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October 2026

Dear Chicago principal,

On behalf of the Illinois Principals Association (IPA) and The Chicago Public Education Fund (The Fund), we are excited to celebrate you during Principal Appreciation Month!

This school year, we are uplifting principals who are Powering Possibilities for entire school communities. Every day, you expand what is possible for your students and staff. You lead through complexity, with courage and care. Because of you, thousands of Chicago youth walk into schools that believe in them.

Throughout October, we will celebrate you by highlighting principal stories and achievements on our social media and websites. You can see some of your colleagues in Chicago Transit Authority ads in trains and on buses, and you can come together with fellow school leaders at celebratory events. On The Fund's blog, TheFundChicago.org/Blog, you can learn about how your fellow principals lead in their schools. You can find more information about IPA's 2026 Principal Appreciation efforts at ilprincipals.org (click Programs, Principal Appreciation), including a press release that you can share with local media outlets.

As we celebrate today's school leaders, we're also looking ahead to those who will lead next. Enclosed is a card to give to someone in your school community who you believe has the potential to become an effective school leader. Sometimes, all it takes is recognizing someone's potential and encouraging them to take the next step.

Leaders across Illinois share our appreciation for you. This year, Governor J.B. Pritzker and Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias signed the enclosed Principal Appreciation Day Proclamation. We encourage you to proudly display this proclamation in your office.

As always, thank you for your leadership and for your commitment to continual growth for Chicago's young people. We wish you success throughout Principal Appreciation Month and in the school year ahead.

With gratitude,

Dr. Jason E. Leahy
Executive Director

Dr. Heather Y. Anichini
President and CEO

Illinois Principals Association The Chicago Public Education Fund