Fort Collins High School (FCHS) offers many events for students’ transition into and out of the school. Middle school family liaisons in Poudre School District invite transitioning 8th grade students and their families to FCHS for a student-led event to help them understand some of the challenges and complexities of high school. Students and families meet in the school’s media center for a short PowerPoint presentation, followed by a student panel, and a small group Q&A session. Current FCHS students are responsible for all aspects of the evening, as well as modeling the high expectations for students at FCHS.

After the 9th grade transition portion of the event, families go to the cafeteria to celebrate the accomplishments of graduating seniors. Participants enjoy cake, ice cream, and a slideshow. Current students are again responsible for this portion of the event, including an opportunity for all attendees to write thank you notes to school personnel. Inviting future FCHS Lambkins to the event help incoming 9th graders understand that studying and being involved are important while in high school and that the ultimate payoff is graduating. Additionally it gives students and families an opportunity to connect with the school and to communicate with other parents.

Event organizers explain how they evaluated the event: “9th grade parents were given an opportunity at the end of the evening to share their thoughts about the event. All comments were positive, with the student-led panel and presentation noted as especially powerful. Senior parents were asked for their input as well. Those in attendance were grateful to have had an opportunity to thank the school and teachers for supporting their children. From the evaluation, we learned that one should not underestimate the importance of caring adults in the school.”