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Matt Kimball  
Superintendent of Schools

August 9, 2022

Blue Ridge ISD Community,

We are so excited to start the 2022-23 school year. Our leaders and staff have worked hard this summer to prepare for the best year yet! I would be remiss if I did not touch on some of the amazing successes from last year:

- 3 students graduated with the associates degree
- First student to earn an FAA's drone pilot license
- First student to graduate with a CNA license
- We increased the number of students who took the SAT from 18 in 20-21 to 63 in 21-22. We also almost doubled the state averages in meeting expectations in math and language arts.
- We sent multiple teams and students to play-off and regional competitions. Students competed at state in powerlifting, tennis, track, band solo and ensemble, and BETA.
- BETA students competed at nationals this summer
- Blue Ridge Elementary earned the "BETA National School to Watch" award and BRISD earned the District of Distinction recognition for the third year in a row.
- Blue Ridge Middle School won the UIL Academic District championship and the One Act Play District Championship
- We opened a new elementary, remodeled the middle school, and, during summer 2022, remodeled the high school.
- Opened the new Field House with improved concession stand and public restrooms. Renovated girls' athletic area in the high school.
- Tiger Band advanced to Area
- Seniors earned over \$400,000 in scholarships
- The Ag and FFA programs soared with individual and team success across shows, judging competitions, and leadership positions
- Continued academic success and strong scores across multiple systems

As we look forward to the amazing school year in front of us, we are excited for:

- Expansion of the robotics program, including new robotics supplies and furniture at the high school and a new robotics room at the middle school. This also includes a partnership with Farmersville ISD to be able to send students to their Engineering Center.
- Dual credit classes at Collin College in Farmersville.
- Expanded support for SAT preparation
- Establishing multiple opportunities and connection points for all of our students
- Expanded Safety and Security measures



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After the tragedy in Uvalde, we know safety and security of our students and staff is on everyone's mind. Our staff has worked on safety and security measures through the summer, including:

- Checking all doors to make sure they operate appropriately
- Working with campus staff to ensure doors are not left unlocked or propped open without supervision.
- Multiple conversations with local law enforcement
- District Safety and Security Committee meeting
- Increased camera coverage
- Continuous training on safety procedures and scheduled safety drills on every campus

One of the factors we see in many school shooting tragedies is the realization that signs were present in previous conversations or postings on social media. I want to reiterate the importance to students, parents, staff members, and community members, to say something. If you see something that is concerning, PLEASE say something. You can report anonymously through the district anonymous reporting system <https://www.anonymousalerts.com/blueridgeisd/>. You can also report to any staff member or administrator. We have multiple resources to quickly analyze the concern, determine level of threat/concern, and create a course of action. We would rather be proactive than reactive.

I would also mention that mental health has taken center stage during this time. I am very proud that we have a counselor on every campus to support students. We also have resources outside the district to provide support. One of those resources is our partnership with Children's Health "Telebehavioral Health System." Through this program, students in grades 4 and higher can have access to a counselor via an iPad and video conferencing. Campus counselors have the information regarding this program and communicate with parents if the program is offered to a student. The program allows a student to work with a counselor for 4 or 5 free sessions by using video conferencing at school. We have seen tremendous value for students through this program. If you would like more information, contact your child's campus counselor: Ms. Douglas, BRES; Ms. Palitza, BRMS; or Ms. Ingersoll, BRHS.

In closing, I am extremely proud of our staff. They have continuously expressed a desire to establish classrooms and campuses centered on students that engage learning in a way that inspires all students. We have focused ourselves on Making a Difference. Developing Dreams. and Leaving a Legacy. I look forward to seeing many of you at various events. Thank you for entrusting us with your children.

Sincerely,

Matt Kimball  
Superintendent