



Good evening North Branch Families,

We are beyond excited for the first day of school tomorrow morning. Our staff has been working hard all summer and we are ready to welcome your children back to the classroom and the special place that is North Branch Area Schools. I have received several emails from parents and I would like to share one that was sent to our principals this past week:

Open houses were amazing, yesterday! We are so thrilled for the upcoming school year. You could really feel the love and compassion in the staff and teachers, yesterday. We are so blessed to be part of NBAS.

This year we have welcomed several new faces to our family of educators. We believe we have the best teachers and support staff in the thumb and surrounding area. Our theme again this year is "All In" and we are ready to serve our children, families, and community.

I would like to share just a few brief updates as we start the new school year:

- **School Safety:** Our safety committee made several recommendations this past year that were approved by the North Branch Board of Education:
 - **ALICE Training:** All North Branch employees completed online and in-person ALICE Training this past week. ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate) is the #1 response training for all organizations should the need arise in the unlikely event of an intruder in our buildings. Our staff and students will be empowered to make good decisions if the need arises. We will provide more information regarding age-appropriate student training in the near future.
 - **Crisis Alert:** North Branch is the only district in Michigan to utilize this new and innovative technology. All of our staff members have been issued a badge that will enable them to call for help with a simple press of a button. The simple activation by the push of a button will ensure help will arrive in seconds for any situation (intruder, medical, etc.). All of our staff have been trained in this new technology.
- **Covid:** Unfortunately, families are still dealing with Covid as we start the school year. North Branch Area Schools encourages all families to contact their primary physician if their child experiences covid symptoms. As with all viruses, please do not send your child to school if your child is sick. County Superintendents met last week and we are all following CDC guidance which recommends staying home and away from others if testing positive and returning to school once symptoms have waned.
- **High School Improvements:** The high school is still undergoing HVAC updates that began back on June 13th as we have experienced several supply chain delays with the shipping of the heating and cooling units. The company installing the new HVAC equipment will be working after hours and there will be no disruption in the learning environment for our staff and students.

We are looking forward to a great 2022-2023 school year. You will see all of our staff wearing our "All In" shirts tomorrow. We are excited to welcome our 2,300+ students back bright and early in the morning!

Yours in Education,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim", is placed below the text "Yours in Education,".

Jim Fish

North Branch Superintendent