

Commentary... Start of school can bring jitters

By Edie Jones
Correspondent

It's happening again. Right on schedule, when September appears on the calendar, the doors to school open wide and welcome students back from their summer vacation.

It's sometimes hard for parents to remember the excitement and nervousness they felt each year when they as students faced this yearly milestone. However, it is definitely there and the more parents recognize the signs of anxiousness in their children the more they can help to ease the worry and discomfort being experienced. Equate it to how you felt when starting your first or a new job — times that will be easier to remember.

The biggest milestones happen for those children attending a school for the first time, as in kindergartners, middle school students and those entering high school. The unknown can be scary, and the more parents help students become comfortable with what is going to happen the better.

Kindergartners have an opportunity on Tuesday, August 29, to ease a little of that worry. The Sisters Library has planned a special story time at 10:30, just for those entering kindergarten. Caregivers need to attend with their student. Just the act of bringing all the kids together and reconnecting with friends, all who will be starting school at the same time, will help. For more information, call 541-312-1072.

Middle school and high school students registering in the Sisters School District for the first time will have the opportunity to step inside their buildings prior to the

start of school on August 22-25 between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. They can get registered and be welcomed, and get a chance to see what to expect. The same days and times are in place for new elementary students; however, due to construction taking place at the elementary school, they need to register at the district office at 525 E. Cascade Ave.

Incoming freshmen are invited to Sisters High School on Monday, August 28, for a new-student orientation from 7:45 a.m. to 3 p.m. On the same day, all transfer students entering grades 10-12 are invited to an open house at Sisters High School from 9 to 11 a.m. For both of these groups this is an opportunity to become familiar with the building, have a tour and get an idea as to what to expect on the first day of classes. For more information on either event, call Mrs. Greaney at 541-549-0200 or Mrs. Rawls at 541-280-6691

Getting your child to talk about their worries is important prior to the start of the

school year. Parents will be able to judge whether there are valid reasons for the concerns or if the anxieties have built up and are unrealistic. Even if this is the case, it's important not to belittle or make fun of the feelings being expressed. All feelings need to be honored and the parents' job is to help the student find ways to resolve or calm the fears that are getting in the way of excitedly anticipating the fun of the new school year.

Being excited about the year ahead is one of the things that will make a difference in how it goes. And going well is important. After all, liking school and getting a good education is equivalent to a parent liking their work. If you've ever been in a job that you faced with frustration and distaste you can relate to how difficult it is to get up and go every day. Helping your child find the joy in this yearly experience will not only pay off in the long run, it will make your job as their parent that much easier and enjoyable.

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