

INFORMATION NIGHT FOR GRADE 12 PARENTS AND STUDENTS Glenmary School Peace River, Alberta, Canada

Glenmary High School is located in rural Alberta, Canada, and students have to leave the area to access postsecondary education. As a result, the Action Team for Partnerships initiated Information Night as a means to meet the challenge of long distance. During Information Night, twelfth-grade students and their parents gathered important information about high school courses, choosing careers, and applying for scholarships. Glenmary used a hands-on approach as students and parents went from a lecture setting to the computer lab to use the Internet to access information about postsecondary paths and careers. In addition, the practice allowed parents and counselors to form an advisory relationship to help students with career choices.

Before Information Night, the school's career counselors met with each of the twelfth-grade students individually and encouraged them to begin career investigations by checking graduation requirements, exploring careers online, and subscribing to some free scholarship websites. Graduation requirements were recorded on an easy-to-read form that enabled parents and students to know quickly if they were meeting graduation requirements and completing the necessary courses to enter the postsecondary programs of their choice.

At Information Night, copies of these

forms were distributed to the parents and students to review with school staff. During the lecture portion of the evening, counselors profiled a couple of careers concentrating on the postsecondary entrance requirements, courses, and average grades needed by students. Students and parents then moved to the computer lab where they completed an interest and skills inventory, which led them to a career choice that they explored together. "I enjoyed looking at some of the Internet sites with my mom," shared one student. "She was surprised at how much information was available." Two career-related websites that students and parents used were:

can.cx.bridges.com; and
www.alis.gov.ab.ca.

Helpful scholarship information was found at *www.scholarshipscanada.com*.

The school and parents played a role in making the night a positive experience. The two career counselors at Glenmary organized the content for the Information Night and decided which websites to feature. The Action Team contacted a group of five parents who then telephoned the twelfth grade parents to invite them to attend the evening. The school's monthly newsletter, which is mailed home to each Glenmary family, publicized the event. All families were telephoned as a reminder a few days before the event. Over the morning announcements students were en-

couraged to attend the evening with their parents. The Action Team also arranged for the night's refreshments.

One parent summed up the results of this event, "The evening was very worthwhile and gave me some idea of how I can help my child choose a career path...We will do some research at home now." The Information Night helped form a partnership between students, parents, and counselors to support students with postsecondary planning.

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