IDEAS

CREATIVE IDEAS TO CELEBRATE SCHOOL APPRECIATION DAYS

As a school leader, recognizing and celebrating the efforts of your staff creates a positive and supportive school environment. Check out our ideas to honor the dedication and hard work of your staff throughout the year!

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HONORING YOUR WHOLE TEAM

Schools succeed because of the dedication of a whole team, which includes more than just teachers. Nurses, paraprofessionals, custodians, and administrative staff all play vital roles in creating a supportive and effective learning environment.

Recognizing all staff members' diverse contributions boosts morale, enhances teamwork and trust, and leads to a more united, high-performing team. School leaders can celebrate each role and remind everyone of their vital contribution to the school's success by organizing fun activities for the school community.

This resource is packed with creative ideas to help school leaders celebrate school appreciation days, ensuring everyone feels valued and appreciated. **Let's start celebrating!**

TIPS & TRICKS

Plan Ahead: Look over the school appreciation days and decide how you want to celebrate different team members. Share the dates with your leadership team or school celebration committee in advance. This way, everyone can be prepared and start planning ahead.

Budget Considerations: Set a budget for each celebration and consider asking your PTO or other funding sources for support. This ensures you can provide adequate resources without overspending.

Delegate Responsibilities: After deciding how you wish to celebrate, divide tasks among a committee or other school leaders to ensure everything runs smoothly.

Encourage Participation: Invite staff to contribute to the celebrations and involve students and their families as well. The more people who join in, the more festive and meaningful the events will be!

Gather Feedback: Ask your staff for feedback on which celebrations they enjoyed and what could be improved. This input will help you plan even better events in the future.

2026-2027

SCHOOL APPRECIATION DAYS

- **World Physical Therapy Day:** September 8, 2026
- **National IT Professional Day:** September 15, 2026
- **National Principals Month:** October 2026
- **School Custodian Appreciation Day:** October 2, 2026
- **World Occupational Therapy Day:** October 27, 2026
- **National School Psychology Week:** November 9–13, 2026
- **World Kindness Week:** November 9–15, 2026
- **National Substitute Appreciation Week / American Education Week:** November 16–20, 2026
- **National Special Education Day:** December 2, 2026
- **School Board Appreciation Month:** January 2027
- **Law Enforcement Appreciation Day:** January 9, 2027
- **National School Counseling Week:** February 1–5, 2027
- **National School Social Worker Week:** March 1–5, 2027
- **Maintenance Worker Appreciation Day:** March 5, 2027
- **National Employee Appreciation Day:** March 5, 2027
  Paraprofessional Appreciation Day: April 7, 2027
- **School Librarian Appreciation Day:** April 4, 2027
- **National Assistant Principal Week:** April 5–9, 2027
- **National Volunteer Recognition Week:** April 18–24, 2027
- **National Administrative Professionals' Day:** April 21, 2027
- **School Bus Driver Appreciation Day:** April 27, 2027
- **School Principal's Day:** May 1, 2027
- **School Lunch Hero Day:** May 7, 2027
- **Teacher Appreciation Week:** May 3–7, 2027
- **School Nurse Day:** May 5, 2027
- **National Speech Language Pathologist Day:** May 18, 2027

SEPTEMBER 2026

SEPTEMBER 8: WORLD PHYSICAL THERAPY DAY

Strengthening our futures!

Ideas to try:

- Invite a local physical therapist to give a talk or demonstration on the importance of physical health and wellness.
- Set up a wellness station with tips on posture, stretching exercises, and the benefits of physical therapy.
- Encourage staff and students to participate in a school-wide stretching session or a mini-exercise class.

SEPTEMBER 15: NATIONAL IT PROFESSIONAL DAY

Our tech hereos!

Ideas to try:

- Present a "Tech Hero" award to the school's IT professional during a morning assembly.
- Create a thank-you banner signed by students and staff, expressing appreciation for the IT professional's hard work.
- Arrange a "tech-free" day where students and staff can focus on appreciating the smooth operation of technology thanks to the IT team.

OCTOBER 2026

OCTOBER 2026: NATIONAL PRINCIPAL MONTH

Leading with Heart and Vision!

Ideas to try:

- Organize a surprise appreciation party for the principal with decorations, cake, and thank-you notes.
- Create a "Principal Appreciation Wall" where students and staff can post notes and drawings expressing their gratitude.
- Create a fun video montage with staff and students expressing why they appreciate the principal's leadership.

OCTOBER 2: SCHOOL CUSTODIAN APPRECIATION DAY

Custodians: Keeping Our School Sparkling!

Ideas to try:

- Have students and staff write notes of thanks and appreciation to the school custodians!
- Organize a "Clean School Day" where students and staff pitch in to help clean and beautify the school as a way to show respect for the custodians' work.
- Provide a gift basket or lunch for the custodial staff as a token of appreciation.

OCTOBER 27: WORLD OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY DAY

Empowering Abilities, Changing Lives!

Ideas to try:

- Organize a "Sensory Day" with activities and stations that highlight the work of occupational therapists.
- Prepare a thank-you card campaign where students and staff create cards to express their appreciation!
- Invite an occupational therapist to host a workshop for teachers on how to support students with diverse needs.

NOVEMBER 2026

NOVEMBER 9-13: NATIONAL SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY WEEK

Supporting Minds, Inspiring Futures!

Ideas to try:

- Have students and staff wear a specific color to show support for school psychologists.
- Create a bulletin board with information about mental health and the role of school psychologists, along with thank-you notes.
- Provide a small gift or treat each day of the week for the school psychologists, such as coffee, snacks, or a gift card.

NOVEMBER 9-15: WORLD KINDNESS WEEK

Choose Kindness Every Day!

Ideas to try:

- Set up a kindness tree or wall where students can post notes about kind acts they have witnessed or performed.
- Provide cards with different acts of kindness suggestions for students and staff to perform. Check out a few more ideas here!
- Encourage families to participate by suggesting kindness projects they can do together at home, such as baking cookies for a neighbor or writing letters to service members.
- Share stories of acts of kindness done by students and staff in the school newsletter or on social media. Highlight the impact these acts have had on the school community.

NOVEMBER 16-20: SUBSTITUTE APPRECIATION WEEK

Celebrating Our Substitute Superstars!

Ideas to try:

- Share stories or profiles of substitute teachers who have made a significant impact in the school community through newsletters, school websites, or social media.
- Provide small gifts or goodie bags filled with snacks, school supplies, or other useful items as a token of appreciation.

DECEMBER 2026

DECEMBER 2: NATIONAL SPECIAL EDUCATION DAY

Celebrating Every Ability!

Ideas to try:

- Organize a buddy system where students can pair up with peers from special education classes for activities and games.
- Provide training sessions for teachers and staff on best practices for inclusive education.

JANUARY 2027

SCHOOL BOARD APPRECIATION MONTH

Guiding Our Schools, Shaping Our Future!

Ideas to try:

- Have students create and present a thank-you poster or artwork to the school board members at their next meeting.
- Feature a "Meet the Board" segment in the school newsletter or on the website, highlighting the contributions of each member.

JANUARY 2027

JANUARY 9: LAW ENFORCEMENT APPRECIATION DAY

Protecting Our Community!

Ideas to try:

- Invite local law enforcement officers to speak at a school assembly about their roles and responsibilities.
- Create thank-you cards or a banner signed by students and staff to present to the officers.
- Organize a "Hero Day" where students dress up as their favorite heroes, including law enforcement officers.

FEBRUARY 2027

FEBRUARY 1-5: NATIONAL SCHOOL COUNSELING WEEK

Helping Hearts and Minds!

Ideas to try:

- Host a daily appreciation event, such as providing breakfast, lunch, or small gifts for the counselors each day of the week.
- Encourage students to create thank-you cards or posters for their counselors, which can be displayed around the school.
- Organize a special assembly or video presentation showcasing the important work of school counselors.
- Feature school counselors in the morning announcements or school newsletter, highlighting their roles and contributions.

MARCH 2027

MARCH 1-5: NATIONAL SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER WEEK

Supporting Students, Building Futures

Ideas to try:

- Create a feature in the school newsletter or on the website highlighting the work and impact of the school social workers.
- Organize a lunch or coffee break for the social workers to express gratitude for their support.
- Encourage students to write thank-you notes or draw pictures to give to the social workers.

MARCH 5: MAINTENANCE WORKER APPRECIATION DAY

Keeping Our School Running Smoothly!

Ideas to try:

- Present certificates of appreciation and small gifts to the maintenance staff at a special assembly.
- Organize a breakfast or lunch for the maintenance workers to enjoy together.
- Create a thank-you banner signed by students and staff to display in a common area.

MARCH 5: NATIONAL EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION DAY

Celebrating Our Amazing Team!

Ideas to try:

- Host an all-staff appreciation breakfast or lunch with thank-you speeches and awards.
- Provide personalized thank-you notes or small gifts for each staff member.
- Organize team-building activities or games to celebrate the hard work and dedication of all employees.

APRIL 2027

APRIL 4: SCHOOL LIBRARIAN APPRECIATION DAY

Opening Our Worlds Through Books!

Ideas to try:

- Host a "Library Appreciation Day" event with activities such as read-aloud sessions, book giveaways, and storytelling.
- Organize a book donation drive where students, staff, and families can donate gently used books in honor of the librarian.
- Set up a surprise snack station or treat delivery throughout the day full of the librarian's favorite treats.
- Present a personalized thank-you book to the librarian.

APRIL 5-9: NATIONAL ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL WEEK

Assistant Principals Make a Difference!

Ideas to try:

- Host a breakfast in their honor with the entire staff. Ask them to share stories and thank the assistant principal for their support!
- Collect video messages from students, teachers, and parents expressing their gratitude. Share the video at a school assembly or via the school's social media channels.
- Have students and staff write notes of appreciation and create a "Thank You" wall for the assistant principals.

APRIL 7: PARAPROFESSIONAL APPRECIATION DAY

Our Classroom Champions!

Ideas to try:

- Have students and teachers create thank-you cards or posters for the paraprofessionals.
- Organize a lunch or coffee break in honor of the paraprofessionals.
- Present certificates of appreciation at a staff meeting or assembly.
- Highlight paraprofessionals on the school's social media channels, sharing stories and photos of their contributions.

APRIL 18-24: NATIONAL VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION WEEK

Volunteers: Always Making a Difference!

Ideas to try:

- Host a special breakfast or luncheon to honor the school volunteers. Include personalized thank-you notes at each place setting and a small gift such as a plant, a tote bag, or a custom mug with the school's logo.
- Create a "Volunteer Wall of Fame" in a prominent location in the school. Display photos and short bios of each volunteer, highlighting their contributions and the impact they have had.
- Encourage students and staff to perform random acts of kindness for volunteers throughout the week, such as surprising them with flowers, homemade treats, or handwritten notes.

APRIL 21: NATIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS' DAY

Our Office Superheroes!

Ideas to try:

- Provide a special lunch or coffee break for the administrative staff with thank-you notes for them.
- Decorate the office overnight with balloons, banners, and flowers to surprise the administrative professionals when they arrive in the morning. Add personalized touches like a welcome sign with their names and favorite treats on their desks.

APRIL 27: SCHOOL BUS DRIVER APPRECIATION DAY

Driving Us Forward!

Ideas to try:

- Arrange for students to create thank-you cards or posters to give to their bus drivers.
- Host a breakfast or coffee morning for the bus drivers as a token of appreciation.
- Organize a "Bus Driver Appreciation Parade" where students can cheer and wave signs as the buses arrive in the morning.

MAY 2027

MAY 1: SCHOOL PRINCIPAL'S DAY

Celebrating Our School's Captain!

Ideas to try:

- Encourage students and staff to dress like the principal for a day. This can be a fun and lighthearted way to show appreciation and highlight the principal's unique style.
- Compile a memory book with photos, letters, and stories from students, staff, and parents highlighting the principal's impact over the years.
- Encourage students and staff to write thank-you notes and messages of appreciation.

MAY 7: SCHOOL LUNCH HERO DAY

High-five to our lunchtime legends!!

Ideas to try:

- Gift each lunch staff member a personalized apron with their name and a thank-you message.
- Have students write personalized thank-you notes or draw pictures and display them on a bulletin board in the cafeteria.
- Decorate the cafeteria with banners made by students, thanking the lunch staff for their hard work.

MAY 3-7: TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK

Teachers: The Heartbeat of Education!

Ideas to try:

- Organize a week-long celebration with daily themes and activities to show appreciation for teachers.
- Provide breakfast or lunch for teachers each day of the week, along with small gifts or thank-you notes.
- Host a special assembly or event featuring student performances and speeches dedicated to teachers.
- Collect thank-you video messages from students and families and share the video at an upcoming staff meeting.

MAY 5: SCHOOL NURSE DAY

Healing Hands, Caring Hearts!

Ideas to try:

- Organize a mini health fair where the school nurse can showcase their role and provide fun, interactive health-related activities for students.
- Have students and staff create thank-you cards and drawings for the school nurse. Collect and display these notes in a scrapbook and gift it to the school nurse!
- Use the school's social media platforms to give a shout-out to the school nurse and thank them for their care!
- Put together a self-care package with items like scented candles, a journal, a cozy blanket, and a gift card to a local spa or store.

MAY 18: NATIONAL SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGIST DAY

SLPs: Helping Voices Shine!

Ideas to try:

- Organize a day of fun speech and language games that students can play. This can help students understand the importance of speech therapy while having fun.
- Create a bulletin board display featuring photos, quotes, and fun facts about the speech-language pathologist's contributions. Invite students and staff to add their own messages of thanks.
- Feature an article in the school newsletter about the speech-language pathologist's contributions and achievements. Include quotes from students and parents about the positive impact they have had.

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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