



MEDIA RELEASE

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Bend-La Pine Schools Celebrates Law Enforcement Jan. 9

Staff and students encouraged to wear blue, share thanks with law enforcement

Wednesday, January 9 is National Law Enforcement Day and Bend-La Pine Schools' staff and students across the district will celebrate by wearing blue, sharing positive stories of law enforcement, sending thank you notes to local officers and more.

"We appreciate our partnership with local law enforcement agencies and how they work alongside our staff and students and build positive relationships in our schools and throughout the communities we serve," said Superintendent Shay Mikalson. "I hope our community will help us celebrate and honor the contributions of our local law enforcement and our School Resource Officers."

Law enforcement support Bend-La Pine Schools' students in numerous ways, including:

- Agencies provide School Resource Officers, who work directly with schools and are jointly funded by local law enforcement and Bend-La Pine Schools.
- Bend Police Department partnered to provide a student and school safety reporting tool, [FirstStep](#), which is available on Bend-La Pine Schools' student iPads and for download. The tool has been a resounding success — receiving more than 14,000 visits and resulting in DOZENS of tips (all of which are responded to).
- Law enforcement staff members support student mental health.
- Law enforcement staff members create positive interactions with students (one example: Bend Police Department sent an officer along with Marshal, a therapy dog, to visit a local high school during exams to help students de-stress.)
- Local agencies help provide tips, resources and information for students and parents, available on Bend-La Pine Schools' [Safety Resources webpage](#).

Bend-La Pine Schools has also partnered with law enforcement agencies to provide free gun locks to help local community members secure their guns.

"We are proud to partner with our local community schools to create a safe environment for our students to learn. Our officers enjoy creating positive relationships with the students inside our schools," said City of Bend Police Department Lt. Clint Burleigh. "We also believe responsible firearm ownership leads to safer communities. Whether it is educating about the safe handling

of firearms or the free gun locks program offered at the Bend Police Department — we believe responsible firearm ownership provides for a safer community.”

There are several ways for the community to team up with local schools in their displays of support. Businesses, organizations and neighbors can join students and send a note of thanks to School Resource Officers or to all who serve at the Bend Police Department, Sunriver Police Department, Deschutes County Sheriff’s Office, Oregon State Police Department or local FBI offices. Take a photo of you or your coworkers wearing blue, turn your personal social media channels blue or shining a blue porch light to show your support.

Share your support using #NationalLawEnforcementAppreciationDay and #IamBendLaPineSchools to share on social media.

#END#