

PLANNING A SUCCESSFUL FINANCIAL AID NIGHT

Hosting a Financial Aid Night is a critical step in helping students and families begin the application process. Getting good attendance at events is challenging. Here are some tips we gathered from schools that have successful events.

Selecting the Date, Time, and Location

Determining the good date is key to having a successful event. Consider the following:

- Be aware of other events already scheduled such as athletic events, theater productions, and concerts (including those at the younger grade levels as many parents have multiple children).
- Most schools find that a start time of 6:00 or 6:30 p.m. on a Monday through Thursday evening works best. Schools that provide dinner typically start between 5:00 and 6:00 p.m.
- Finalize your date as early as possible to allow for multiple advertising opportunities.
- Select a location that can accommodate anticipated attendance as well as the presenter's needs (LCD projector, projection screen, outlets to plug in AV equipment).

Presenter

Confirm your presenter as early as possible and communicate the following information:

- Date, time, and location of workshop
- Audience type and size
- Desired length of presentation
- Confirmation of equipment needs

Advertising

Start advertising early, often, and in a variety of ways including:

- Invite all high school students and parents – never too early to hear this information!
- Send out a "Save the Date" flyer or email to students and parents.
- Promote on school's website and include in the school's electronic calendar.
- Create posters to post around the school.
- Write about it in the school newsletter and/or send a press release to the local newspaper.
- Make announcements over school intercom system, at sporting events, etc.
- Send email or postcard reminders to parents and students two weeks prior to the event.
- Announce the event on school's outside display board.
- Using school's auto-dialer system to remind families of the event – very effective!

Prior to the Event

A week before the event:

- Reconfirm with the presenter - share anticipated numbers, confirm directions to school and room, and discuss any other details.
- Check that location and equipment are still reserved and ready to use.
- Send out final reminder to students and families.