



Thank a Teacher Campaign PTA Toolkit

Dear PTA Members,

When it comes to education, the Virginia Lottery is game! All of our proceeds support Virginia's K-12 public schools, but we don't stop there. We're supporting Teacher Appreciation Week from May 7-11, 2018, to create more opportunities for Virginians to recognize teachers for their hard work throughout the year. At the heart of our "Thank a Teacher" campaign is a pledge to thank as many public school teachers in the Commonwealth as possible for making a difference in their communities – and that's where we need your help! Thanks to you, Virginians sent more than 70,000 thank-you notes to deserving educators in its first two years.

What you can do: Show your support by sending thank-you notes to public school teachers you value and appreciate. Teachers who receive a Virginia Lottery-branded thank-you note (we have both hard copy and electronic versions) can enter a drawing for a chance to win one of four prizes, including one of two amazing Virginia vacation packages through a partnership with the Virginia Tourism Corporation, four round-trip train tickets through a partnership with Amtrak and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, or a \$500 VISA gift card courtesy of the Virginia Lottery.

This toolkit is your one-stop shop to encourage others to thank a teacher. Here's what you'll find in it:

- **Email Templates** – Use these email templates to send information about the "Thank a Teacher" campaign to parents and others at your school.
- **Tips to Host Your Own Thank-You Note-Writing Station** – Create more opportunities for people to thank a teacher by setting up a thank-you note-writing station in your community. This document will provide ideas for where and how.
- **Printed Thank-You Note Request Form** – Information on how to request physical thank-you notes from the Virginia Lottery.
- **Media Invitation** – Let local media know the date and location of your thank-you note-writing station so they can help spread the word.
- **5 Tips to Host a Successful Brainstorm** – Use these brainstorming tips to come up with other fun ways your local PTA can help encourage Virginians to thank a teacher.
- **Social Media Posts** – Use these social media posts on your local PTA Facebook site to engage people in Teacher Appreciation Week.

We thank you for participating!

Thank you for joining the Virginia Lottery in our effort to recognize the Commonwealth's teachers for all that they do!

The Virginia Lottery



Email Template for Parents/Others

Subject line: Thank a deserving teacher for their hard work!

Do you know a Virginia public school teacher at **[insert name of the school your PTA is affiliated with]** who deserves a “thank you” for all they do? Here’s a way to send them one.

Help our PTA celebrate **Teacher Appreciation Week (May 7-11, 2018)** by sending a thank-you note to an inspiring teacher. We joined the Virginia Lottery’s “Thank a Teacher” campaign and their pledge to thank as many public school teachers in the Commonwealth as possible – and we need your help to do so!

All teachers who receive one of our thank-you notes can enter a drawing for a chance to win one of four prizes, including one of two amazing Virginia vacation packages through a partnership with the Virginia Tourism Corporation, four round-trip train tickets through a partnership with Amtrak and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, or a \$500 VISA gift card courtesy of the Virginia Lottery.

You can submit a thank-you note in two ways:

- 1) **Electronically** – simply visit www.thankateacherva.com to send a digital thank-you note to a deserving teacher via email.
- 2) **Printed Notecard** – you can request printed thank-you notes from your local PTA. You also can order them from the Virginia Lottery by emailing jMullen@VALottery.com (please note that the Virginia Lottery can only fulfill requests for a minimum of 50 printed thank-you notes, and will need at least five business days to fulfill the request).

Thank you for celebrating Teacher Appreciation Week with us and the Virginia Lottery. The Virginia Lottery is game for public education, and we know you are, too!

Yours,

[Insert name]

Tips to Host Your Own Thank-You Note-Writing Station

You can help us create more opportunities for people to thank a teacher by setting up a thank-you note-writing station in your community. Here's what you'll need to set up a thank-you note-writing station:

- A table
- A sign explaining what the station is (i.e. "Send a thank-you note to a deserving teacher!")
- Printed thank-you notes from the Virginia Lottery (see Toolkit document with information on how to request these)
- Pens/Colored Pencils/Markers/Crayons
- Optional: A laptop with internet connection to allow people to send electronic thank-you notes via www.thankateacherva.com, if preferred

Here are some ideas for places where you could set up a writing station:

(Note: Where applicable, check first with the manager at some of these locations to make sure they are okay with you setting up the writing station outside their business.)

- Upcoming PTA meetings
- School events (sporting events, plays/concerts, etc.)
- Community playgrounds
- Grocery stores
- Libraries
- Post offices
- Daycares
- Dance studios
- Museums
- Boys and Girls Club centers
- YMCA
- Movie theaters
- Malls
- Restaurants (Chick-fil-A, McDonald's, Panera, etc. – and particularly those that frequently partner with organizations for a cause)



Printed Notecard Request Form

To request hard copy thank-you notes from the Virginia Lottery, please send an email to Jennifer Mullen at jMullen@VALottery.com with the following information:

- Contact name
- The number of thank-you notes needed*
- Mailing address
- Contact phone number
- Deadline for when the thank-you notes are needed
- One or two sentences explaining the planned use for the notes (i.e. PTA meeting, special event, note-writing station, sending home in kids' folders, etc.)

*Please note that we can only fulfill requests for a minimum of **50** notes, and need **at least one week** (five business days) to fulfill any requests.

Thank you for helping us recognize as many Virginia teachers as possible for their hard work!

This year's printed thank-you notes feature images created by three public school students:

[Sahasra Vishwanathan](#), 2nd grade, Kiln Creek Elementary School, Newport News

[Cleo Scott](#), 7th grade, Albert Hill Middle School, Richmond

[Isabel Lee](#), 9th grade, Battlefield High School, Prince William County

Media Invitation Email Template

Subject line: **[Insert name of school]** to celebrate Teacher Appreciation Week **[insert date of event]**

Hi **[insert name]**,

The local PTA at **[INSERT NAME OF SCHOOL]** is hosting a thank-you note-writing station on **[INSERT TIME/DATE/LOCATION]**, just in time for Teacher Appreciation Week (May 7-11). Would you be interested in letting your audience know about this event and where people can fill out thank-you notes for deserving teachers in their community?

The Virginia Lottery, the Virginia Tourism Corporation and the Virginia PTA are partnering to celebrate Teacher Appreciation Week by pledging to thank as many Virginia public school teachers as possible for their hard work and dedication. Teachers who receive a thank-you note can enter a drawing for a chance to win one of four prizes, including one of two amazing Virginia vacation packages through a partnership with the Virginia Tourism Corporation, four round-trip train tickets through a partnership with Amtrak and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, or a \$500 VISA gift card courtesy of the Virginia Lottery.

We invite you to come out to learn more about the "Thank a Teacher" campaign, and to write your own thank-you note to a special (current or former) teacher!



Let us know if you're interested and if you have any questions. More information about the "Thank a Teacher" campaign can be found at www.thankateacherva.com.

Below is a suggested tweet for your consideration.

Stop by **[name of school]** on **[insert date and time]** to send your favorite teacher a note for #TeacherAppreciationWeek #ThankaTeacherVA

Many thanks,

[Insert your name]

5 Tips to Host a Successful Brainstorm

In addition to setting up a thank-you note-writing station, you can brainstorm other fun ideas to encourage your community to thank a teacher. Here are five tips to get the ball rolling and ideas flowing during a brainstorm:

- 1) **Select a moderator** – In many cases, brainstorms can overflow with ideas and side conversations. Having a moderator will help keep participants on track. When selecting a moderator, choose someone who understands the project and is seen as an authority figure. The moderator should not dominate the conversation, but rather act to steer the conversation away from topics that are unproductive.
- 2) **Set a timer** – It's good to set a time limit and announce it at the beginning of the brainstorm, so that participants understand that goals must be met by a certain time. Additionally, setting a time limit will ensure that everyone stays on track and eliminates any needless discourse that ultimately has nothing to do with the goals.
- 3) **Pinpoint goals** – Without identifying goals, a brainstorm can quickly and easily go off topic. Prior to the brainstorm, be sure to provide participants with an overview of the project and the goals of the brainstorm.
- 4) **Start general, end specific** – At the start of the brainstorm, ideas should be numerous and widespread. Think outside the box! Toward the end of the brainstorm, identify and refine the best ideas, and eliminate the less effective ones. Take the best ones and get more specific about how they could be implemented.
- 5) **Write it down** – Be prepared at the start of the meeting with sketchpads, sticky notes or a large whiteboard. Remember that every idea, good or bad, should be noted. Having the ideas written down for all to see throughout the brainstorm could spark additional ideas later in the brainstorm.



Social Media Posts

Use the suggested posts below to spread the word about the “Thank a Teacher” campaign on your PTA’s Facebook page. Download “Thank a Teacher” images for Facebook and Twitter that can be shared on social media with the posts below, [here](#).

Share sometime from April 30 – May 4 (the week before Teacher Appreciation Week):

Teacher Appreciation Week is right around the corner, May 7-11, and we are so excited for the “Thank a Teacher” campaign from the Virginia Lottery! Encourage all of the parents and friends of **[insert school name]** to write a digital thank-you note to their favorite teacher by visiting: www.thankateacherva.com. Teachers who receive thank-you notes can enter to win some great prizes, including one of two Virginia vacation packages from Virginia Tourism Corporation! #ThankaTeacherVA

Share on May 7 (first day of Teacher Appreciation Week):

Teacher Appreciation Week is here! We’re supporting the Virginia Lottery’s campaign to thank as many teachers as possible. Send digital thank-you notes to the amazing teachers at **[insert school name]** by sharing this link all week long: www.thankateacherva.com. Teachers who receive thank-you notes can enter for the chance to win some great prizes, including four round-trip train tickets from Amtrak and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation! #ThankaTeacherVA

Share on May 9 (middle of Teacher Appreciation Week):

Have you thanked a teacher yet? It’s Teacher Appreciation Week, and we’re supporting the Virginia Lottery’s campaign to thank as many teachers as possible! Visit www.thankateacherva.com to send a digital thank-you note to your favorite teacher at **[insert school name]** today. Teachers who receive thank-you notes can enter for the chance to win some great prizes, including a \$500 VISA gift card from the Virginia Lottery! #ThankaTeacherVA

Share on May 11 (the last day of Teacher Appreciation Week):

Today is the last day of Teacher Appreciation Week! Don’t miss your chance to write as many thank-you notes as possible to the teachers we love at **[insert school name]**. Teachers who receive a thank-you note can enter for a chance to win some great prizes. Visit www.thankateacherva.com to send in those final notes! #ThankaTeacherVA