

News U Trust

APPRECIATING, DEVELOPING, AND SUPPORTING SCHOOL STAFF

Don't miss out

UTRUST SUMMER OLYMPICS

FOR SUPERINTENDENTS, FINANCE DIRECTORS,
& EAP SYSTEM COORDINATORS



REGIONAL MEETINGS

JULY 24-JACKSON
JULY 26-COOKEVILLE
JULY 27-MORRISTOWN

GO FOR THE GOLD!

It's an Olympic year and you are on the team! We are using an Olympic theme for our Utrust Regional Meetings. Mark your calendars now and make plans to join us for a great time of learning, idea exchange and a legal update with Dewey Branstetter. We will have a great time learning and experience a little friendly competition as we all go for the gold!!

Superintendents, EAP System Coordinators and Finance Directors will all benefit from attending and there will also be awesome give-aways and of course, in order to keep us all in prime physical condition, lunch will be provided.

Why should you make this meeting a priority?

- Receive up to date information on

unemployment issues from attorney Dewey Branstetter

- Learn about changes in employment law and how it affects your school system
- First glimpse of the EAP Relaunch with newer, more user friendly additions
- Face to face time with the Utrust team for Q&A
- Awesome prizes and give-aways that can help you take your EAP to a whole new level!!

July 24th - Jackson (West)
July 26th - Cookeville (Middle)
July 27th - Morristown (East)

[Register](#) now to have your name submitted multiple times for the \$100 cash giveaway!!

What's In This Issue?

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UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION



Over the past couple of years, school systems have been faced with additional liability for unemployment benefits beyond the normal 26 weeks. However, in February of this year, certain conditions were set that had to be met in order for claimants to receive extended benefits.

Fortunately, Tennessee no longer met the requirement to pay out funds for the extended benefits tier and they expired in April. School systems are no longer liable for the additional 20 weeks which should reduce the amount of benefits being paid out to claimants.

Another change in unemployment was the

passage of the Unemployment Accountability Act of 2012 which put more controls on those receiving benefits. It strengthened the definition of misconduct helping to ensure that those who have been fired for cause do not receive benefits. This reform also enacts new work search requirements for claimants. Claimants now must provide detailed information about their search for jobs each week and it requires the department to conduct audits to ensure the legitimacy of these efforts.

All in all the changes that have been made in unemployment this year have been good for school boards and Utrust. Unemployment benefits are moving from 99 weeks to 73

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weeks by year end and will hopefully be back down to 26 weeks by January of next year.

Phanfare

Phanfare.com is a brilliant website that makes it easy to share with us your videos, pictures and summaries of appreciation day festivities. It is very simple and user-friendly. Jennifer Brown, a school coordinator in Jackson County, was one of the

first coordinators to try it. She said, "Phanfare is one of the simplest things I have used!" For the upcoming school year, we will ask all pictures, videos and summaries to be uploaded to phanfare.com instead of emailing them to us. It is guaranteed to make life easier for everyone!

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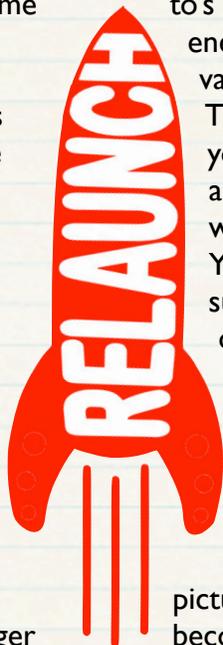
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Review The Relaunch

In our ongoing quest to make the EAP effective and easy to use, we have redesigned and revamped. We will be unveiling the awesome changes at our regional meetings but just to give you a taste of what you can expect from Utrust in 2012-2013, here are some highlights.

The redesigned packets include three levels. We want to make it simple for those who are just getting started so we have Rookie, Pro and Expert levels in each packet. You will never be limited to certain ideas but we make suggestions for which activities are a good fit for your level.

You will also find stronger graphics, easy templates for quick fixes, more cost free ideas and a more streamlined look. We have also expanded our award program so there are more opportunities to win cash prizes for your A-team.



The website will continue to be available for resources and information and now you will also enjoy Thursday Tips. Each week we will post something to help you with the EAP. These tips may be in video or text format but will be quick and easy how to's that can save you time and energy in the carrying out of various aspects of the EAP.

Thursday will become one of your favorite days as you anticipate what fun idea you will see next.

You will also be able to submit your own questions or ideas of topics for Thursday Tip that we will address as possible.

Phanfare has already proven itself to be a fantastic way to submit pictures and videos and that will become an even more exciting place as more people take the plunge and connect with us there.

There is no end to the ways we are working to serve you and supply you with all you need to lead in showing appreciation.

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Stay tuned for more details and register now to be at the regional meeting near you.

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Teacher Appreciation Day Celebrations

Appreciation bloomed all across our great state during Teacher Appreciation Day. Using the Spring Fling theme, schools showed their teachers appreciation in many wonderful and creative ways.

At **Trousdale County Elementary** over 60 teachers were treated to a special lunch and given flower pots that said "Our students thrive and bloom in your care, thanks to the seeds of knowledge you share".

In Jackson County, **Dodson Branch Elementary** celebrated their teachers by giving each teacher a flower pot filled with fingerprints of students in each grade and a Books of Blessings with handwritten notes from the students.

One teacher said "she felt so happy to know that she was thought of so much and that it meant a lot to hear how much her hard work was appreciated."

A great big shout out to Jennifer Brown, school coordinator at Dodson Branch Elementary who uploaded the pictures, video and summary of the festivities in phanfare.com!

Jackson County High School treated their teachers to a nice breakfast to honor them.

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Teacher Appreciation Day Celebrations

Flowers and butterflies abound throughout Hawkins County during their Teacher Appreciation Day.

Church Hill Intermediate School celebrated all week and had a special lunch planned by parents and staff.

Church Hill Middle School also celebrated the entire week by having breakfast, desserts, gifts in the teachers' mailboxes and a luncheon held in their honor.

At **Keplar Elementary School** all the teachers received a hand made picture quilt from their students.

Kristie Jernigan, school coordinator, stated, "**We had a great time planning this for our teachers. They do everything to help our students and we just felt wonderful to give back to them.**"

Teachers at **Joseph Rogers Primary** were treated some rest

and relaxation by getting a 10-minute chair massage.

At **Pathways Alternative School**, old photos of the staff were posted to provide a fun backdrop for the teachers' luncheon.

Also in Hawkins County, teachers at **Volunteer High School** were treated to a special breakfast to show their appreciation.

Mt. Carmel Elementary showed their appreciation to the teachers by having an assembly in front of the entire student body. The teachers had to sing and dance to a song picked out for them. They were given a booklet made for them with questions answered by the students.

"It has been my pleasure to be involved with all our appreciation days this year. Thanks to the Hawkins County School System and Utrust for everything!" Teresa Salyer, school coordinator.

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In Sumner County, **Beech Elementary** honored not only the classroom teachers but the related arts teachers by serenading them with the rewritten song “You Are Our Sunshine”, presenting them with goodie bags filled with treats, water bottle and hand sanitizer. As a special treat from the community, Long Hollow Baptist Church provided box lunches for every teacher for the day.

At **Knox Doss Middle School** the festivities for the special day included goodie bags filled with a bouquet of pencil flowers, notes of thanks, water bottle and home made cookies for all of the teachers, a special lunch provided by Long Hollow

Baptist Church, posters announcing the day and notes of thanks from The Church at Indian Lake and Our Lady of the Lake Church.

Teacher Appreciation Day was a great ending to a fun-filled Employee Appreciation Program. Thank you to all the schools who participated in showing love and appreciation to all of their employees. May you be blessed with peace and relaxation this summer, and come back motivated to make your 2012-13 EAP even better than the last.

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Teacher Appreciation Day Celebrations



Briarwood School

Congrats on Brightest Star!!

Teacher Appreciation Day was awesome and we had many excellent entries in the Brightest Star Challenge which was the presentation activity. Since the packets for elementary and middle and high school are not exactly the same, we have now broken the Brightest Star Challenge into two categories.



Camden Jr. High

The elementary school winner of the \$100 prize is Briarwood Elementary. They submitted a great video showing us their creative presentation and musical tribute.

For middle and high school the \$100 winner is Camden Junior High. Their video entry showed us the level of participation and their creativity in honoring their teachers. Click [here](#) to see their award winning videos.

Congratulations to both these great schools. Keep up the good work on showing appreciation--You shine brightly!!!

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2012-13 EAP Themes

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