



# 2024 School Board Recognition Month Kit

A resource kit to help recognize the contributions to public education by the members of Ohio boards of education.

**Ohio School Boards Association**

[www.ohioschoolboards.org/SBRM](http://www.ohioschoolboards.org/SBRM)



# USING THIS TOOL KIT

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This School Board Recognition Month Tool Kit is designed to help you recognize the valuable contributions of your school board members. This web-based resource can be used in two ways: either download the entire resource kit or download files you wish to customize yourself by visiting [www.ohioschoolboards.org/sbrm](http://www.ohioschoolboards.org/sbrm).

The kit contains:

## **Ideas for honoring your school board members**

These are ideas for administrators, staff, students, parents, community groups, service clubs and businesses. Adapt the activities to your needs.

## **Sample district activities**

Districts have expanded upon ideas in this kit to recognize their school board members. Read what some districts and newspapers have done.

## **Sample news release**

Personalized this news release to send your community newspapers. If your county has only one newspaper, considering coordinating with the other districts in the county to submit one news release honoring all board of education members in the area.

## **School Board Recognition Month sample proclamation**

Use this sample language when asking your township, village, city or county's elected officials to proclaim January School Board Recognition Month in your community.

## **Sample messaging for school marquees and social media**

Place appreciation messages on school marquees and in social media posts.

## **Art**

The School Board Recognition Month art is saved in two formats: jpeg and pdf. Other file formats can be provided upon request. All art, including graphics for social media, is available at [www.ohioschoolboards.org/sbrm](http://www.ohioschoolboards.org/sbrm).

Please contact Angela Penquite at [apenquite@ohioschoolboards.org](mailto:apenquite@ohioschoolboards.org) or (614) 540-4000 if you have questions.



# IDEAS TO HONOR YOUR SCHOOL BOARD

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Let your board members know how much their work for your students is appreciated during School Board Recognition Month (SBRM) in January. Visit [www.ohioschoolboards.org/sbrm](http://www.ohioschoolboards.org/sbrm) for artwork, a sample news release, downloadable logos for your website and other resources.

The theme for 2024 is Launching Our Next Generation, and we hope these ideas will blast off and turn into star-worthy board recognition campaigns in your district!

## **Plan a board member recognition event**

- Plan a special reception at your January board meeting. Invite community members, students, parents, the media, city council members and more to submit videos thanking board members for their service.
- Send student thank-you cards, artwork and any other tokens of appreciation to board members. OSBA will send districts personalized certificates in December that can be used during recognition celebrations.
- Feature student entertainment at the event.
- Ask staff to record a few words on behalf of their teams, including teachers, school administrative assistants, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, etc.
- Give special recognition to school board members with extensive service records.
- Ask local businesses to post notices of School Board Recognition Month in their business or on social media.

## **Promote school board appreciation in the community**

- Encourage your city council, chamber of commerce or PTA to pass a local SBRM proclamation. (A sample is available at [www.ohioschoolboards.org/sbrm](http://www.ohioschoolboards.org/sbrm).)
- Ask your community's civic and business clubs (Lions, Rotary, Kiwanis or chamber of commerce) to host your board at a breakfast or lunch.
- Publish information on board members, including their background, years of service, etc. This information can be distributed in a variety of formats, like a brochure, webpage, blog and communicated at civic meetings.
- Place appreciation messages on school marquees. (Available at [www.ohioschoolboards.org/sbrm](http://www.ohioschoolboards.org/sbrm).)
- Ask your PTA or students to place a thank-you ad in the local newspaper.
- Download the SBRM logo and print it on shirts, use it on school or district websites and more. (Available at [www.ohioschoolboards.org/sbrm](http://www.ohioschoolboards.org/sbrm).)



# IDEAS TO HONOR YOUR SCHOOL BOARD

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## Promote SBRM using your district's digital assets

- Place an SBRM logo in staff email signatures during the month of January. Link the logo to your district or board of education webpage. (Available at [www.ohioschoolboards.org/sbrm](http://www.ohioschoolboards.org/sbrm).)
- Use your district's blog, newsletter or website to post information about SBRM, board member profiles and more.
- Post video interviews with board members in which they talk about the role of the board.
- Watch OSBA's Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts for updates. Feel free to like, retweet and share posts.
- Share SBRM graphics on your social media accounts. Be sure to use #SchoolBoardMonth on Twitter and Instagram. (Available at [www.ohioschoolboards.org/sbrm](http://www.ohioschoolboards.org/sbrm).)
- Invite your community members to share their appreciation for board members through social media and email.

## Get media coverage

- Send a press release about SBRM. (Customizable Microsoft Word document available at [www.ohioschoolboards.org/sbrm](http://www.ohioschoolboards.org/sbrm).)
- Invite students to write about the important role of school boards that can be given to members and published in local newspapers.
- Schools with access to a district cable TV channel can use their time to conduct interviews with school board members and have informal talks on board service. Use students as interviewers and technical help.

## Educate students, community on what a school board does

- Hold mock school board meetings and elections in high school and invite your board members to attend.
- Work with high school government teachers who are interested in discussing the role of local government – and public school leadership, in particular – with their students.
- Include information about what a board does on your district/school cable TV channel or podcast or in school newspapers. Encourage students to interview board members.
- Ask schools to “adopt a board member” and sponsor events for the adoptee throughout the month or year.

## Other creative ideas and student projects

- Have students create thank-you notes using colorful construction paper.
- Invite members of the schools' student council or other student groups to record videos honoring school board members.
- Invite board members to athletic events to blow the whistle to start the game.
- Ask each school in your district to be responsible for doing something special for one of your board members.



# IDEAS TO HONOR YOUR SCHOOL BOARD

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- Donate a book or set of books to the school library, dedicated to the board, and include board members' names and dates of service on a recognition label within each book.

Don't forget to complete the online form at [www.ohioschoolboards.org/sbrm](http://www.ohioschoolboards.org/sbrm) to share your great ideas and help us continue to improve this campaign. District recognition events will be shared in the OSBA Journal magazine and on the association's website.



# SAMPLE DISTRICT ACTIVITIES

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*Each year, OSBA asks school districts to share their successful board recognition events. Here are a number of ideas that worked throughout Ohio in 2023.*

Students at Bay Village City went all out to show their appreciation for the board members who support their success during School Board Recognition Month in January.

During a board meeting, seventh-graders Jane Fanter, Esli Gjeci and Owen Mendez and Media Specialist teacher Melissa Wolf gave board members tokens of appreciation, including a bag, pencil case, mini cutting board and wood flower arrangement, made and personalized in the district's MakerSpace. Second-grade students in teacher Anne Hart's class at Normandy Elementary School made thank-you notes for the board members, and Renee Duffy, Bay High School senior class president, shared her gratitude on behalf of the student body: "I would like to thank the Bay Village Board of Education for providing students with countless opportunities to succeed in our future," she said.

Students in Licking Heights Local (Licking) high school's Fab Lab created custom-made signs to honor their board members. Elementary school students gave board members thank-you cards and "survival kits" of symbolic gifts, including a battery so they could recharge and a fan to keep cool in stressful situations. Superintendent Kevin Miller presented a resolution in honor of School Board Recognition Month that praised the board members for serving the community with integrity and honor and their "commitment to our children's futures."

Steubenville City board members were treated to a breakfast at East Garfield Elementary School, where select students gave a brief description of their daily activities and learning opportunities. Board members received appreciation gifts, including magnets made with the school's 3D printer, as well as coffee and donuts.

Crestview Local (Van Wert) Superintendent Kathy Mollenkopf recognized board members with a proclamation during a board meeting, pointing out that they set the direction for the district by establishing policies and procedures that govern operations while ensuring staff are vested in the district's mission and goals. "I encourage all employees and members of the Crestview community to thank these board of education members for their service and representation of the district's motto, 'Tradition invested in the future,'" she said.

Revere Local (Summit) board members were recognized at a January board meeting and received a goodie bag that included Revere-branded socks and a note stating that the board members "knock 'R' socks off!"

At the Findlay City board's January meeting, Mayor Christina Muryn presented a proclamation in appreciation of the board's work. Students in the district's



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preschool gave each board member a handmade necklace and card, and the leadership team from Glenwood Middle School presented board members with thank-you notes and chocolates.

Delaware City Superintendent Heidi Kegley thanked board members for “the amazing service” they provide to the school district, students and community to make the district successful.

Maumee City board members enjoyed a performance by the high school string orchestra at the board’s Jan. 23 meeting. In addition, the local newspaper ran features on each board member, highlighting their favorite part of being a board member and why the community was important to them.

In a column submitted to The Clermont Sun, West Clermont Local (Clermont) Superintendent Natasha Adams thanked the district’s board members for “the work that our board is doing to help West Clermont commit to excellence with every learner, every day, every way.”

Chardon Local (Geauga) board members received tokens of appreciation, including a personalized Hilltopper clipboard and mug, and notes signed by students. Superintendent Dr. Michael P. Hanlon Jr. thanked board members for their commitment to public service, noting that much of their work is voluntary and “each of our members is committed to promoting success for all students and to advocating (for) our schools within the community.”

Cuyahoga Falls City celebrated its board members throughout January by featuring one board member each week on the district’s social media platforms. Board members also received artwork designed by DeWitt Elementary School students under the guidance of art teacher Kat Skoff.

Other districts that shared recognition posts through social media or profiled their board members on their district website included Avon Lake City, Avon Local (Lorain), Butler County ESC, Champion Local (Trumbull), Columbus City, Copley-Fairlawn City, Crestline EV, Cuyahoga Heights Local (Cuyahoga), Dublin City, ESC of Central Ohio, Great Oaks Career Campuses, Greenfield EV, Hudson City, Independence Local (Cuyahoga), Lebanon City, Liberty Center Local (Henry), Mad River Local (Montgomery), Monroeville Local (Huron), Northwest Ohio ESC, Struthers City, Sylvania City, Tuscarawas Valley Local (Tuscarawas), Weathersfield Local (Trumbull), Warrensville Heights City, Wellington EV, Whitehall City, Yellow Springs EV and Zanesville City.

Westlake City feted its board members at their monthly meeting, where Mayor Dennis Clough presented a proclamation honoring the board. Each board member also received an individual Bundt cake as a token of appreciation.

In recognizing the ESC of Eastern Ohio’s board members for their service, Superintendent Dr. Traci Hostetler said, “They are the voice of the community



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in a school district. They ensure all aspects of their respective districts are designed to best serve its community.”

Benjamin Logan Local (Logan) middle school students gave each board member a kiln-fired clay tile with a message thanking them for investing their time into the students’ lives. The high school provided artisanal, handmade cookies to complement the caramel apples gifted to the board members by the district. In a video created by the elementary school staff, students shared their ideas of what a board member does and thanked the board members for their service.

Cincinnati Public Superintendent Iranetta Wright recognized each board member with certificates during the “Superintendent Update” at the January board meeting. Board members were featured individually in social media posts that highlighted their backgrounds and accomplishments, including the board’s newly elected officers and committee positions.

Fairfield Local (Highland) middle school students interviewed the board members for a feature article in the middle school’s newspaper. Board members received paintings titled “Starry Night, Fairfield Night,” created by elementary school students, and a 3D key chain designed and printed by the high school STEAM class.

During the East Palestine City board meeting, Superintendent Chris Neifer asked that the community join the district in recognizing the “dedication and hard work” of its board members. “This group works tirelessly to maintain an education system that meets the needs of both today’s and tomorrow’s children,” he said.

Kings Local (Warren) asked the families of its board members to share what their service means to them. Their responses were incorporated into a video honoring the board during School Board Recognition Month. The video is posted at [www.ohioschoolboards.org/sbrm-recap](http://www.ohioschoolboards.org/sbrm-recap).

Jefferson County Vocational School board members were treated to a recognition dinner prepared by students in the culinary arts program.

Student artwork and appreciation postcards from teachers and staff were used to decorate the room for the Deer Park Community City board’s January meeting, where board members were honored with a resolution recognizing their work and feted with cake.

In an editorial in the Times Reporter, Dover City Superintendent Karie McCrate recognized the district’s board members for their dedication, noting that each board member is involved in the community and gives their time by having discussions, planning for and attending meetings and broadening their knowledge of public education. “Their love for our students and for making our community the best it can be is evident each day,” she wrote.





# SAMPLE DISTRICT ACTIVITIES

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Third-graders shared thank-you notes with Patrick Henry Local (Henry) board members during their board meeting.

Fairborn City board members were honored with framed recognition certificates during their board meeting. The district also submitted a press release to a local newspaper and shared posts honoring its board on the district's website and social media platforms.

While honoring Hillsboro City's board members, Superintendent Tim Davis thanked them for their service and their dedication to the district. "I just want to thank you for all the work that you put in. ... It's a thankless job, and I do appreciate everything that you do," he said.

East Muskingum Local (Muskingum) students, including the board members' children and grandchildren, surprised the board with appreciation gifts at its January meeting.

While presenting certificates to the Galion City Board of Education, Superintendent Jennifer Lynn Allarding thanked board members "for the time they selflessly give so that our students receive the best possible education and are prepared to be the leaders of tomorrow."

Other districts presenting certificates or recognizing their boards included: Ada EV, Alliance City, Bellefontaine City, Buckeye Hills Career Center, Conneaut Area City, East Liverpool City, Edison Local (Jefferson), Fairfield City, Holgate Local (Henry), Indian Creek Local (Jefferson), Leetonia EV, Lincolnview Local (Van Wert), Martins Ferry City, Mid-Ohio ESC, Mississinawa Valley Local (Darke), North College Hill City, North Ridgeville City, North Union Local (Union), Ohio Hi-Point Career Center, Perrysburg EV, Reynoldsburg City, Sebring Local (Mahoning), St. Clairsville-Richland City, Trumbull County ESC, Twin Valley Community Local (Preble), Twinsburg City, Van Wert City, Warren Local (Washington), Washington Court House City, West Branch Local (Mahoning) and Woodridge Local (Summit).