

## North Branch Area Schools “Person of the Week”

Welcome to our NBAS Person of the Week! Each week, we highlight a member of our incredible team to showcase their unique contributions and share a bit about their journey. This week, we’re shining the spotlight on Patti Martin!



### **How long have you worked for NBAS?**

I have worked in NB schools for 28 years.

### **In a few sentences, briefly describe your role(s) at NBAS.**

I was hired in 1997 to start the Pre-Primary Impaired Program, taking it from the county ISD level to the local district level. It's now known as the Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) program. I teach the district's special needs preschoolers!

### **Did you attend NBAS as a student? If so, which school(s)? If not, where are you from?**

No, I'm not a born and bred Bronco. My 3 children, Emily (2008), Ellen (2011) and Cole (2015) all graduated from NBAS though!

I graduated in 1976 from White Cloud HS; I'm a proud Indian from a little town of about 1000 people on the west side of Michigan. I was my senior class homecoming queen and involved in girls' softball as a statistician and FTA (Future Teachers of America). I've known I wanted to be a special education teacher since the 7th grade when I read a book called, "Jordy, Lisa and David", a story about kids on the autism spectrum. I got my bachelor's degree and teaching certificate in Elementary Education and Conatively Impaired from Central Michigan and my masters in Preschool and Parent Education from Wayne State.

### **What has been your favorite part of working here? What aspect of your job do you find most rewarding?**

I have enjoyed being a hometown teacher and part of a close knit, small community school district. Everyone knowing each other, cheering on the local kids in sports, banding together to support a fundraiser for local families that are experiencing a crisis, shutting down the main streets for school parades and volunteering at various school-related events and activities like school fair, fun runs, daddy/daughter & mother/son events have made this teacher's heart happy and fulfilled.

I especially enjoy interacting with and supporting my student families to help their special needs child outside the classroom; to keep the learning going that will ultimately support them in school. It's a close working relationship with families.

### **What is your favorite NBAS memory?**

My favorite NBAS school memory is when the new elementary was built in 2009. On the day we moved from the now admin/Quest building to our new building, all the grades made signs, wore special commemorative t-shirts and carried banners representing our classes. The local police cordoned off our

path and kept a barrier from the traffic and we all, students, parents and staff paraded down Jefferson to our new school! There was such a sense of pride and excitement as we moved from the old to the new location. Merry Hosner was the principal and she led us with strength, joy and purpose. It was a grand day for our NBE family.

### **What do you enjoy most about the North Branch community?**

Working at NBAS has been a wonderful place to complete my teaching career. I came to the district with 17 years of teaching experience and I'll retire on Friday with about 44 years, all in special education. I have taught in 5 different school districts; I started in Los Angeles, CA, moved back to Michigan to work in Pontiac and Avondale, and worked one year in Florida. The best families and most awesome students have crossed my path and are like family to me. I've worked with so many amazing teachers and staff and I'm proud to be a Bronco!

### **Here is what her co-workers had to say...**

- Patti will be retiring. Her last day will be January 17th. Patti is an amazing teacher and person. She will be impossible to replace.
- Patti is the best ECSE teacher I've known. She makes such a significant impact on these children, especially the children with Autism Spectrum Disorder, and their families by teaching them what they need to know to get ready for Kindergarten. She is a truly gifted and nurturing teacher who has impacted the lives of so many students in the North Branch District. Miss Patti is irreplaceable but we wish her the best in her retirement.
- Ms. Patti has dedicated so much time and talent into each and every student and family she serves. Her focus on preparing kids to be independent shows in each of their successes. Not only is she making each student feel cared about, she also works closely with families and leaves a lasting impact on them as well. I have recently been talking to some past parents and students about her upcoming retirement and they all say the same things, about how special she made them feel and she was their favorite teacher. Parents also share how much of an impact she made on theirs and their child's life. The impact she has made through the years is immeasurable.