Birthday Words of Praise

Hide words of praise, upbeat birthday quotes, or fun jokes around the room – on the person's desk, computer keyboard or monitor, in books, cupboards, file folders, etc. You might want to start them with "You are special because...." If you know the person's age, you could hide one for every year of his or her age (e.g., 40 affirmations for the person turning 40).

<u>An Educator Is...</u>

Give each staff member the sentence starter "An educator is ______". Have them give one-word adjectives to finish the sentence. Wrote down the silly, fun, and serious responses and distribute the list to staff members.

The Good Stuff

Begin each meeting with "The Good Stuff." Staff members share something funny a student or parent did or said, a note or letter received, or a story to warm hearts and bring laughter.

Manly Chick Flick Movie Reviews

When a "chick-flick" movie is released, ask for a male staff member to volunteer to see it. Give him two tickets to attend the movie, and then report back at the staff meeting with a review of the movie.

<u>Chair Massages</u>

During finals week or at the end of a project, have massage therapists come to the workplace. Schedule staff members to receive 15-minute shoulder and neck massages. Check with massage therapy schools to see if they have students who would like to participate. Vending machine profits could be used to sponsor this activity.

<u>E-mail Trivia Challenge</u>

E-mail staff members a trivia question each morning. The first five winners get to select a prize from the Trivia Box, which consists of goodies from the Oriental Trading Company. On Monday, 10 winners are selected. A few starters are:

1. What is the longest work you can spell without repeating a letter? (uncopyrightable)

2. What is the longest work with just one vowel? (strengths)

- 3. What is the only English word with a triple letter? (goddessship)
- 4. What is the word with the longest definition in most dictionaries? (set)
- 5. What is the shortest "ology" (study of) word? (oology, the study of eggs)
- 6. What is the only word in which an "f" is pronounced like a "v"? (of)

In-Touch Lottery

At an event or meeting when *all* staff members are present, hold a lottery in which all supervisor's names are put into one container and all other staff member's names are put into another. Select one name from the supervisor container and one from the staff member container. The administrator spends a day (or half-day) assisting the staff member whose name was drawn. You can also do the reverse. Have participants write what they learned about the other person's job. This activity gives the employees a new perspective on how the organization operates.

Tea for Substitute Teachers

Substitute teachers are in such demand that recognizing and appreciating them is meaningful. One way is to have a tea in their honor. Make them feel welcome and part of the team so they put your school on top of their list.

Summer Highs and Lows

At the beginning of the school year (or after a long break), ask staff members to stand and join hands. Each person shares a "high" and a "low" event of the summer. Everyone quickly catches up on their colleagues' lives; people can find out more details as desired.

<u>What's in Your Bag</u>

In advance of the meeting tell the staff to put up to 20 items found in their desks, wallets, brief cases, and purses into a bag and bring them to the meeting. Using the items brought, have a contest to see who...

- Has the largest number of people in a picture
- Has the oldest coin
- Has the smallest pencil
- Has the highest number of calories in a single item (candy bar, chips, etc.)

<u>5 Minutes of FUN</u>

Make a calendar of the dates of upcoming staff meetings. Ask each staff person to sign up to lead a fun activity at the start of the meeting. It should be brief and should bring the staff together through laughter, entertainment, mental stimulation, etc. When "playtime" is over and people are feeling happy, energized, and enthusiastic, the business part of the meeting can begin.

Some people will immediately know what type of activity they want to lead; others may struggle with this "assignment".

<u>Coffee Break</u>

A clever way to distribute your newsletter is to call it "The Coffee Break" and attach a tea bag or a small bag of coffee to it, which invites employees to have coffee while the read the current staff news.

This Song's About ME!

Ask each staff member to submit their favorite song and a description of their interests, hobbies, number of children, college they attended, animals the own, etc. Each day one song and description are included as part of the announcements. Each class tries to guess which staff member is being described.

Guest Teacher Appreciation

When the "guest teacher" checks in for the day's assignment, have a small bag ready with a bottle of water, a snack, a thank-you note and the name of the person who will be having lunch with them that day. What a way for them to feel welcome and want to come back!

<u>Hobby Showcase</u>

Life outside of work? Many staff members have very rich lives that aren't always known to their colleagues. Invite staff members to bring in an item that represents one of their hobbies or interests (e.g., fishing pole, miniature sewing machine, jewelry, gardenting gloves, music, etc.) and tell the group what the item represents and means to them. You can also make it challenging by asking staff members to match the item with the person.

<u>Good Days Jar</u>

Designate a jar as the staff's *Good Day Jar*. When a staff member has a particularly good day or solves a difficulty in a positive manner, he or she puts a marble in the jar and shares the events with the staff. When the jar is full, have a "Good Day" celebration.

Don't Eat Lunch with Grouches

Supply the staff lounge with water pistols and Nerf balls. Whenever someone is negative, staff members are free to use these toys to give their colleague an "attitude adjustment".

Get to Know Each Other Better via E-mail

Send this e-mail to a designated staff member to complete. That person then sends it on to another person to complete, until it has reached everyone on staff. It helps colleagues learn more about each other.

Name as it appears on your birth certificate: Nicknames: What was the last movie you was in a theater?: Place of birth: Favorite foods: Have you ever loved someone so much it made you cry? Have you been in a car accident? Do you prefer croutons or bacon bits? Favorite day of the week: Favorite flower: Favorite spectator sport: Favorite drink: Favorite ice cream: Favorite fast food restaurant: Before this one, from whom did you get your last e-mail: In which store would you choose to max out your credit card? What do you do most often when you are bored? What is your normal bedtime? What are your favorite TV shows? Do you prefer Ford or Chevy? What is your favorite color? Do you prefer a lake, ocean or river?

RETURN DIRECTIONS: Copy this entire e-mail and paste it onto a new e-mail that you will send. Change all of the answers so they apply to you. Then send it to a staff member who has not received the e-mail. In this way, you'll learn many little-known facts about your colleagues. Enjoy the discoveries!

<u>Survival Kit</u>

Make a Survival Kit for each staff member by placing the following instructions in a bag, along with the items mentioned.

TOOTHPICK	To remind you to pick out the good qualities in your students.
RUBBER BAND	To remind you to be flexible throughout the day.
PAPER CLIP	To remind you to hold it all together.
ERASER	To remind you to start each day with a clean slate .
BAND AID	To remind you to heal hurt feelings – yours or a student's.
CLAY	To remind you that you are molding futures .
LIFESAVER	For always being there when your students need you.
MARBLE	To replace those we lose from time to time.
MINT	To remind you that you are worth a mint .
TEA BAG	To remind you to relax and take time for yourself .
PIPE CLEANER	Flexibility is important for a successful year.
RICK RACK	This year will be full of ups and downs , but it will all smooth out.
MATCHES	For those days when you feel you need to light a fire under the students.
WIGGLY EYE	To keep an eye on the students to determine how to best help them.
BATTERY	Like the Energizer Bunny, this will keep you going, and going, and going
ANIMAL CRACKER	For when you think your job is a zoo.
JINGLE BELL	Ring for help when you need it.
PRESENT	Remember, our students are a gift to us.
CANDY BAR	Use when you need a " sweet excape ".
SMILY STICKER	Wear a happy face .
SNOWFLAKE	When all else fails, pray for a snow day !
FLOWER POT	We are here to plant the seeds of knowledge.
CLOTHESPIN	Hang in there!
HOLE REINFORCER	RS Don't' forget to reinforce each other's efforts .

Appreciation Chalkboard

Place a whiteboard or chalkboard in a location where people congregate 9staff lounge, restrooms, mailboxes, etc.). Title it "KUDOS". Staff can write positive comments about each other on it. OR....put a pack of Post-it Notes by the board and let staff stick it on the board. At the end of the week, erase the board and start Monday with a fresh slate. Record the comments and include them in a staff newsletter.

Office Laundry

String a clothesline across a wall and have a supply of clothespins available. Have cards and felt pens handy for staff to write notes of praise. Letters from students, parents, etc. can also hang on the line for all to read.

<u>"What Upset Me Today" Box</u>

Instead of having a suggestion box, have a place where staff can express themselves and share what is not working in the organization by placing items in a "What Upset Me Today" box.

G.O.O.S.E. Cards

A G.O.O.S.E. (Get Out Of School Early) card can be given to all staff at the start of the year or as rewards when someone does something worthy of recognition and acknowledgement.

<u>Recess Pass</u>

Once a year, the principal gives each staff member a Recess Pass. With 24-hour advanced notice, the principal takes the teacher's recess duty.

Flexibility Pass

The principal gives each staff member a half an hour of his or her time. If the staff person needs to start work late, leave early, or take a long lunch, the principal covers the duties.

<u>Go for the Gold</u>

Use the Olympic theme for the year – Go for the Gold. Have awards such as Golden Staff Award and Funny/Fun Olympics. Organize several fun events in which staff members compete. The "Olympics" can be an ongoing event or just a day of fun. Some events might include:

- **Broom baseball** bat with a broom rather than a bat and run the bases backwards.
- Lay an egg divide staff members into pairs and have them stand with their backs to each other. Place a raw egg between their backs and see if they can lay the egg on the ground without breaking it.
- **Dress-up relay** make two piles of the same type of clothing. Divide the staff into teams. Have the first person on each team race to put on all of the clothes in the pile and take them off. The next player then does the same. The team that dresses and undresses the fastest wins.
- Find the rainbow divide the staff into teams. Give each team a bag with a piece of paper with the colors of the rainbow (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet) written on it. Each team is to find and put in the bag an object outside that matches each color. The winner is the first team to find objects that match all of the colors.
- **Foot golf** hit the ball with your foot rather than a golf club.
- Hula hoop relay divide the staff into an even number of teams and provide a hulahoop and a stick for each team. Devise a course for each team to follow. Start the relay by blowing a whistle; then each competitor rolls the hoop through the course and back by using either a hand or the stick. The hula-hoop is handed off to the next player. The relay continues until all of the players of one team complete the course.

Match & Win Game

Obtain prizes from local businesses or other sources. Each staff member is given a copy of a U.S. bill (\$20, \$10, etc.) with the following note attached. Make sure you display the winner's name and prizes awarded.

Who wants to win?

The attached currency is for you – our hardworking teachers and staff. We wish we could afford to give you the real thing; however, you may be holding a winning bill!

Look at the serial number on the front of your currency. Match it to one of the numbers listed on the poster on the door of the staff lounge and win that prize. Claim your prize by presenting your currency at the office.

Good luck!

<u>Concerts in the School</u>

Staff members bring in their favorite CD to play over the PA system after the students leave for the day.

<u>Substitute Lotto</u>

Each fall the names of teaching staff are put into a container for a drawing. Each of the administrator's (building or district) selects the name of a staff person; As a show of appreciation, the administrators substitute for the teacher on a mutually agreed upon date, with no strings attached. When a teacher's name is drawn, his or her name is eliminated from next year's drawing. Eligibility can be regained the following year.

Bus Driver Sunshine Letters

Can you imagine being a bus driver and maneuvering a bus on snow and icy roads with 60 children behind you? Sunshine Letters printed on bright yellow paper are sent to parents. They are asked to write a Sunshine Letter to the bus driver when there is an occasion to show appreciation.

Services Auction

Each person who qualifies by reaching the goal is given a sum of play money to use in an auction. The administrators designate services they are willing to perform for their staff (washing a car, babysitting, baking a pie, preparing a meal, etc.) and these services are auctioned off.

<u>Best Poker Hand</u>

Use this reward activity with smaller groups such as grade levels or departments. With the group members, develop criteria in which they would receive a card (if they got their grade sheets in on time, perfect attendance for the week, etc.) When they have earned a card, each staff member draws a playing card out of a deck of cards that the supervisor holds. At the end of the designated time, the person with the best poker hand wins a prize.

Adopt-An-Employee

This recognition requires that all employees in each school be identified and that selected activities are implemented. Parent-teacher organizations and students "adopt" a staff person within their building and plan a recognition activity.

<u>Tell-A-Thank You</u>

Parents, students, and community members are encouraged to call in appreciation messages for staff members. Volunteers answer the phones and operate the computers. All messages are entered into the computers and employees are given their messages on staff appreciation day.

Tell-A-Thank You

February 5 & 6 Call 303-555-1212

Parents, Students, Friends: Take a moment to recognize those who have touched your lives. Remember the employee who always greets you with a smile...the bus driver who waited for you...the custodian who fixed your locker...the counselor who changed your class schedule...the administrator who helped you out?

Phone lines are open on the above dates to receive messages for teachers, administrators, secretaries, custodians, paraprofessionals, bus drivers, food service staff, and other school personnel.

Messages will be delivered on Staff Appreciation Day - Friday, February 9th.

Personal Profiles

List the names of all staff members on the left side of a piece of paper. Duplicate the page and distribute it to each person. Instruct them to write a positive statement about each of their colleagues next to his or her name, e.g., why they like working with that person, the qualities her or she brings to the organization, the characteristics the person demonstrates, etc. Collect and compile statements about each individual on a summary sheet and give it to the subject person.

<u> "I Blew It" Cards</u>

Staff members are encouraged to be innovative – to try new things. People often have a fear of failure and find comfort in maintaining the status quo. Annually, the administrator gives each staff member an "I Blew It" card that allows him or her to try new things without fear of ridicule.

<u>Wake-up Call</u>

Do you have trouble getting up to go to work in the morning? Log onto <u>www.mrwakeup.com</u> and have them call to wake you. You can record messages, music, etc. to start your day. You can also set it up to wake up a coworker too!

<u>Two Truths and a Lie</u>

Divide the large group into smaller groups of five or six members each. Ask each person to tell, with conviction, two truths and a lie about ______ (how they spent their summer vacation, what they did over the holidays, etc.). Other members of the group have to guess which are the truths and which is the lie.

Who's Your Match?

Purchase inexpensive items in duplicate (e.g. two noisemakers, two Hawaiian leis, two yo-yos, etc.). Put all items into a large bag or box. Each person reaches into the bag and chooses an item. When all participants have made their selection, they each have to find the person in the room who has the matching item. The two people become a team.

Monday Brown Bag Lunch Exchange

Pack a lunch for someone else. Each month, draw names for the person whose Monday lunch you will be preparing.

Appreciative Sayings

Attach appreciative sayings to food items and have them at staff meetings, on staff member's desks, placed in their mailboxes, etc.

- Starbursts *Bursts with energy*.
- Peppermint Pattie Get the sensation of learning.
- Chocolate Kisses & Hugs Kisses and hugs to you!
- M & M Candy Marvelous & Motivated
- Cupcakes You take the cake!
- Berry Jam You did a "berry" good job!
- Cinnamon Buns You worked your buns off!
- Juice Box Thanks for sharing your creative juices!
- Stick of gum Thanks for sticking it out!
- Red Hot Candies Our staff is RED HOT!
- Gummy Lifesavers You're a lifesaver!

Empty Bowl Lunch

Staff members skip lunch and donate the cost of the lunch to a local soup kitchen.

<u>Circle Massage</u>

Before you get into the "business" of a staff meeting, ask people to stand up and form a singlefile line or circle. Tell them to place their hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them and give them a nice shoulder and neck massage. First, have them pretend they're making pizza and kneading the dough. Then have them switch to karate chop movements on the back, and end with light "raindrops". After a few minutes, have the group reverse directions and give a massage to the person who is now in front of them.

Staff Meeting Bingo

Make a BINGO sheet that lists words, acronyms, phrases, etc. that are commonly used in your organization. Give each staff member a copy of the sheet and explain that to win, they simply need to mark off five squares in one staff meeting. Then they should BINGO! And receive a prize. Some words to use are:

- Revisit
- Lesson plans
- Go the extra mile
- Ballpark
- Results driven
- Site-based
- Rigorous curriculum
- Professional development
- Touch base
- Benchmark
- Proactive, not reactive
- Empower
- Long-range plan
- Best practice
- Portfolio
- The big picture
- Mind-set
- Response to Intervention (Rtl)

- Paradigm shift
- Fast track
- Student driven
- At the end of the day
- Authentic assessment
- Student achievement
- Cost effective
- Think outside the box
- Stretch the envelope
- Parent-teacher conferences
- Time on task
- Under the gun
- Unified Improvement Plan
- Walk the talk
- Knowledge base
- Critical thinking
- Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS)

The Great Mascot Adventure

Let a picture or stuffed animal representation of your mascot accompany numerous staff members as they travel. At each destination, take a picture of the mascot in the appropriate surroundings. For example, at Disney World, have Mickey Mouse hold the mascot. Showcase the pictures in a common area in the building.

"Guess Who?" Contest

Have staff members bring in baby or school pictures. Number each photo and place it in a display case. The students can fill out ballots guessing which teacher was which baby or child. The students have fun realizing their teachers were just like them!

<u>Golden Plunger Award</u>

Have the custodian spray paint a plunger gold. The golden plunger is given by the custodian to the classroom that is the cleanest at the end of the day or week. Students and teachers are proud to be a recipient of the golden plunger!

<u>V.I.P. Parking</u>

Create a V.I.P (Valued Instructor Parking) space in your parking lot right up front! The V.I.P of the week can park in their special space and get in and out of the building fast!

You've Been Mugged!

Buy four coffee mugs that will circulate amongst the entire staff and place them in four separate bags. Attach a "Mug Shot" list to the bag and include notecards in the bag. Want to mug someone? Write a short note about the person on a notecard and stick it in the mug. Write their name on the Mug Shot list and send it on to them. When you receive your mug, read your note, but leave it in the cup. Write a name on the Mug Shot list (or someone who hasn't yet been mugged), include a note and pass it on. Once you have been mugged, you have 24 hours to mug someone else. At the next staff meeting, choose notes from each mug to share aloud. Four lucky people will go home with a new mug!

Valentine's Match

Make Valentine's Day hearts in a quantity equal to half the number of people on your staff. Cut the hearts into two pieces, each in a unique way. Attach half of each heart to a sheet on which the following instructions are printed. During the day, staff is to find the other staff member who has the half of the heart that matches theirs. At the end of the day, the pairs can come to the office to receive a special treat.

Valentine's Match

Good morning, dear friends. Happy Valentine's Day. We hope you slept well and are ready to play. We should recognize that we need one another. Our hearts aren't complete without sharing each other. Attached is a heart, cut in a way That you must find its match by the end of the day. We'll all wear our hearts in hopes we will find That one special person who's one of a kind. Bring both matching halves to the office to see The treat we will give you. It's special – and FREE!

<u>Dinner on Us</u>

Surprise your staff with a drawing to win a night out of the kitchen. Pick up the following items from the grocery store or have them donated from PTO or a local store: Package of frozen lasagna Package of frozen garlic bread Package of pre-washed salad mix Package of cookies Jug of apple juice Paper plates, cups and napkins

The lucky winner can pick up dinner to go right from the faculty refrigerator!

<u>Hello Muddah, Hello Faddah</u>

Highlight staff strengths in the parent newsletter. Let the parents know the strengths of each staff member throughout the year.

<u>Pepper Week</u>

Need a way to SPICE up the week? Thank your teachers and staff each day...

- Monday Peppermints Add a note "Thanks for keeping your teaching fresh!" or "You're worth a mint!"
- Tuesday Dr. Pepper
 Chill some sodas, set them out at lunch and add a note, "I'm a _____ (mascot), you're a _____ (mascot), isn't it great to be a _____ (mascot) too? Thanks for all you do for _____ (school name) students!"
- Wednesday Hot Peppers Set out a few jars or a platter of hot pickled peppers and invite staff to add them to you lunch. Include a note "You sure spice things up around here! Thanks for bringing zest to our school!"
- Thursday Pep Band
 Put out music request slips in the lounge or copy room the week before. Ask for a
 favorite song or artist. Play teacher's favorite songs or requests over the loud
 speaker throughout the day. "This special dedication goes to Mr. Jones our ninth
 grade math teacher have a great day!"
- Friday Pepperoni Pizza
 Let teachers know you will be providing lunch on Friday pepperoni pizza to thank them for all of their hard work.

Boxers or Briefs?

Give out the Depends Award during staff meeting. Take a pair of Depends ™ Undergarments and spray paint them gold. Give out the Depends Award to the most dependable person each week. This is an award they can keep until it is passed on to the next person. Be specific about how each person is dependable.

<u>Phantom Ghost</u>

A "phantom ghost" delivers treats to celebrate Halloween. Each "ghost" is responsible for delivering treats to two other people. Attach the following ghost picture and poem to the treats. Those "hit" by the phantom should display the phantom on their classroom door so the phantom knows to visit someone else.

Goooooooooooo Mooooooooning!

The "Phantom Ghost" has come to town, To leave you some goodies I see you have found. If you wish to keep on the ball, Continue this greeting, this Phantom call.

FIRST, put this "Phantom" where it can be seen And leave it there until Halloween. This will scare other "Phantoms" who may come to call, Be sure to participate, so joy spreads to all!

SECOND, make treats, notes and "Phantoms" like this Deliver them to <u>two neighbors</u> who may have been missed. Don't let them see you, be sneaky, no doubt And hope that they put their "Phantom Ghost" out.

Next, you have little time, so be quick Leave it at cubbies or offices where the Phantom hasn't hit. Deliver at dark when there is no light, Since there is no doorbell, just run, stay out of sight!

And last but not least, come join the season Don't worry, be happy, you need no good reason. Be cool, have fun and remember – don't be seen. SHARE IN THE SPIRIT OF HALLOWEEN!

<u>Cheers!</u>

Pass out grape juice in plastic goblets at the next staff meeting and toast each other. Keep going until everyone has received a toast.

Working at the Carwash

Make a deal with the staff. "If we have 100% attendance for the Criterion Reference Testing then the PBIS staff will wash everyone's car on a non-rainy day."

<u>We're Telling!</u>

Send a thank-you note or acknowledgment to the staff member's parent or spouse. Have the parent or spouse return the acknowledgment signed. Post it in the staff lounge for all to see!

	THANK YOU! GOOD JOB! We are sending this note home to your parent or spouse!	
On	(Date), you were observed:	
•	Teaching a great lesson	
•	Helping a student after hours	
•	Working with another staff member	
•	Giving a compliment	
•	Reading to a student	
•	Being polite	
•	Working late	
•	Arriving early	
•	Generally showing concern for staff and students	
•	Smiling and enjoying your profession	
Please have your parent/guardian or spouse sign and return by: (Date)		
P.S. We will also follow up with a phone call to ensure this message was delivered and signed!		

Me Like Cookies!

Ask the cafeteria staff to bake some special cookies. After a particularly difficult day, invite all the staff to come down for cookies in the cafeteria. Have the PBS team set up ready to entertain. The PBS team might be dressed as Alvin and the Chipmunks and lip sync the Alvin and the Chipmunks song. Another idea is to have the PBS team put on lipstick and paint eyeballs and a nose on their chins. Then lay across a table with heads hanging backwards with stocking caps over their hair, face, and nose. Then lip sync to a silly song like "We are Family."

Late Night With...

Ask parents to send in praise via email. At the end of the day, do a David Letterman's mail bag and read the kudos that came in via email about staff members. Give kudos to the parent who shared by sending a hand written note. It won't take long for word to spread that compliments are appreciated.

<u>Scavenger Hunt</u>

Surprise the staff with a scavenger hunt all over the school. As each person enters the building have them see a sign that says "Immediately check your box." In their boxes have a candy bar that says, "Your next clue is awaiting you at the coldest water fountain in the school." When the staff members get to the coldest water fountain, one of the PBS team members will be waiting with a bottle of water that has the next clue taped on it. This will go on and end up in the cafeteria where the team meets up again and has a breakfast ready for all the staff members.

Complimentary Journal

Start a journal for all staff. Write a compliment for another staff member on one of the pages and then pass the journal to them. They have 24 hours to read it, then write a compliment about someone else and pass it on.

Nice Notes for Teachers

Create a bulletin board where there is a manila folder stapled to it for each staff member (include classified staff as well!). Students, parents and other staff members can stick in a positive note for a fellow staff member.

Staff Auction

Provide tickets to staff for making a certain number of positive phone calls or notes home, giving out the most acknowledgements to students, or teaching the expectations. Staff can then use the tickets in a silent auction to "win" items donated by PTA or the community.

<u>Gift Baskets</u>

Ask PTA for school supply donations (or raid the supply closet). Put the school supplies into decorated gift baskets. You can pass them out to staff or include them in the staff auction.

School Store for Staff

Include items for staff in the school store that staff can "purchase" with tickets or money they earn for participating in the PBIS implementation. Some ideas might include: Don't have to turn in lesson plans this week voucher, have the administrator cover your class for a certain time period, valet parking pass, and fun supply items.