

# St. Louis Park High School freshmen will receive copy of book

## 'Success for Teens' aids transition to high school

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Incoming St. Louis Park Senior High freshmen will receive a unique prize after walking through the doors of their new school for the first time Aug. 18.

For the first time in the history of its organization, St. Louis Park's reading initiative, Bookmark in the Park, is giving each incoming freshman a complimentary copy of the book "Success for Teens" by the editors of the Success Foundation.

Bookmark in the Park was co-founded by Robert Ramsey, a former assistant superintendent of St. Louis Park School District, and Mary Bloomgren, Park Spanish Immersion School media specialist. Ramsey and Bloomgren discussed the idea of a reading initiative such as Bookmark in the Park with St. Louis Park Mayor Jeff Jacobs.

"So he figured it must be important," Ramsey said.



Bloomgren is still working at PSI and Ramsey is retired now but remains focused on what he calls his "community service project." Bookmark in the Park has worked with mostly younger kids in the St. Louis Park School district on their reading skills. Ramsey reports that this is the first time Bookmark in the Park has worked with the high school.

The Success Foundation is an organization that created Success magazine, which aims to help adults succeed as leaders in life and at work. The Success Foundation compiled an interactive book called "Success for Teens" that would help teenagers through the struggles of school, relationships and managing money properly. Themes like skills, goal setting, managing time and self-esteem are a few among many listed and explained in the book.

The book "hits skills that are necessary for any leader at any level," Ramsey said.

He mentioned leadership several times and said he believes the book's interactive activities help the kids establish important leadership skills.

For example, the book asks readers to journal about how they see themselves, their philosophies on life, aspirations for the future and managing money.

Bookmark in the Park contacted The Success Foundation and learned that they were looking to give away 10 million books nationwide this year alone. After hearing this, Ramsey contacted the foundation about getting enough books for the entire incoming freshman class. He succeeded. There will be roughly 350 "Success for Teens" waiting to be passed out Aug. 18 during freshman orientation, the official beginning of the 2009-10 school year.

St. Louis Park Senior High School Principal Rob Metz said he was impressed by the wide variety of topics mentioned in "Success for Teens" and believes that distributing the books to the incoming freshmen will set them on the right track.

Metz said getting off to a good start as a freshman is vital to having a success-

ful high school experience; if that student does not get off on the right foot, high school becomes much more challenging.

Metz endorses the book because he thinks it contains helpful information that will aid his freshmen in the fall. He also likes the idea of distributing this book for another reason.

The book will "impress on the ninth graders that the community of St. Louis Park cares," Metz said.

He hopes that this message will motivate the freshmen to represent their community well by succeeding in the classroom.

Metz classifies the transition from middle school to high school as "a leap" and believes that the freshman year is "a very important time in their lives."

As roughly 350 teenagers prepare to take that leap, "Success for Teens" will be waiting for them, providing what Ramsey classified as "the skills to succeed in school, in life and in relationships."

*Jared Bloomfield is a student at St. Louis Park High School.*