

Local high schools give students head start on advanced classes

While most of their classmates were still in summer vacation mode, a number of local high school students were in classrooms preparing to take on the challenge of advanced classes during the coming school year.



As part of an ongoing effort to boost the number, diversity and success of students taking on more rigorous coursework, students at Eastside, Gainesville and Newberry high schools were provided the opportunity to attend a summer institute designed to give them a head start on the Advanced Placement (AP) courses they'll be taking in 2019-20. Most of them, like incoming Newberry High School sophomore Warren Wilson, are new to AP.

"The teachers said it was going to help us in the future," said Wilson, who will be taking AP Biology in the fall. "That's my big goal, what my future is going to be like."

"As a school, we wanted to make sure that our students are supported and welcomed as they take on this challenge," said Newberry High's assistant principal Kris Bracewell.

Wilson and about 20 of his fellow Newberry High students spent four mornings at the school for sessions with AP teachers that covered issues ranging from time management to study skills to document analysis.

Newberry High School teacher Jordan Marlowe says the goal is to equip the students with the skills they'll need to be successful.

"We want to get that kind of logistical information to the students during the summer so that when school starts we can launch right into the content and hit the ground running," he said.

Teachers also gave the students an advanced look at the coursework they'll be tackling during the upcoming school. A representative from College Board, the organization that administers the AP program, talked with them about the online resources available to them, and they heard from a Newberry High graduate and current University of Florida senior, who talked about the benefits of the AP program.



"It was good to get a mindset of what to expect from the classes," said rising sophomore Diego Garcia, who will be taking an AP seminar course. "I think it's going to help me do well in the future."

Marlowe says he was impressed by the students' willingness to give up a part of their summer vacation to attend the institute.

"They really are taking ownership of their own education," he said.

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