

Student Success Portfolio Program

May Discussion Starter

Here we are nearing the end of the school year and the end of the RTAM year. It is time to start thinking about your role as the sponsor of your Grade 12 student for the RTAM Student Awards and to support them as they develop their application form.

The RTAM Student Awards application forms are located under the Student Awards Committee found on the RTAM website at www.rtam.mb.ca . The due date is July 29th with the completed application attached.

On the application form, it outlines the requirements to be submitted by the student. The Student Award Application Form needs to be accompanied by the following items to meet the criteria:

- Applicant's comprehensive written description of school and community activities (one page)
- One (1) letter of reference/support from a non-family member (one page)
- Final official high school transcript of marks (copy only).

This gives you and your student some time to start planning for this submission.

In the October and December Monthly Discussion Starters, we had discussed examples of school and community activities to support your student when developing their one page description. You can ask your students what they have been doing and determine if there are any gaps in their activities. What are their strengths? Are they involved in musicals, sports teams, school clubs, planning special celebrations or other activities? In the community, are they involved in various organizations such as 4-H, Girl Guides, Boy Scouts or others? Have they

worked a job where they were learning work habits and leadership skills? Refer to the past Monthly Discussion Starters for more specific activities.

We also did a Monthly Discussion Starter in November with some suggested questions you can discuss with your student when selecting their reference(s). It is a bonus if the reference knows the student in a variety of settings – personal experiences, school-related activities, community activities and others. Your student may want to select someone they know will do a masterful reference letter and sit down and talk with them to inform them of all their activities and achievements. This offers the reference a more rounded knowledge and understanding of all your student has accomplished to facilitate them developing an effective reference letter.

The final transcription of the student's marks will be available at the end of June after Graduation. Here we look at the student's marks throughout their high school years, the courses they selected, if they took any International Baccalaureate or Advanced Placement courses or any specialty courses. When making our selections, we review how their marks relate to the provincial averages determined by provincial exams.

Starting now to plant the seeds with your student about these areas required for the RTAM Student Awards will help them to start noticing and organizing the great things they are doing and have done in their past four years. You may also prompt the student to look at the online sites on the back of our pamphlet for other scholarships, awards and bursary opportunities to assist them in receiving funds as they move onward from their high school journey to post-secondary education. Have fun with your student and I believe you may be surprised with some of their many endeavors as you start this discussion.