

(Neb.)-Chadron High School Using Grant Funding To Encourage Students

By: Chris Fankhauser Posted at: 11/07/2013 08:33 AM

(Chadron)-Area residents may or may not be aware that Chadron High School was selected to be the recipient of a \$20,000 EducationQuest grant. People may also be asking how has this impacted the students?

Chadron High School Guidance Counselor Carolyn Hinrichs shared information on the grant which was posted on the Chadron High School principal blog at chadronschools.org. She said the goal of the Nebraska EducationQuest office is "to improve access to higher education." CHS received a \$20,000 grant (\$5,000 over four years) to promote college readiness activities. Hinrichs wanted to take this opportunity to let parents know how the students have benefited.

One of the opportunities for the students include Lunch 'n' Learn meetings, where students are invited for free pizza. They listen to a speaker talk about their educational/career experiences locally. Last year, we heard from the National Guard, Lorrie Hunn (Education), Rob Wahlstrom (Wahlstrom Ford), and Robin Bila (Counseling). So far this year, we've had Officer Chrisman and Lieutenant Hickstein (Police Department) UNL (Engineering Careers). Parents are asked to please encourage their student to listen to the announcements. On November 12, Matt and Senna Reeves will be visiting with students about careers in Finance and Entrepreneurship!

All of the sophomores have been invited to a tour at Chadron State College and free brunch. The main purpose of this event is to get students on a campus, so that they can picture themselves in that environment. The school will be taking 30 students on November 14th and another 30 on November 21st.

Students are invited to attend a day-long field trip to Western Nebraska Community College (Scottsbluff Campus). WNCC has a wide variety of opportunities, both for transfer programs and stand-alone degrees (such as LPN, Auto, or Welding). This field trip is scheduled for November 22nd.

A meeting will be held in the spring for parents of sophomores and juniors to learn more about the benefits of AP and dual credit courses. These options can save a lot of money, and also provide students with an affordable jump start of their college career (often allowing them to graduate sooner). They also get a sense of confidence that they are capable of college-level work.

Seniors are welcome to come to the Guidance Office to complete a CSC or WNCC application if desired. Hinrichs said she likes students to see how easy it is to apply to a college, and she would gladly walk them through the process if desired.

Their Educational Planning Event was held on October 14th and most of the juniors and seniors attended. Have you asked them what they learned? What was a surprise? What schools are they learning towards right now?

Financial Aid Night is scheduled for January 14th at 6:30pm. This meeting is crucial for seniors and their parents (unless you have older students and are already familiar with the FAFSA process). The Free Application for Federal Student Aid is the document necessary to apply for gift aid from the government. We'll be offering a FREE dinner prior to the meeting and will have guest speakers talk about how they financed their education.

As in years past, the school will be inviting their previous students to visit with current high school students over their Christmas break. This free lunch meeting will probably be around January 9, and is generally very popular...it's fun for the students to reconnect with last year's graduates and get the 'real scoop' on college. Parents are encouraged to have their student listen to the announcements for the finalized date!

Last year, Hinrichs took students to visit the Sidney campus of WNCC as well. Specialty programs at Sidney

include: Cosmetology and Airframe Maintenance (airplanes). She said to please have students see her if they'd like to make the trek again this year.

Hinrichs has tried to get kids interested in a field trip to Kearney. She approached students last spring and again last month, and only had three students turn in paperwork. If someone has a student who would like to participate in a free trip to Kearney, please have them see her and she will start a list.

The school also does some good things that don't cost a dime! For example, they visit with each student individually regarding next year's schedule. They attempt to schedule students for the classes that they need, according to their current plans. For example, if a student is headed for a health career, they will push such classes as math, science, Psychology, Medical Terminology, Nutrition, and Basic Nursing. If your student is hands-on, we'll push Construction, Industrial Tech, Welding, Woods, etc. Next year's Course Handbook will probably be available online by February. Parents are asked to please take the time to look at it and have a visit with your child.

(Information courtesy Carolyn Hinrichs, Chadron High School)