

# News Utrust



February, 2010

## March: Special Services Appreciation Day

With March comes Spring, Leprechauns and NCAA playoffs. More importantly, it brings Special Services Appreciation Day, March 11. On this day, schools across the state will recognize the hard work and dedication of school nurses, student resource officers, guidance counselors, crossing guards, audiologists, social workers and school psychologists.

To celebrate this day, Utrust has created materials for you to use. They can be obtained on our website at [www.tnuct.com/specialservicesstaff](http://www.tnuct.com/specialservicesstaff). This year's theme recognizes the employees as a "Rescue Squad" because they strive to keep our students safe and make them strong. These employees are always there for students and staff in a time of need. Whether it is healing a wound or healing a heart, lending an ear or lending a hand, the special services staff make our schools a better place.



**RESCUE SQUAD**



Our Rescue Squad is our Special Services Staff  
Thanks for Keeping Our Kids Safe and  
Making Them Strong!

Special Services Appreciation Day, March 11

## Stars Align for School Boards



Does your school system shine when it comes to managing employees and creating a positive work environment? We hope so, and to reward you for doing it, we have created the "Utrust Five Star Awards Program for Excellence in Employee Management". We have created five standards of excellence, and if your board achieves all five standards, a Utrust trustee will present you with an award at your board meeting, send local media a news release about your accomplishment and provide you with an online seal of excellence.

Meeting all five standards not only shines a positive light on your school board, but demonstrates that you want the best for your school employees, and want to create a workplace atmosphere where they can flourish. To find out more about the Five Star Awards Program, click [here](#).

## Trustee Feature

Perry Dykes is an East Tennessee Representative for the Utrust Board of Trustees. He was appointed to the board in 2008 to fill the unexpired term of Tammy Baird. During his time on the board, more than a half of a million dollars in premiums were returned to member systems. He also helped to launch the Utrust Employee Appreciation Program that honors and recognizes school employees for the work they do. "He brings a lot of enthusiasm and experience to the board", said Dan Tollett, Utrust Administrator, "He has proven to be an excellent trustee".

Perry has also served on the Hawkins County Board of Education since 2002. His support of the "Utrust Make A Difference" employee appreciation program led Hawkins County to win an award for their participation at the 2009 Utrust Member Awards Dinner in November. He also supported the Utrust Writing Competition which led to many stories being submitted about school employees who make a difference, employees who may have otherwise gone unrecognized.



## Snow Didn't Stop Schools from Honoring Principals

While the recent snow did cause many schools to move the date around for Principal Appreciation Day, it didn't stop them from celebrating. Schools across the state came up with a number of creative ways to show their principals how much they are appreciated. From decor to gifts, red seemed to be the color as schools used the theme of "Loving Our Leader", which coincided with Valentine's Day.

Fentress County Schools had to postpone the appreciation day due to inclement weather, but the central office went ahead and treated the principals and assistant principals to lunch, a thank you letter, and gift cards to local restaurants. Fayetteville City principals were featured in the local newspaper and were presented with certificates of appreciation and thank you letters.

While Lebanon Special Schools honored principals in a variety of ways, the central office provided a breakfast and gave each principal a copy of "The Principal's Story" on DVD. Central office staff in Crockett County treated principals there to a nice meal by presenting them with restaurant gift cards.

Principal Appreciation Day may have fallen in the midst of ice and snow, but students, staff, administrators and board members all rallied to warm the hearts of the principals in their school districts.



*Board members in Fayetteville City present their school principals with certificates of appreciation and thank you letters at their monthly board meeting.*

## Lexington City Loves Its Principals

Lexington City School showed their leaders they were loved. At Caywood Elementary, each grade level made either big cards or banners of thanks for the principal and assistant principals. One group of students even created bouquets of paper flowers for the day. Students and staff made posters for all the teachers to sign which were presented during a morning assembly. Several third grade classes were studying letter writing so they wrote letters for the administrators. Meanwhile over at Lexington Middle School, banners and posters of appreciation adorned the hallways. Principal Shannon Taylor was also surprised to find a banner in her office, along with red roses and cookies. Principal Appreciation Day just may have trumped Valentines Day in Lexington City!



Smith County principals were surprised when the superintendent and central office staff showed up at each school to present them with red valentines bags filled with chocolates, snacks and gift cards. Superintendent Roger Lewis received several phone calls later from principals thanking him for the surprise gifts.



Ms. Lola Pearson's pre-school class stopped by the school office to give hugs and high fives to Mr. Walker, Principal and Mrs. Winstead, Vice-Principal to thank them for their dedication to RCS students and how they show a caring attitude for the students and staff all during the school year. A small reception was held in their honor during the school day as staff stopped by to show their appreciation.



The staff, at Miller Boyd Alternative School in Hamblen County, celebrated Principal Appreciation Day with special activities. They presented Principal Tami Tasker with a poster signed by all staff members, a heart-shaped candy dish filled with chocolates, a cake and lunch provided by staff members.



## A Big Surprise in Trousdale County

It had been kept hush, hush because Superintendent Clint Satterfield wanted it to be a surprise for their principals and assistant principals. He had each school call an assembly program at different times during the day. At this assembly, Mr. Satterfield gave a "From the Heart" speech encouraging the students to make good choices in life and not to leave their lives to "chance". To conclude each assembly program, he recognized each principal with a thank you "from the heart" and recognized them for their dedication to their work. "Our principals set the course for success for our students and our teachers", Satterfield said, "They provide a multitude of services to our school and take responsibility for the day to day performance of school staff, faculty and students." He also presented each one with a certificate of appreciation from the Board, an appreciation letter from the Director, and a gift card to Barnes and Noble Bookstore. Each principal was greatly surprised.



## Hawkins County Goes Big on Principal Appreciation Day

From fancy luncheons to funny posters, Hawkins County Schools came up with lots of different ways to celebrate Principal Appreciation Day.

School board members, Charles Fuller and Perry Dykes visited the schools and presented each principal with a jacket that had the school system's logo printed on it. Meanwhile students and staff at the school level came up with some other ways to say thanks.

At Church Hill Elementary, Principal Richard Hutson was sent on a scavenger hunt. Data Clerk Jody Hall gave him the first clue which sent him to each grade level where he received a gift and a new clue. He ended in his office where the faculty and staff presented him with a gift card.

At Clinch School, students and staff wore pink shirts and bandanas. That's because Principal Linda Anderson Long was diagnosed with breast cancer at the end of 2009. She has undergone many treatments and surgery, so to honor her, students wore the same kind of bandanas that she often wears. Faculty and staff did the same and made t-shirts that said "I wear pink for my principal". Students even put on a performance for her filled with music and poetry. "Her leadership, courage and love have been an inspiration to us all", said Kim Harville, School Counselor.

Principals at Church Hill Middle School were treated to a fancy lunch and a little humor when they were featured in an online comedy skit created by staff and faculty.

Principals were shown lots of love in Hawkins County. There were cheers, crowns, banners, giant thank you cards, musical performances, memory boards and more. When Hawkins County Schools show principals appreciation, they go BIG!



## Jackson County's Principal Feature

Jackson County recognized each principal in its system with thank you letters, a pen set from the board and chocolate hearts to go with the "Loving Our Leaders" theme. Among those honored was Principal Charles Breidert at Gainesboro Elementary for his 16 years of services as a school leader. He is well known at the school for his collection of character ties and uncanny ability to know every child's name. When asked about his job, Mr. Breidert said the following:

**Favorite Part of the Job:** I love getting to know the children and watching them learn, grow and mature.

**Favorite Memory:** I had a student named Rickey who was legally blind but he compensated so well that I rarely thought of him as disabled. One day I noticed that his shoe had come untied, so I bent over to tie it. Rickey rubbed my head and exclaimed "Mr. Breidert, where is your hair?" I realized that from his vantage point he was unable to see the top of my head. Rickey did not see himself as "special", but it reminded me to look for something special in every child..

**On Tie Collection:** When I started working at the school, I bought a couple of ties with cartoon characters and the kids loved them. Gradually I acquired more and more. I bought some of them, but then started receiving them as gifts. It helps me connect with the kids. If a child brings me a tie, I go to my office and put it on so they see me wear it all day.

**On Being Recognized by the Board:** I love my job, and I look forward to coming to work every day. When someone recognizes your work and says "thanks for doing a good job", it is a very rewarding feeling. I feel appreciated and it motivates me to keep doing my best every day.



*Charles Breidert, Principal of Gainesboro Elementary in Jackson County sports a "Sponge Bob Square Pants" tie, just one of his many character ties.*

## Benton County is Big On Thanks



After all the snow cleared, teachers and students in the Benton County School System had the chance to honor their principals. Camden Junior High Principal Michelle Leonard and Vice Principal Barry Barnett were showered with homemade cards from students. They described their principal using metaphors and similes, "beautiful as a butterfly" is how one child described Mrs. Leonard. Another student wrote that Mr. Barnett was "like an elephant, because he is so strong." Chocolate and homemade sweets took care of Sharon Latendresse, Briarwood School Principal's sweet tooth because students said it was "**sweet** to have her as their principal".

Mike Bell and Assistant Principal Marty Caruthers from Big Sandy School received homemade books from some of the students. The students wrote about "What Do Principals Do at School?" They were able to let the principals know the hard work and dedication they put into their job doesn't go unnoticed...not even by a group of 1st graders.



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