



## Press Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Whittier Union Kicks off 2017-18 School Year, Welcomes Nearly 3,000 Freshmen to its Campuses

**WHITTIER** – Green and black balloons, colorful banners proclaiming “Titan Pride” and dozens of student leaders greeted 320 members of Pioneer High School’s Class of 2021 on Aug. 15 for Freshman First Day, an annual student orientation program that takes place at each Whittier Union High School District campus to help students learn about the schools they will call home for the next four years.

Now in its 13th year, Freshman First Day eases students’ transition from middle school to high school by encouraging the District’s nearly 3,000 ninth-graders to tour their respective schools, attend abbreviated class sessions, meet their teachers and classmates, and participate in fun and interactive team-building activities before upperclassmen arrive the next day.

On Aug. 16, Whittier Union welcomed close to 11,900 new and returning students for the official first day of the 2017-18 school year.

“Freshman First Day is the first introduction our students have to their new school – the place in which they will make lifelong friends and meet the teachers who will push them beyond their limits to reach their fullest academic potential,” said Whittier Union Superintendent Martin Plourde. “We are excited to welcome these new and returning students to an inclusive and supportive environment, and are eager to continue molding the minds of our future leaders.”

At Pioneer, Link Crew juniors and seniors, who will serve as mentors to the students during their first year at the school, led campus tours, answered questions and participated in activities, including a balloon-pop challenge, to help the underclassmen come out of their shells.

Students also took advantage of information sessions on helpful high school tips, including social media use, dress code and helpful resources available to them at Pioneer.

This school year, students can look forward to new furniture in the cafeteria, as well as the re-opening of Bergenthal Gymnasium, which will feature new wall logos in September and logos on its resurfaced floor in November. This is also the last season that Pioneer will compete in the Del Rio League before moving to the newly formed 605 League next year.

“The Titan community is honored and excited to welcome the class of 2021 to our campus, where we will continue to set and reach goals, work harder and take student achievement to the next level,”

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Pioneer High School Principal Lilia Bozigian said. “I look forward to continuing to push our students to reach new academic heights and leave each day stronger and prepared to excel every day after.”

**PHOTO CAPTIONS:**

**081617\_WUHSD\_FRESHMANDAY1:** Pioneer High School teachers and Link Crew leaders welcomed more than 300 ninth-graders for Freshman First Day, a Whittier Union High School District program that annually takes place at the comprehensive school sites to ease nearly 3,000 freshmen students’ transition from middle school to high school, on Aug. 15.

**081617\_WUHSD\_FRESHMANDAY2:** Pioneer High School Link Crew leaders are upperclassmen who will serve as mentors to the students during their first year at the school. As part of Freshman First Day, Link Crew leaders led students on campus tours and helped students come out of their shells through team-building activities.

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*The Whittier Union High School District provides all students with an engaging, quality standards-based instructional program delivered by a well-trained staff resulting in improved student achievement. Whittier Union High School District works to achieve and maintain excellence in providing a comprehensive education for all students.*

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