



# CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG SCHOOLS NORTH STAR READING PARTNERS INITIATIVE

## **Encourage, Challenge, Support and Celebrate**

Mentors working with 12<sup>th</sup> grade students may use the following information as a tool for guiding conversations with potential high school graduates. The goal is that each senior will graduate from high school with a clear plan aligned to their postsecondary goals. Whether the student is headed toward college, career and/or military enlistment, the mentor will **encourage, challenge, support and celebrate** students as they progress toward graduation. Thank you in advance for your efforts in ensuring that CMS graduates are future ready!

## **General Guidelines**

CMS has outlined procedures for mentors as found on the district's website. It is imperative that all mentors read this information as it contains important tips and guidelines:

<http://www.cms.k12.nc.us/cmsdepartments/vp/Pages/MentoringTips.aspx/>

During your sessions with students, sensitive topics may arise (e.g., child abuse, suicidal ideation or homelessness). A member of the school's Student Services team (i.e., counselor, psychologist or social worker) should be contacted immediately. If the student is expressing suicidal ideation, the student must never be left alone. Please escort the student to a member of the school's Student Services team immediately.

Because of the high stakes associated with the senior year (e.g., graduation and postsecondary planning), it is imperative that the mentor collaborate with the student's counselor. The counselor is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the student meets graduation requirements and completes steps for their specific postsecondary plans. Extreme caution is to be used in advising students in these areas.

This timeline is intended to guide your conversations with your mentee. Understand that disclosures during any given session may alter your focus during that session or during subsequent sessions. You may exercise flexibility in how you proceed through these talking points, but there are key topics included that are beneficial for you to address so that your student has a successful senior year. Though some items are listed only once, the recommendation is that these topics be revisited on an ongoing basis. Examples include periodically checking grades and attendance in PowerSchool or getting status updates regarding progress toward postsecondary plans.

## **WEEK 26: February 29 – March 4**

- ✓ March 1 – Early Release Day
- ✓ March 4 – Deadline to register for the April 9<sup>th</sup> ACT
- ✓ Have your senior confirm status toward graduation, ensuring that they are well aware of which graduation requirements still need to be met. The Graduation Success Initiative (GSI) Report as maintained and monitored by the school counselor may assist with this. Suggest that your student consult with the counselor to confirm that he or she is on target and making positive progress toward graduation. Address any concerns or deficiencies immediately.
- ✓ This would be great time to caution your senior about “Senioritis” and any other choices that might impact graduation and/or postsecondary plans. Encourage your student to maintain steady focus on academic achievement and classroom performance because colleges can still rescind an offer of admission based on academics and behavior. Students should refrain from any decisions that might negatively impact postsecondary plans such as college enrollment, military enlistment or employment.
- ✓ Each student’s class rank was updated on February 18<sup>th</sup>. If your student is not aware of their most recent standing in the class, it may be obtained from the school counselor. Procedures for disseminating this information may vary from school to school.
- ✓ Scholarship deadlines may be quickly approaching. Ask your student to continue to research scholarship opportunities for which they might be eligible. It is important to consistently monitor application deadlines and requirements throughout the spring semester.
- ✓ If your student is planning to attend Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC), have them check with the school’s Career Development Coordinator to determine if a CPCC representative will be visiting campus to administer ACCUPLACER, the suite of placement tests that may be required prior to registering for CPCC courses. In addition, have your student inquire as to whether or not a CPCC representative will be conducting a course registration session at the high school this spring.
- ✓ Questions to Ask: Do you know which requirements remain for you to graduate? What steps are you taking to avoid “Senioritis”? Do you know what your GPA and class rank are?

## **WEEK 27: March 7 – 11**

- ✓ March 9 – The College Board, in conjunction with *A Dream Deferred* and the *Historically Black Colleges and Universities Conference*, invites seniors to participate in their first student-centered College Fair on Wednesday, March 9<sup>th</sup>, from 8:00 AM to 12:00 noon, at the Sheraton Charlotte Hotel. Seniors from Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools, who have not yet finalized their college plans, will have the opportunity to speak directly with college admissions representatives. Unlike most college fairs, this one will provide an opportunity for students to be considered for onsite admission from such colleges as Livingstone College, Benedict College, Johnson C. Smith University, Florida A & M University, North Carolina Central University and Saint Augustine University. Have your student see the counselor for more information.
- ✓ Does your senior need to take a spring college admissions test? If so, recommend that he or she register for and take the ACT rather than the SAT for this calendar year. Beginning with the March test, the College Board is providing a new version of the SAT and this graduating class will not have been heavily exposed to information about the recent changes. Upcoming ACT administration dates are Saturday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, and Saturday, June 11<sup>th</sup>. Details are available at [www.act.org](http://www.act.org).
- ✓ Ensure that your student is closely monitoring grades and absences by logging in to PowerSchool. This would be a great activity for the two of you to periodically do together. If there is evidence of academic concerns and / or attendance problems, have your student make contact with the teacher or counselor as soon as possible.
- ✓ June graduates should have already placed an order for a cap and gown if the senior plans to participate in the graduation ceremony. Confirm with your student that the necessary items have been ordered. Also, make sure they are aware of any remaining balance due that may be due when items are delivered. Encourage your student to maintain a copy of all order forms and receipts.

- ✓ High school graduation is just months away. Continue to emphasize the importance of staying focused and keeping up with all course requirements. Special attention should be given to those courses that are necessary to graduate. School attendance is essential to academic success, so any absences should only be those that are unavoidable. Encourage your senior to stay committed!
- ✓ Questions to Ask: How are you progressing with college (or other postsecondary) plans? Do you know what you need to graduate? Are you regularly checking your grades in PowerSchool? Have you ordered your cap and gown? Do your college plans require that you take the ACT this spring?

### **WEEK 28: March 14 – 18**

- ✓ For seniors who may have been denied admission to colleges and universities, college redirection as available on the CFNC website ([www.cfnc.org](http://www.cfnc.org)) may be a good resource. The College Redirection module allows applicants who have been denied admission to the institution of their choice the opportunity to be recruited by colleges that may not have previously been considered. If this is applicable, encourage your student to seek additional postsecondary options through this resource.
- ✓ The National College Fair will be held on Sunday, March 20<sup>th</sup>, 12 noon – 4:00 p.m., at the Charlotte Convention Center. While most seniors have applied and are making a final college selection, this opportunity might assist a late-bloomer in exploring additional college options. Representatives may be able to answer questions about mid-year enrollment and college transfer possibilities. If your senior is still researching colleges, they may register for the College Fair at [www.gotomyncf.com](http://www.gotomyncf.com).
- ✓ Seniors enrolled in English IV during the second semester will be working to fulfill requirements for the CMS Graduation Project. Assistance with preparation for the presentation would be beneficial to your student. Inquire about how you may support the process with feedback and constructive criticism. Encouragement will be essential to the student at this critical time.
- ✓ Continue to encourage your student's use of an agenda, calendar or other organizational tool to record and monitor pertinent dates and deadlines. In addition to academic requirements, the spring semester often offers a variety of events and activities that add to a meaningful high school experience, such as the prom. Encourage your student to maintain a balanced perspective of academic and extracurricular activities as they create a memorable senior year.
- ✓ Spring Break is approaching and this would be a great time for a reminder about the impact of social media. Encourage your student to make wise decisions about items and/or photographs that may be posted, not only as a part of Spring Break fun, but at all times. This might also be another good opportunity for your senior to monitor accounts and security settings as any information viewed may give others insight into the student's personal activities and character.
- ✓ Questions to ask: Are there any major projects or deadlines that you have before Spring Break? For college or scholarship applications, ACT, or the CMS Graduation Project? If so, have you recorded these items and deadlines in your organizational tool? If the student has not, support them in recording key dates that will be significant in upcoming weeks.

### **WEEK 29: March 21 – 25**

- ✓ March 25 – Spring Break / Holiday
- ✓ March 24<sup>th</sup> signals the end of the third quarter. Have your student check in with all teachers to confirm that assignments for the quarter have been submitted. If any late work may still be turned in, if even for partial credit, encourage the student to do so as required by teachers.
- ✓ Mid-term exams will most likely be administered this week, just before Spring Break. Confirm with your senior that the necessary materials (e.g., class notes, study guides, textbooks and online resources) are available for study and review.

### **SPRING BREAK / HOLIDAY: March 25 – April 1**

*In compliance with federal law, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools administers all education programs, employment activities and admissions without discrimination against any person on the basis of gender, race, color, religion, national origin, age or disability.*