

NBAS Person of the Week February 6th, 2025

Each week, North Branch Area Schools is proud to 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 2nd grade teacher, Cheryl Barrows.

Teaching is indeed a labor of love, and we all see Cheryl's dedication to making her classroom a positive and welcoming place. Cheryl embodies what great teaching looks like. She works tirelessly to connect to students and families and to do it with passion, flexibility and grace. We know how deeply invested she is in teaching and nurturing her students and NBAS recognizes Cheryl Barrows for hard work and tremendous efforts and impact on students.



Cheryl's Message:

Education is all about people, and the people are what I will remember most about my career at NBAS. Learning doesn't happen without building relationships and making connections, and the North Branch community provided the perfect environment and people to promote learning for my students and for myself.

Even though my husband and I didn't grow up and go to school here, it feels like home. All three of our children grew up here and attended NBAS. The guidance and inspiration they received from their teachers, coaches, and community members have had, and will continue to have, a lasting impact on them as they use what they learned here to help them make a difference in their own communities.

I want to stress that teachers can never help their students reach their full potential without the support of community members and parents. Over the years, I have been blessed by countless community members who have contributed to our student programs and by the many parents who have donated their time, energy, and talents to enrich my classroom.

Over the years, I have had the privilege of working with administrators who work tirelessly to put students first and to make sure that teachers are supported and have the resources they need to provide a nurturing and encouraging environment for our students. Many of our administrators started as teachers in the district and have spent their entire careers serving our community. They do more behind the scenes efforts on behalf of our students than anyone can ever know.

Teaching is rewarding work, but it can be mentally and physically exhausting. There is never a moment of downtime during the day, and when I get tired and feel overwhelmed, it is my colleagues who pull me through. Whenever I need a shoulder to lean on, a smile to lift my spirits, a piece of advice for handling a challenging situation, or a good laugh to ease the stress, I turn to my fellow 2nd grade teachers who have always been in my corner. I am especially grateful for my team of Sara Racine, Sherri Bonner, and the many para-professionals who create the environment needed to help students meet their potential.

Sometimes people think that teachers do all the teaching and students do all the learning, but I can sincerely tell you that I have learned more from my students than I could possibly learn from anyone else. Working with students has taught me to be a better listener, a more compassionate person who tries to understand the needs of others, and a better teacher. When people ask me what I like most about teaching, my answer is always the same: the kids! I will miss all the hugs that students give and the pictures that they draw for me; it makes my day - every day! Parents, thank you for sharing your kids with me for a few hours each day for all these years.

I never would have taught for 38 years if it wasn't for all these people. It has always been about the people!

What her colleagues have said about her...

- I am honored to nominate Cheryl Barrows for NBAS Person of the Week. With the second-highest seniority in the district, Cheryl has been a pillar of strength and wisdom throughout her time here. She has witnessed and embraced countless changes, always serving as a steadfast mentor and friend to her colleagues. Cheryl is a phenomenal teacher whose dedication has touched the lives of countless students and families. Beyond her exceptional teaching, she leads the "Kids Helping Kids" program, which has a profound impact not only within our school but throughout the entire community. When I first joined NB, I was greeted by Cheryl's warm smile at the back-to-school breakfast. She welcomed me with open arms, long before she even realized that I'd be working just across the hall on her second-grade team. Her kindness made me feel instantly at home, and over the past three years, I've had the privilege of learning from her example—both in and out of the classroom. Cheryl's generosity, compassion, and dedication make her an invaluable member of our school and district. She exemplifies what it means to be an educator and a community leader, and I cannot think of anyone more deserving of this recognition.

- This week, we proudly recognize Cheryl as our Person of the Week to celebrate years of service as an educator. Cheryl has had a career that has allowed her to teach children and instill a love for learning in them. Her dedication, patience, and steadfast commitment to nurturing the potential in each child have made her a pillar in the community and our building. Cheryl has risen above every challenge to make sure students feel valued, supported, and able to strive for excellence. Her legacy as a caring and effective educator will continue to impact all her students far beyond their years in her class. Thank you, Cheryl, for your many years of service and profound dedication to hundreds of students throughout your career.