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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****Illinois Principals Association Encourages Principal Appreciation in October**

**Springfield, IL** – Lifetouch and the Illinois Principals Association (IPA) encourage all communities in Illinois to celebrate Principal Appreciation Week October 16-22, 2022, and Principal Appreciation Day on Friday, October 21, 2022. This state-endorsed recognition was first approved by the Governor of Illinois in 1990 and is celebrated annually. The IPA also joins the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), and the American Federation of School Administrators (AFSA) to recognize October as National Principals Month.

Principal Appreciation Day provides learning communities an opportunity to publicly recognize the work, commitment and importance of principals, assistant principals, and deans throughout the state. Lifetouch and the IPA invite all teachers, students, parents, and community members to perform some act of appreciation on Friday, October 21<sup>st</sup> to acknowledge the leadership of building administrators in Illinois' public and private schools.

Raúl Gastón, IPA President and principal of Jefferson Middle School in Villa Park, shared, "John C. Maxwell once wrote, 'A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way.' For Principal Appreciation, it goes without saying that Principals work intensely to learn the skills necessary to do their work, lead their staff through the work, and model what matters most for the betterment of the staff and students they serve daily. Principals aspire to be humble, influential, inspirational, motivating, results-oriented, trustworthy, visionary, and much more while creatively serving their respective communities. We all know we never precisely get there, but the determination and passion for aspiring to be their best is contagious and immensely appreciated by all. The IPA is here to support principals throughout the State in their journey towards excellence. Happy Principal Appreciation Day!"

"This year, we celebrate our state's school leaders for what they are – Leaders of Hope," said Dr. Jason Leahy, IPA Executive Director. "These courageous individuals lead their learning organizations with optimism, humility, vision, perseverance, and a deep commitment to do what is best for their students. Both research and common sense tell us how critical these servants are to positively influence young people, teachers, and communities. For this, they deserve our respect and gratitude."

*Lifetouch is proud to be the official school photographer for the National Association of Elementary School Principals. Lifetouch is honored to support local members of the Illinois Principals Association in recognition of "Principal's Appreciation Day." Lifetouch is excited to have joined forces with Shutterfly to bring together two industry leaders who share a common purpose – to share life's joy through capturing and preserving memories with the click of a camera. While we continue to deliver the quality photography and service you expect from Lifetouch, we are creating a new, innovative experience that will allow you to do more with your photos than ever before. As a part of our mission to help you share your memories, Lifetouch and Shutterfly are truly better together! Learn more at: <https://schools.lifetouch.com/shutterfly/>*

*The Illinois Principals Association is a leadership organization which serves over 6,000 educational leaders throughout the state of Illinois and whose mission is to develop, support, and advocate for innovative educational leaders. For more information about the IPA, please visit [www.ilprincipals.org](http://www.ilprincipals.org)*

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