



Superintendent's Back-to-School Message to District Staff 2021-22 School Year

August 13, 2021

Dear NJUHSD Staff:

Welcome to the 2021-22 school year! It was wonderful to visit and catch up with many of you during our annual kick off events this week. Second to graduations, "back-to-school" is one of my favorite times of the year because it symbolizes new beginnings and possibilities for our students. This year, perhaps more than any other, I am excited to welcome students, families, and staff back to full in-person instruction along with all of the events and activities that accompany vibrant high school communities.

I have run out of phrases and colloquialisms that try to capture what we have experienced the past year and a half. Unfortunately, it looks like we still have a ways to go. We start the 2021-22 school year with yet another round of uncertainties and anxieties. Despite the worries and unknowns associated with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, my optimism about NJUHSD's future remains steadfast.

It is because of **YOU** that we were able to continue serving our students, families, and communities during a time they needed us the most. If that was not enough, in the middle of a worldwide crisis, we worked collaboratively to develop and launch a series of bold initiatives that will significantly improve and expand how we serve our students' academic and social-emotional needs. I want you to know how extremely grateful and proud I am of our district for rising to the challenge to create and sustain opportunities for students.

A major element of our work this school year will be that of restoration. Our students and families will need time for adjustment and reorientation to in-person instruction. Almost all of our students struggled with some form of academic and social-emotional challenges while we and our feeder districts were in distance and/or hybrid instructional models. It will be up to us to provide them the support, encouragement, and grace they need to successfully transition back into the classroom, and equally important, into the activities and positive relationships that foster successful school experiences for all of our students.

As we initiate our transition back to in-person instruction, your safety and well-being, along with that of our students and families, remain the district's top priority. The district will continue to adhere to the guidance and directives of federal, state, and local public health officials. We remain committed to working collaboratively with both of our employee organizations, and will continue to communicate information to all district stakeholders in a consistent and timely manner.

Once again, thank you for your unbridled service and commitment to our students, families, and Nevada County communities. It remains a great honor to be your superintendent. I wish you a safe and successful 2021-22 school year.

Sincerely,

Brett W. McFadden
Superintendent