

Pilot Butte, La Pine middle schools hire new leaders

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

Bend-La Pine Schools will welcome two new leaders starting July 1. Stephanie Bennett will take over as the new Pilot Butte Middle School principal and Jim Boen will become the vice principal at La Pine Middle School. The announcement comes after a comprehensive, nationwide search and demanding interview process. "It's exciting to find such talented leaders to bring to our schools," said Superintendent Doug Nelson. "We had many qualified applicants, and the experiences both bring will further enhance their schools." Bennett comes to Pilot Butte Middle School from Coeur d'Alene, where she has more than six years experience in school administration. She is currently the director for The Bridge Academy, an alternative school she started four years ago. Other experience includes working as vice principal of Coeur d'Alene High School and Canfield Middle School and teaching at the middle and high school levels. Bennett started her career as a middle school teacher and looks forward to once again working with that level of student. "It's so refreshing to spend time with 11- to 14-year-olds. They give a completely different perspective on life," she said. "As a teacher, one of the most enjoyable moments is when you see a student understand a new concept. When the wheels turn, you know you have made a difference. As an administrator, I feel like I can make a bigger impact on more students." Bennett has a Masters in education administration and Bachelors in physical education, natural science and health from the University of Idaho. She replaces Kathryn Legace, who is the new Mountain View High School principal. Boen has been an administrator, teacher and counselor. He comes to the role of vice principal of La Pine Middle School after spending the past four years as the principal of La Grande Middle School. He has been vice principal and counselor at La Grande High School and has worked at Gladstone High School and for the Spray School District. "The best part of my job as an administrator is working with people, from students, to parents, to staff," he said. "What motivates me is the opportunity to help make someone's life better in some way. I get energized by being a member of a team that has 'What is best for the students?' as its first priority." Boen takes over for Jay Mathisen, who is the new principal of La Pine High School. Boen received his Continuing Administrative License and Initial Administrative License from Lewis & Clark College, a Masters in counseling from Oregon State University and a Bachelors in physical education from Western Baptist College.

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