

# 13 Motivators

Ways to bond, recognize, and award your staff

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**1 ICE BREAKERS** - There are 100's of ways to do this, but one way to get to know each other in the beginning is to pass around a bag of M&M's and tell staffers to take as many or as little as they like. Arrange yourselves in a circle, then have categories for each color. For example, Red- what is one of your favorite movies, Blue- what is your biggest pet peeve, Green- describe one thing that makes you really happy, Orange- tell a fact about the third person to the right of you, etc. You have to do this for each red, orange, blue, green, etc. . . you took. This gives staffers a preview of who the people are that they will work with this year. It's fun and easy. Make up your own questions and have fun!

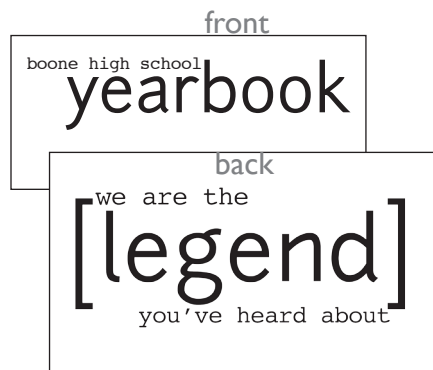
**2 SUMMER CAMP** - I can't say enough about how helpful this is for us. The students learn great skills they'll use in the year and it allows for bonding of the new staff. They have projects to produce so this forces them to work together in a nonthreatening way. I pair two returners and two newbies in rooms, too. Break up the cliques early.

**3 WEDDING** - Get the rings at a party store and a cake from local baker. Write vows about marrying the publication for the year, to promise to be ethical, committed, etc. . . ; have everyone recite and then sign the certificate. Frame and post.

**4 SECRET PALS** - Students complete a questionnaire about things their favorite things: snacks, color, magazine, Starbucks order (yada, yada). Then have returners draw the names of newbies and vice versa. For four weeks they are to get their secret pal something on that list and leave it in a class for them with a clue of who they are. This helps break up the us versus them.

**5 CELEBRATE** - Birthdays, driver's license, getting into the college of one's choice, and especially awards and deadlines.

**6 DEADLINE MET DAY** - While it can be hard with back to back deadlines, try to fit in a day where they just have fun. They can play Ultimate Frisbee, Taboo, Just Dance, whatever your staffers are into.



**7 SHIRTS** - Either jerseys or regular t-shirts. You can design as a staff around your theme or just with the name of the book and staffers names on the back. Have fun, be funny, be creative.

**8 SCAVENGER HUNT** - Think up items that students can find around campus and award a prize to the winning team. Try to keep items journalism related, but this can be an array of things. Who's been on campus the longest? What color was the third yearbook? etc.

This is really fun at an evening holiday party and sending students around the surrounding area. (Keep it legal!).

**9 FUN DAYS** - Have a day(s) where you meet for a barbecue or just a social. Play kickball, capture the flag, volleyball, or anything team oriented. You have to have FUN aside from the chaos. This is great for the editors to do by themselves to regroup and bond with one another.

**10 STAFFER OF THE DEADLINE** - Create an easy nomination form and have each staff member nominate the person he/she feels has worked the hardest, been the most helpful or dedicated to receive the award. Get free food coupons from your local restaurants to give to the person and make up award certificates to hand out too.

**11 YOU ROCK** - Create a postcard to send home praising staffers' efforts. Everyone likes to be recognized for their hard work and there's nothing better than getting mail at home.

**12 THEMED DINNERS** - Pot luck dinners can be an inexpensive way for the staff to get together and hang out (Sunday Sundaes, Fondue Friday).

## BANQUET

**13 LOCATION** - You can either have this at school or at a nice restaurant, but make it a big deal. Send out invitations to the students and parents and have them RSVP, especially if you are having it at a restaurant. Give out pins, medals, staff awards, and letters here. Everyone gets something, even if it's simply a participation award.

**THEME IT** - Seniors pick the theme and keep it a secret until the invitations are out, which is designed to fit the theme (Wild, Wild West; It's been Real; Easy Street). Seniors decorate the space to fit the theme and everyone dresses up too.

**SLIDE SHOW** - Put together something to celebrate the year. Make sure to include every staffer, don't just highlight a certain few.

**AWARDS** - Create some serious (MVJ, Outstanding Writer, Best Designer) and some funny (Biggest Procrastinator, Most likely to be texting).

**GIFTS** - Come up with something affordable to give to each senior at the banquet. Generally these people have invested a lot of time and effort into the program and should be awarded for it, or treat them to a formal dinner separately.

We also recognize parents who have gone the extra mile: organized fundraisers, worknight dinners. . .

## Give praises, praises, praises.

This is a thankless job, so it's up to you to keep your staff pumped up.