

Recognizing school board members

Most of the nation's school board members serve without pay and with little recognition for the hours they spend directing the operations of what is often the largest business in their communities.

School Board Recognition Month (January) is a time to say thank you for your school board members' hours of volunteer service. It's also an opportunity to remind community members of the importance of public education in our democratic society and the importance of local governance required to keep the community's schools strong.

In addition to planning district events to thank school board members for their service, consider asking community groups to adopt the following resolution or to take some action to thank school board members for their hours of service on behalf of the young people in your community. Your list of community groups should include:

Chamber of Commerce

City Council or County Commissioners

Library board, which might feature books or historical artifacts about your schools and their history during School Board Recognition Month

Other local civic organizations or boards

Local church councils, which might be willing to dedicate a Sunday service to thanking not only school board members but also all those who serve children in the public schools.

Seek local media coverage not only for the groups that adopt resolutions but also for feature stories about school board members and their service to the community. (Note: Long-term board members can provide excellent historical perspectives for feature stories. New board members can emphasize what they are learning about the district's successes and challenges.)

If your community is served by more than one school board, adapt the proclamation to include the members of all the school boards in your area.

Sample Proclamation

WHEREAS: An excellent public school system is vital to the quality of life in this community and fundamental to preserving a strong democratic society now and in the future; and

WHEREAS: Public schools are being held to higher standards of accountability than ever before at both the state and federal levels; and

WHEREAS: The (name of district) school board represents an invaluable resource as local decision-makers responding to the challenges of assuring our schools meet these higher standards; and

WHEREAS: The (name of school district) school board members must formulate policies to assure that all children learn to their fullest potential; and these board members continually strive for improvement and progress with an understanding of the need for commitment to the highest standards of student achievement; and

WHEREAS: The (name of school district) school board members are working diligently to assure our young people are educated and prepared for the future with fewer and fewer state and federal resources to accomplish this task; and

WHEREAS: The men and women elected to school board positions deserve recognition and thanks for their countless hours of volunteer, unpaid service to public education and the children of our community;

NOW THEREFORE, the (name of organization) thanks all members of the (name of school district) School Board for their tireless and devoted service to our children, our community and our democracy and urges all residents of our community to join us in saying thank you to these exemplary public servants.

The (name of organization) proclaims the month of January 2012 to be

School Board Recognition Month

Signed:

Dated:

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