacher. You can then laminate them and display them in the hallway as a way for students, parents, and other stakeholders to get to know your wonderful staff.

Pinterest

Some other cute ideas for how to recognize and celebrate teachers can be found here:

<https://www.pinterest.com/mischelleinmaui/teacher-appreciation-week-may-5-9-2014-may-6~-day/>