

Like many of you, I don't necessarily remember the classes I took in school, but I certainly remember many of my teachers' names because of the relationships they forged with me and their impact on my life. I am a proud product of public education, and I'm eternally grateful for the many teachers and coaches who invested in me and helped me learn and grow while I was in school and playing sports.

Next week is Teacher Appreciation Week for BDS, and I don't think there's ever been a more fitting time for us to show our collective appreciation to our teachers. In their post-pandemic world, our teachers are dealing with students in crisis, students with attendance/behavior issues and other challenges in numbers we've never seen before.

And that takes a toll.

The good news is, it's easy to help 😊 All you have to do is share a heartfelt "thank you" with the educators in your lives. Teacher Appreciation is a critical component of building a strong, supportive school community, and it is essential that we take the time to thank our teachers for their hard work, dedication, and unwavering commitment to our students.

One of the most important ways to thank our teachers is by simply expressing our gratitude. A heartfelt note or a word of thanks can go a long way in showing our teachers that we value and appreciate the work that they do. We can also show our appreciation through small acts of kindness, such as bringing in a treat for the teacher's lounge or organizing a potluck luncheon. As we celebrate Teacher Appreciation, let us all take the time to thank our teachers for their tireless efforts on behalf of our students and our community.

I'd like to thank those generous sponsors who are helping us celebrate our teachers all week. Our primary sponsors, Trustmark Bank, Vacasa and Alignment Bay County, have helped us plan some fun recognitions for our teachers and other businesses (listed below) have donated gifts and prizes:

Panama City Coca-Cola Bottling Company, The St. Joe Company, Beachy Beach Real Estate, Royal American, Waterworx Car Wash, Ash and Stone Boutique, Half Hitch Tackle, Tervis, The Press Downtown, Sage Boutique, The Little Mustard Seed, Infinite Beauty Skin Care, My Massage Clinic, FINNS Barista Bar and Snack Shack, Storage King USA, Granny Cantrell's, Sweet Frogs, C & G Sporting Goods, Cahall's Deli, That's Too Cute, Shipwreck Island Water Park and The Association of Bay County Educators.

Everyone in our community will have the opportunity to nominate deserving teachers for awesome prizes throughout the week of May 8-12. We hope you'll take a few minutes to comment on one of our prize giveaway posts and help us celebrate the amazing teachers in the Bay District Schools family.