TIPS FOR ACTIVITIES

JANUARY 2015 IS SCHOOL BOARD APPRECIATION MONTH

This tip sheet offers suggestions about what students, parents, and the community can do to recognize school board members.

Be creative – "Actions speak louder than words!"

✓ Ask students at all schools in your district to prepare thank you posters, letters, and cards to mail to board members or display on a rotating basis in the district's board room and the halls of the administration building. Cards and posters may range in size, but remember that the brighter and more colorful they are, the better.

✓ Ask students to present their cards, letters, etc. at a board meeting. Invite their families to attend.

✓ Contact service club and organization presidents and suggest that they honor board members during a luncheon or dinner meeting.

✓ Work with local media to schedule interviews with board members. Suggest that they interview trustees about the role they play in the schools and community. Not only does this acknowledge the importance of school board members, it also helps spread good news about your schools.

✓ Encourage business owners to display school board appreciation posters in prominent windows. Have students make the posters. Supply teachers with guidelines (size, color, border width, and content information).

✓ Ask each school in your district to be responsible for doing something special for one of your board members. One idea is to make a board member "King for the Day," with appropriate crown and robe. Take a photo of the occasion and submit it to your local newspaper.

✓ Encourage parents to write board members and tell them how much they appreciate their efforts to improve the schools. Coordinate this through your local PTA chapter.

✓ Schedule campus visits for board members and include a special appreciation activity by the class being visited. Invitations can be written and decorated by students.

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✓ Ask student athletic team captains to invite board members to "toss the first ball or participate in the coin toss" at a home sporting event. This activity can go on throughout the school year.

✓ Encourage the city council, local Chamber of Commerce, or PTA to pass a local "School Board Appreciation" proclamation. (Use the enclosed example as a starting point.)

✓ Send letters to school board members' employers to acknowledge board members' service to the community.

✓ Ask school board members' employers to sponsor recognition/thank you ads in the local newspaper.

✓ Encourage parents, school administrators, and teachers to send thank you notes or cards to school board members. Teachers could enlist the help of students to create large thank you cards signed by the entire classroom.

✓ Plan for a school board commendation at a staff in-service meeting or meeting of school and district administrators.

✓ Seek editorials featuring the school board's most recent outstanding achievements. Provide the media with information on the board's function, current decisions facing the board, important actions the board has taken recently, and how much time the board members devote to public schools.

✓ Use this same information for a district newsletter or brochure.

✓ Seek guest appearances for school board members on local news programs. Many local early morning and noon news programs feature community leaders discussing current issues. This would be an excellent forum for board members.

✓ Schedule the regular board meeting in a school setting.

✓ Invite school board members to eat lunch at various schools. Students can prepare a special welcome.

✓ Schools can present T-shirts and sweatshirts to school board members either preordered with the school mascot or individually hand painted by students.

✓ Use school marquees to post messages of thanks and recognition for school board members; encourage local businesses to do the same on their reader boards.

✓ Invite school board members to individually visit schools for breakfast breaks with teachers.

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✓ Encourage high school newspaper editorials or articles describing the role of the school board and how it impacts the students and community.

✓ Feature school board members in all district newsletters and publications.

✓ Arrange for school board members to speak at civic clubs and other organizations during the month.

✓ Encourage local service and civic groups to recognize school board members during their regular meetings, in their newsletters, and by sponsoring public service ads.

✓ PTA organizations could sponsor evening receptions or breakfasts for school board members showcasing work by students.

✓ Hold a reunion/reception for former school board members. You may choose to honor them with a certificate, too.

✓ Create "School Board Appreciation" public service announcements for TV and radio.

✓ Publish a colorful brochure featuring board members' photos, along with a diverse listing of "School Board Appreciation" activities at schools over a five-day period, with times and locations.

✓ Ask your local Representative to write a proclamation expressing appreciation to the board members for their service. Get it signed by House officials and frame it to hang in the board room.

✓ Social studies students can do a mini-unit on the duties and responsibilities of school board members. Ask school board members to teach for a day or two.

✓ Invite board members' families to a dinner prior to the board meeting. Give each family member an "Outstanding Family Support" certificate. Take a photo of each board member family.

✓ Give board members framed prints of student artwork.

✓ Add a special school board appreciation "thank you" to the district and schools' Internet home pages.

✓ Donate a book or set of books to a school library, dedicated to the board, and include board members' names and dates of service on the recognition label within each book.

✓ Display an appreciation banner across a major street or highway where residents of the school district will see it.