



ACTIVITY



SECRET STAFF SURPRISE SWAP



Gifts, giggles, and a little mystery

Foster team camaraderie and boost morale with fun, themed treats exchanged in secret all year long.



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WHAT'S IN HERE

- Quick activity description
- Activity directions
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- Editable tracker





TREATS & TEAM BONDING

At the beginning of the year, invite your team to sign up for the Secret Staff Surprise Swap! Each month (or quarter, semester, etc), they'll surprise a new staff member with a treat and receive one in return.

Your staff will enjoy delighting each other with fun and thoughtful gifts based on monthly themes, all while using their ninja skills to keep their identities secret. This activity is an engaging way to foster camaraderie and boost morale among your team.

Use our tips and tricks and embark on this year-long initiative to promote kindness, connection, and a supportive team environment! Let's go!





ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS

- **Sign-Up:** At the beginning of each school year, ask your staff to sign up if they want to participate in the Secret Staff Surprise Swap.
 - **Monthly Selection:** At the start of each month, randomly assign new staff members to each participant—use our tracker for easy organizing! Alternatively, assign one person per participant for the whole year to simplify the process and reveal mystery gift givers at the end of the year!
 - **Theme and Gift Selection:** Each month, share the theme and remind your staff to keep their identity a secret while selecting a gift around \$5.
 - **Delivery:** Participants must deliver their gift anonymously by the last Friday of the month! Don't forget to adjust dates in case of breaks or holidays.
 - **Guessing Game:** At the end of the month, reveal everyone's mystery staff member and assign a new one!
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ACTIVITY VARIATIONS

- Worried about activity burn-out? Instead of monthly, complete this activity every other month, quarterly, or just a handful of times.
- Don't like one of our theme ideas? No problem! Change whatever makes sense for you and your team! **Other ideas could be:**
 - **Certain colors:** One month, each surprise gift has to be a certain color!
 - **Starts with ____:** Pick a few letters and ask participants to find a small gift or treat that starts with one of the letters!
 - **Celebrate birthdays:** Assign each participant one staff member and share their birthday. Participants will only buy for their secret birthday staff member!
 - **Childhood Favorites:** Bring something nostalgic from your school days.
 - **DIY Month:** Handmade items only—baked goods, crafts, or notes.
- Skip busier months! Let's face it, every month of the school year is busy, but there are a few that are definitely busier than others (we're looking at you, October). Skip the surprise swap those months so your staff has one less thing to plan!

TIPS & TRICKS

- **Keep It Fun and Flexible:** Encourage creativity and flexibility with the themes to make it fun for everyone. Allow participants to interpret the theme in their own way.
- **Theme Plan:** Decide whether to share the monthly themes at the start of the school year or each month!
- **Provide Examples:** Share a few example gifts each month to spark ideas and help staff understand how to stay within the budget while being thoughtful.
- **Send Reminders:** Send gentle reminders a week before the swap deadline to ensure everyone remembers to participate and prepare their gifts.
- **Celebrate Participation:** Occasionally, celebrate all participants with a small treat or recognition to show appreciation for their involvement and to boost morale.
- **Ask for Feedback:** Check in after a few months to see if your staff has any feedback, changes, or suggestions.
- **Back-Up Plan:** Have a plan in place for last-minute emergencies where a staff member might forget or be unable to participate due to unforeseen circumstances. This could be a designated "backup" person who can step in and ensure everyone receives a gift.



THEME IDEAS

These fun and simple themes will add a special touch to each month, bringing thoughtful surprises for your staff!

AUGUST: BACK-TO-SCHOOL BOOST

Gift ideas: Stationery, planner stickers, or their favorite classroom supply.

SEPTEMBER: FALL-TASTIC FUN

Gift ideas: Pumpkin spice treats, cozy socks, fall-themed candle or decorations.

OCTOBER: BOO-TIFUL SURPRISE

Gift ideas: Their favorite Halloween candy, seasonal snack (kettle corn, caramel apple, etc.), or a fall-scented soap or lotion.

NOVEMBER: GRATITUDE GOODIES

Gift ideas: Blank thank-you notes, gratitude journal, new pens for note writing.

DECEMBER: HOLIDAY CHEER

Gift ideas: Festive ornaments, hot chocolate mix, holiday-themed socks or mugs.



JANUARY: FRESH START FINDS

Gift ideas: Inspirational book/quotes, wellness products, goal-setting journal, water bottle, or healthy snacks.

FEBRUARY: HEARTFELT HUGS

Gift ideas: Chocolates, candles, heart-shaped items, flowers, or a fun Valentine.

MARCH: WELLNESS WONDERS

Gift ideas: Herbal tea blends, candles, face mask, hand sanitizer, mindfulness coloring books, or soothing bath salts.

APRIL: BLOOMING SURPRISES

Gift ideas: Spring flowers, flower pots, seed packets, spring-themed kitchen towels.

MAY: END-OF-YEAR CHEERS

Gift ideas: Photo frame for a class picture, favorite snacks or drink, notecards, small plant.

JUNE: SUMMER SMILES

Gift ideas: Beach accessories, sunglasses, summer-themed treats, sunscreen, tropical cup, or picnic essentials.

ACTIVITY TRACKER

Stay organized with this activity tracker!
Here's what to do:

1. **Open this link** – it will open Google Sheets
2. **Save the file:** rename it and save it to your Google Drive.
3. **Staff Member Column:** List the names of all participating staff members down the first column.
4. **Assigned Recipient:** Across each month's row, indicate who each staff member is assigned to surprise with a treat. This way, each participant does not receive treats from the same person more than once.
5. **Stay Updated:** Regularly update the tracker to reflect any changes or new participants, ensuring the activity runs smoothly each month!



Activity Printables





**YOUR HARD
WORK DOESN'T
GO UNNOTICED.**

KEEP SHINING!



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WE'RE SO GLAD YOU'RE HERE!

Thanks for downloading this resource—at [Alpaca](#), we're on a mission to **make school the happiest place to work**.



Tried an activity?

Send a photo or a staff testimonial to [our team](#), and we'll send you a coffee on us!



Got an idea brewing?

We love co-creating with school leaders—[drop us a line](#) with any resource ideas you'd love to see next.



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