

Igniting Excitement While Social Distancing

We Got This!

- 1 Teacher appreciation yard signs** – This can be a fun surprise for teachers to wake up to and find in their yard.
- 2 Office Hours** – Set a time for teachers and staff to swing by your office, or give you a call to voice questions, concerns or just a quick chat during the week. This can help replace informal conversations you once had and will encourage people to come forward with topics or suggestions that might not seem important enough for a full meeting.
- 3 Certificate for dinner delivered from their favorite restaurant** – Surprise teachers with a dinner that shows up at their doorstep to thank them for their hard work.
- 4 Host a drive-through celebration or parade.**
- 5 Employee bake-off** – Employees may send one another baked-good care packages and show-off what they baked/received during staff meetings.
- 6 Picture sharing** – Set a theme for the week/month and encourage staff members to submit photos to match the theme (i.e. pets, family, favorite books). Take time to share the submitted pictures during the following staff meeting or in regular staff communications.
- 7 Virtual or in-person dance party before meetings** – Let everyone let loose, have fun, and don't be afraid to be a little silly!
- 8 Team Karaoke** – Choose a song for everyone to sing together at the start of a meeting or the end of the day. Allow each team-member/grade the opportunity to select the songs or make it a prize for a team challenge.
- 9 Virtual coffee break** – Provide a gift-card for coffee to your team members and hold a virtual meeting with everyone logging in from the coffee shop of their choices' patio. You may also have everyone login with coffee/tea from their homes.
- 10 At-home scavenger hunt** – Before the virtual meeting begins, provide a list of scavenger items you believe most people would have in their homes (you can also make the clues a little vague to help show off personalities). Provide a set amount of time for everyone to find their objects before sharing with the rest of the team.
- 11 Remote fitness challenge** – Set an exercise goal that can be tracked on a Google spreadsheet. The individual or team that wins gets a prize. Encourage activities that can be done comfortably from home.
- 12 Remote Workout** – Schedule a time for a yoga/fitness instructor to host an online workout for interested team members.
- 13 Mental wellness challenge** – Mindful meditation can help reduce stress. Create a 30 day challenge to help boost focus and decrease stress.
- 14 Friday Trivia** – Wrap up the week with a trivia game. Once students are out of the building, ask grade levels to team up and answer trivia questions that are announced over the PA system. Set an amount of time to answer the questions and have teams send in their answers (no Googling – honors system). Provide a small prize for the winning grade level.
- 15 Outdoor meetup activities** – Take some time to participate in socially distanced activities outside of school. Interested team members can go on a bike ride, take a hike or play some round-robin tennis. Wear face coverings and keep the group size small.
- 16 Celebrate international holidays** – Encourage team members to input special holidays from their country/culture into a calendar. Remind all team members of the holiday a few days before and encourage them to bring something special for that day. Team members can later discuss what they learned about different cultures.

50 WAYS TO Ignite Enthusiasm & Engagement



Recognition

- 1 Highlight a Teacher/Employee of the Month** – Teacher/Employee of the month can be someone you've seen doing a great job around the school or allow the teachers and staff to vote.
- 2 Thank you/positive "shout out" notes posted in the break room** – Anytime anyone notices something positive in the school, give them a chance to give a "shout out" to their colleague and encourage similar acts in the future.
- 3 Jean coupons for reaching goals** – Allow teachers and staff a little extra comfort when they achieve specific goals either individually or as a school.
- 4 "Staff Spotlights" in school newsletter/social media, highlighting cool things observed in the school.** – It's one thing for teachers to know how each other are doing, but share the good news with your families and community so the good feelings spread.
- 5 Make an accomplishment jar** – Anytime anyone in the school notices someone doing something good, they can put it in the jar, and all the accomplishments can be announced monthly.
- 6 Victory Friday** – Compliment staff weekly on an achievement or anything they did to improve the school environment.
- 7 Nominate Teachers/Staff for District Employee of the Month** – If you have a standout employee, share them with the rest of the district and they earn recognition at a school board meeting.
- 8 Share great things happening in your school district-wide by sending to goodnews@gcsnc.com** – If good things are happening in your school, we all want to know about it! Send to Good News before an event for potential media coverage and photos after to share your good news in My GCS or on social media.
- 9 Nominate a teacher for Fox 8's Educator of the Week.** – Go to <https://myfox8.com/educator-of-the-week-nomination-form/> to submit a nomination.
- 10 Share your teacher/staff successes on social media and with your PTA/PTO** so that more people will know your good news!

Appreciation

- 11 Local Businesses Donate Token of Appreciation** – Restaurants could cater to lunch or offer a discount for teachers dining in. Businesses could donate pencils, pens, or other office supplies, so teachers don't need to purchase them from their own pockets or purchase small gift cards.
- 12 Monthly Snack/Treat Carts** – Give teachers a little extra treat with food donated by the PTA/local businesses to say "thanks" for their hard work.
- 13 Updating Teacher Lounge with "quote art"/comfortable furniture** – gives teachers space to truly relax during their breaks.
- 14 Local spa/masseuse donates a day for 15-minute massages** – Who doesn't love a massage? Find volunteers to cover teachers' classes for 15 minutes, so the teacher gets an extra break for the massage instead of using their lunch or planning time.

- 15 Food Truck Fridays** – Offer teachers the chance to purchase their lunches from a food truck once a week. It offers a fun change and an opportunity to socialize during the school day.
- 16 Coffee/Biscuit Drop-Off** – Give teachers a little pick-me-up, and thank you for their work.
- 17 After a break, small surprise gifts** – A little gift bag or token of appreciation lets teachers know you're happy to have them back and ready to start on a positive note.
- 18 Supply lunch/dinner for teachers working extra hours** – For example, any teacher working a school festival, book fair and parent-teacher conferences don't have to worry about what they will do for dinner that day.
- 19 Organize volunteers to cover teacher duties a couple of times a month to provide teachers with an extra break** – There is never enough time in a day. You can still give the teachers a little spare time by having a volunteer cover a class for 15 to 20 minutes.
- 20 Have random teacher appreciation drawings with prizes** – There doesn't always need to be a reason to celebrate teachers. Give everyone a chance to win with a fun drawing.
- 21 Keep drinks and snacks in stock in the teacher lounge or workroom** – Even teachers' need an extra boost now and then. Have healthy snacks available to keep their energy going all day.

Motivation

- 22 Start each week with a motivational quote to get everyone in the right mindset** – It may sound cheesy, but a little motivation can go a long way to get employees thinking positively and setting the right tone in the classroom.
- 23 Lesson plan and material swap** – Allow teachers to share ideas and methods that work in their classrooms. It may motivate teachers to try something new and spark innovative ideas.
- 24 Hold meetings in different rooms** – Hold faculty meetings in another teacher's room each time and allow that teacher to conduct part of the meeting, perhaps showcasing a strength they have that would benefit the rest of the staff.
- 25 Encourage teacher career advancement and give advice regarding next steps** – It is sometimes hard to stay motivated if you don't know where you're going next. Help teachers think about where they want to be in five or 10 years and help search for growth or advancement opportunities in the district.
- 26 Offer continuous feedback, support, and guidance for teacher improvement** – Allow teachers to learn and grow in a positive environment.
- 27 Assign teachers to committees based on individual expertise** – such as curriculum development, social committee; hiring committees for new teachers; writing a new policy. This allows teachers and staff to feel valuable and involved in the future of the school.



- 28 Spread out duties evenly. Don't put too much on a single teacher** – It's easy to put all the work on one or two of your best employees, but that may cause burnout and limit others' opportunities in your school. Distribute the work volume between all employees, so everyone feels invested in your school.
- 29 Set up a mentor/buddy system for new teachers** – New teachers can learn from others' experiences, and more experienced teachers may gain new inspiration from the rookies.
- 30 Send them into the world with information** – There are times when decisions made by the district or school may be confusing or controversial to the families and communities we serve. Take the time to explain the school/district position so they may speak knowledgeably about the topic. If you don't understand it yourself, ask questions.

Team-Building

- 31 Rotating Candy Jar** – Each week, teachers pass-off the candy jar to another teacher.
- 32 Monthly staff potlucks** – Everyone brings something from home and gets a chance to talk and socialize after school.
- 33 Karaoke Nights at Staff Meetings** – Don't be afraid to have fun and be a little silly!
- 34 Teacher/Staff Talent Show** – Teachers have lives outside of school. Let them show off a little.
- 35 Hold meeting off-campus at a local park for a team-building exercise** – Give teachers a chance to get to know one another outside of school in a more relaxed atmosphere.
- 36 Encourage random acts of kindness** – Small gifts or tokens of appreciation can come from anyone in the school.
- 37 Celebrate birthdays** – Celebrate the month's birthdays at a staff meeting or slip a card in their mailbox on a particular day.
- 38 Recognize personal achievements/milestones outside of work (completing a race, having a baby, service projects, additional degrees, etc.)** – Use any excuse to celebrate with your staff.
- 39 Dress up days** – like a superhero/favorite book character/etc. – Have fun at work, and learn something new about your staff.

- 40 Scavenger Hunts around the school** – This is a great team-building activity and a lot of fun! Have staff create teams and find a list of things around the school. You can even add a few personal items to the list, like a picture frame from a desk. Set a time frame and small reward for the winning team.
- 41 Gift Swap** – Host a party where staff can write out cards and swap gifts celebrating different holiday traditions.
- 42 Book Club** – Read books related to education that will allow professional development (CPDU credits) and teachers to spend some social time together.
- 43 Zumba/Workout classes after school** – Do any of your teachers know how to teach a class? Offer this as an opportunity for staff to get to know one another and get healthy after school.
- 44 Get to know you games** – Fun ice breaker questions or "guess who this is" from baby pictures or "cutest pet" contest when people bring photos of their pets.
- 45 Host a teacher cookout at your home** – Another opportunity for you to show genuine interest in your staff and show you're willing to go the extra mile for them.
- 46 Organize a night out for teachers with activities such as dinner and a movie.** – Another chance for teachers to get to know one another and have fun outside of school.
- 47 Volunteer together** – Employees can benefit from helping others in need; it can also increase camaraderie and communication.

Personal Communication

- 48 Be Genuine** – The most important morale booster of all is to simply be genuine. Be transparent in all you do, encourage communication and stick to our district's values.
- 49 Encourage creativity and embrace teachers who think differently** – You never know what will inspire others to do the same.
- 50 Do not dismiss any concern a teacher raises. Instead, follow through by checking into it and always let them know how you handled it.** – This allows your staff to know you care about what they have to say, and even if it can't be fixed, you didn't ignore it.
- 51 Take a genuine interest in their personal lives by learning about their families and interests outside of school.**
- 52 Be an example by staying happy, positive and enthusiastic.**