

D211 POST: FREMD HOLDS FIRST CHAMPION PROGRAM MEETING



Fremd High School Math Teacher Maddie Junge speaks with Sophomore Megan Keith during the first Champion Program meeting.

A group of teachers and staff at William Fremd High School wanted to combat students' feelings of no connection with the school. The group ultimately came up with the Champion Program, which would pair these students with staff members who volunteered as mentors. The program held their kick-off meeting October 2.

Special Education Department Chair, Jessica Medinah said the purpose of the mentors is to create an additional support system for students.

"These students would benefit from one on one connections with a supportive staff member who has a genuine interest in creating a trusting relationship. Today's climate tells us that students need to know they are valued and supported at their school," she said. "This program strives to support students who may feel disconnected from Fremd with a caring, trusted adult. We want all students to feel that they have a champion in their corner; somebody who provides affirmation and recognition."



William Fremd High School Applied Technology teacher Steve Elza demonstrates holding six penne noodles on a single dry spaghetti noodle during an ice breaker at Fremd's first Champion Program meeting.

Students were introduced to their mentors during their shared free period of the day. During the introductory meeting, students and mentors dined on pizza provided by Tre Amici Pizza (Palatine), after which they engaged in an ice breaker exercise. After the exercise mentors and students discussed topics ranging from things they enjoyed at school, family, and other topics.

Sophomore Megan Keith said the concept of the new program was interesting.

"I think it's a good idea to have more students feel a connection to their school," she said.

Medinah said the Champion Program will have a second large group meeting prior to finals, but mentors will meet one on one with the students at a minimum of twice per month, though some mentors and students may choose to meet more frequently.