



News Release

From Seattle Public Schools

For Immediate Release: Tuesday, July 21, 2009

Contact: David Tucker, Media Relations, (206) 252-0203

Summer “bridge” programs help 8th grade students succeed in high school

Seattle – While all high schools within Seattle Public Schools offer orientation classes for their incoming freshmen, several schools host bridge programs during the summer to help 8th grade students prepare for their transition to 9th grade and a new high school environment. These bridge programs are an important step toward achieving Seattle Public Schools’ goal of all 10th graders passing the WASL Math, Reading and Writing requirements. The programs also support the District’s central goal of preparing students to graduate ready for college, careers and life.

Studies show that ninth grade is the most significant year in determining students’ futures. Students who participate in high school summer bridge programs receive higher grades in their high school Language Arts and Math courses than those who did not. In addition, students often feel more of a connection to their fellow students, teachers and their new school as a whole. Some summer bridge programs provide students with the opportunity to take Language Arts, Science and Math classes, earning academic credit while also learning about the high schools they will be attending.

“Freshmen orientation and summer bridge programs provide our students the initial knowledge, skills, and supports needed to make a successful transition into high school,” said High School Instructional Director Michael Tolley. “A goal of these programs is to also make students aware of the importance of earning credits as they relate to graduation and college admission requirements. Ultimately, we hope to have each of our students enter high school well-prepared and then to graduate ready for college, work and life.”

Below are examples of the various bridge programs offered this summer:

Chief Sealth High School’s Summer Bridge 2009 gives students a head start on high school. From August 17 through August 28, 8 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., incoming 9th grade students will get a chance to connect with Chief Sealth mentors, learn time management and self-confidence while taking classes in Humanities, Science and Math. They can also earn community service hours while meeting new friends and classmates. The program provides students with a daily bus token, breakfast and lunch, “Sealth Bucks” for Sealth pride gear, school supplies and parent/family workshops. For more information on Chief Sealth’s Summer Bridge 2009, please click [here](#).

From August 18 through 21, 8:30 a.m. – noon, **Cleveland High School** will be hosting it’s Freshman Orientation Week. Students will have an opportunity to tour the high school, be introduced to Cleveland teachers and staff, learn about graduation requirements and discuss college readiness. The four-day program will allow students to bond through community-building exercises, visit the Cleveland Memorial Forest and become better prepared for their freshman year. Lunch will be provided every day, with prizes and giveaways also available.

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For those incoming freshman attending **Franklin High School**, the 9th Grade Bridge program begins in late August with a general campus orientation, ropes courses (which are team building exercises through experiential and interactive learning) study skills orientation, and diagnostic testing in reading, writing and math. In addition, there will be an academic Saturday school for freshman launched in the fall. Those incoming 9th graders in need of extra academic support will benefit from additional instruction from certificated staff, with an emphasis on reading, writing and math skills.

Rainier Beach High School holds a three day Orientation/Bridge program from August 25 through 27. During the three-day session, students will learn about the recently approved high school math adoption, literacy programs, college readiness and how to get involved in school activities and athletics for greater success. Parents and families are strongly encouraged to participate. Representatives from the University of Washington and other community partners will provide information on their organizations.

West Seattle High School's Summer Bridge 2009 runs for five days in August. All incoming 9th grade students are expected to attend. Students will have a chance to meet some of West Seattle High School's 9th grade teachers while getting instruction in Math, Literacy and basic high school life. There are also extracurricular activities offered such as chess, urban dance and photography. Students can also earn community service hours and build a sense of community with their fellow classmates. Lunch is served and bus tokens are available upon request. Every student will receive a planner, notebook and backpack. West Seattle High School collaborates with community partners One World Now!, YMCA of Greater Seattle, and Arts Corps and students will get the opportunity to sample the enrichment programs they offer during the school year. For more information on West Seattle's Summer Bridge 2009, please click [here](#).

The first annual Bulldog Summer Bridge program at **Garfield High School** began earlier this summer with the five week long session concluding on July 31. Students are able to earn high school credits while attending classes in Math, Science, Language Arts, History, Technology and Advisory. Students attend three classes per day, which are taught by Garfield's master teachers and University of Washington teacher education students. Students also have a chance to talk to upper-class mentors who can provide insight into the high school world. In addition, the Garfield program has Friday enrichment activities such as college campus visits, school spirit activities and other fun workshops. Students earn community service hours toward graduation for those events that were service-related. Click [here](#) for more information on Garfield's Bulldog Summer Bridge program.

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