

## Advising and Scheduling to Impact Student Academic Achievement

June 8, 2017

### College and Career Readiness Initiatives: Empty Nest Night

*How much do we help our students and their families when they begin their post-secondary journey? The idea of “Empty Nest Night” came about when we (FRYSC and CCRC) had a meeting with the seniors and their parent/guardian and asked what we could do for them; what their concerns were; what their expectations were after graduation. Using the information we garnered from our meeting Pat (FRYSC) and I (CCRC) began the process of having an “empty nest” night. Following you will see what an “Empty Nest Night” involves:*

- Determine your date: We have chosen a date in March for the last 3 years because we wanted an alumni to be present that represented different populations of college students.
- Determine the format you want your empty nest to be; ie, our empty nest night is an “open mic” night where we want seniors and their parent/guardians to discuss problems, concerns, hopes, and wishes with us.
- Develop your panel: Our panel includes the FRYSC, CCRC, a mental health counselor, financial adviser/banker, commuter student, student who lives on campus, student who lives off campus, student who works and attends college, and a student who went straight to the workforce after graduation, parents/guardians of a student who went out of state, and parents/guardians of a student who is in-state.
- Most of your audience will know these students but be prepared to introduce them and their credentials.
- We have a bit of fun beginning our night by first having an Easter egg hunt with the seniors. The eggs have candy in them and then we award a prize to whomever collected the most eggs. Local businesses donate gift cards and/or faculty and staff donate items to be used as door prizes. We then do a team building activity where the senior and their parent/guardian construct a dwelling for their “peep” using ramen noodles (we all lived on those as our main food staple at some point in our lives) and glue. It’s very heartwarming to see these seniors and their parent/guardians working together on this. The panel then picks a winner and they are awarded a restaurant gift card.
- We then move into the Q and A portion of the evening. The information that can be garnered from this panel is eye-opening. For example, on our first Empty Nest Night I learned from a parent panel member the importance of having a power of attorney for your son/daughter. Something that had not ever entered my mind. Also, our mental health counselor provided valuable information on how they will feel and how to deal with the “homesickness” and how parents can help their son/daughter.
- Along with the FRYSC we have created a packet of information for our seniors and their family.
  - i. Your First Year of College: How to Survive and Thrive

- ii. Dorm Room Checklist
- iii. Tips for Living Off Campus
- iv. Tips for Commuter Students
- v. Working and Taking College Classes
- vi. Alternatives to Going to College
- vii. What Employers are Looking For

If you would like copies of any of the above please contact [pat.fuqua@cloverport.kyschools.us](mailto:pat.fuqua@cloverport.kyschools.us) or Angie Dubree at [dubree3@yahoo.com](mailto:dubree3@yahoo.com) we have a zip file of our Empty Nest Night and other events and presentations that we have made at the state FRYSC Conference and for GRREC.