



MEDIA RELEASE

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Base Camp Program Preps 180 Students for High School

Second year program designed to get students connected to high school programs, staff

Local high schools are opening their doors to incoming freshmen this week as part of Bend-La Pine Schools' Base Camp, now in its second year. Approximately 180 ninth-graders are connecting with peers and staff, learning about activities and athletics, touring schools, deepening study skills, developing leadership skills and more.

"If freshmen have a successful first year, they are more likely to reach graduation," said Steph Bennett, coordinator for Base Camp. "Our goal is to make that transition from middle school to high school a positive and exciting next step."

The free program, which is led by ninth grade teachers at each school, lasts two weeks and includes about 40-50 students each from Bend Senior High, La Pine High, Mountain View High and Summit High schools. Some students are invited to attend the program while others signed up last spring. Bennett says that the results from the 2018-19 participants are positive – showing that students who participated had better attendance, less discipline referrals and higher GPAs than a similar peer group.

"Our goal is for students to develop strong bonds with teachers, understand what they need to do to be successful students and ultimately walk into the first day of high school feeling confident and ready," said Bennett.

At Mountain View High School Monday, more than 40 freshmen gathered in the school's library, where they learned about the bell schedule, met with the activities and athletic directors, played a high school-themed guessing game and made connections with fellow students and key staff members.

"Ultimately we want them to show up the first day of school feeling comfortable and prepared," said Brandie Ross, Spanish teacher and Base Camp teacher.

Incoming freshman Clay Holman says he thinks Base Camp has helped him get prepared for — and excited about — high school. "We know the layout of the school and where our classes are.

We met the principal. We found out about rallies and clubs and we've been having fun while learning about school."

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