



# The SUPERINTENDENT GUIDE

UTRUST APPRECIATION PROGRAM

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*The Utrust Appreciation Program (UAP) is student led but it is most likely to be enormously successful when the superintendent recognizes and acknowledges the value of the program to the school system and the students it serves.*



The Utrust Appreciation Program does not require a great deal of work on anyone's part, including the superintendent. It is built on the notion that Everyone does a little; no one does a lot. However, the superintendent can ensure that the school district has a quality employee appreciation program by carrying out the following responsibilities.

### Get the Board on Board.

The superintendent can get the board on board with this program by:

1. emphasizing its importance at board meetings and in communications
2. creating board ownership of the program by asking the board to approve it.
3. presenting a resolution for the board to adopt prior to each appreciation day
4. scheduling a time on the board agenda following each appreciation day for the system coordinator to make a brief report at a board meeting.



*When employees know their work is valued and the school and district care about them, they will almost always go the extra mile for their student.*

~Mark Edwards



**It's built on the notion:  
"Everyone does a little so no one does a lot."**

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### Select a Capable System Coordinator.

A system coordinator should be a person who is respected by principals and staff. The person needs to have enough clout that principals and school coordinators will cooperate and consider the coordinator's suggestions carefully. It's important that the system coordinator be able to put together an interesting and informative presentation to the school board about each appreciation day.

### Get Principals Involved.

Principals are the key to the success of the program in their schools. The superintendent can create enthusiasm and support for the program by periodically asking principals how the program is going in their schools and recognize outstanding effort after appreciation days.

### Be an Active Participant.

On each appreciation day, the superintendent should find some way to express a personal appreciation to individuals in the group being honored. It may be an email, a note included in the check envelope or letter distributed through the system mail. Mail merge systems make it possible for the superintendent to personalize letters to large number of employees without being burdensome. These personal expressions mean a great deal to most school employees.

As much as possible, stop by the work site of employees to offer a personal expression of appreciation. Superintendents are very busy but those who take time to do it report that it builds respect and loyalty on the part of employees. It clearly enhances employee morale when employees know that the superintendent cares about them and their welfare.

### Promote the Program in the Media.

Assign to the System Coordinator or the school communications director the responsibility to get information to the media about each of the eight Appreciation Days. Utrust provides a draft news release for each appreciation day. Add quotes from the superintendent, and perhaps board members, about how the employee group contributes to the success of the school system.

A local news release about celebrations in the schools after each appreciation day, increases the honor to employees being celebrated.

**“Cultivate the habit of being grateful for every good thing that comes to you, and to give thanks continuously.”**

~Ralph Waldo Emerson



**Superintendents will find the Utrust Appreciation Program to be a joy not a burden. It will make your day to make the day of your employees.**