



*Inspire. Educate. Connect.*



# Cloud Coach

## Educator Handbook

## The Story of Cloud Coach

BestPrep's newest program **Cloud Coach** is an expansion of its successful email mentoring program, **eMentors**, which launched in 2003. eMentors, a one-on-one email mentoring experience, is a platform for students to explore careers, identify workplace skills, and improve their professional communication abilities.

Building on the infrastructure of eMentors, Cloud Coach empowers students to:

- Develop a caring relationship with a working professional
- Identify career aspirations
- Learn how motivation and effort affect long-term success
- **Think Forward** to their future careers and **Act Now** to prepare for them

**Mission**  
Cloud Coach  
**strengthens** student  
**motivation** to succeed  
in school  
and beyond.

Working in tandem with **Search Institute**, a research organization that specializes in the lives, beliefs, and values of young people, BestPrep has designed Cloud Coach to be an effective tool in teaching students the habits and behavioral skills they need to **graduate** on time and **succeed in their future professions**.

### Table of Contents

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| The Story of Cloud Coach | 1 |
| The Role of Educators    | 2 |
| Sending Messages         | 3 |
| Weekly Gateway Prompts   | 3 |
| Cloud Summit             | 4 |
| Educator Timeline        | 6 |
| Program Timeline         | 7 |

All Materials in this booklet are  
copyrighted by BestPrep

BestPrep's Cloud Coach Program  
7100 Northland Circle N., Suite 120  
Brooklyn Park, MN 55428

[www.bestprep.org](http://www.bestprep.org)

763-398-0090

## The Role of Educators

Educator engagement is essential to the success of the program. Educators are expected to:

- Introduce the program to students
- Administer a pre and post-program survey
- Establish and reinforce clear relationship boundaries
- Oversee the timely exchange of messages
- Prepare for and encourage student attendance at the Cloud Summit



### Introducing the Program



BestPrep will provide educators with a PowerPoint and other introductory materials. Educators should spend time preparing students to send thoughtful messages. Consider sending a practice message or creating a related in-class writing assignment.



### Administering Surveys

Students take two educator-administered surveys, one before the program starts and one after it concludes. Both are mandatory.

### Top Tip

Don't forget to factor in extra time for surveys, technical questions, logging in, etc.



### Maintaining Boundaries

Educators are expected to communicate program boundaries to students before messaging starts. The following should be considered out-of-bounds:

- A request to borrow something
- An invitation to an outside event
- Sharing of personal contact info
- Connecting via social media (Including LinkedIn)
- Rude, vulgar, or disrespectful statements

## Sending Messages

Students respond to one message a week sent by their Cloud Coach mentor. Educators should be aware of the following:

- Students respond in-class on the same day of the week (educator decides the day, e.g. Wednesday)
- Absent students should send a make-up message when they return to class
- All students must send their first message within two weeks
- Educators should notify BestPrep staff if a mentor has not sent two consecutive messages

### Top Tip

Create and explain your make-up policy in advance.



### Online Portal

Cloud Coach uses an online message delivery system instead of regular email. This allows educators and BestPrep staff to easily see and assess messages with questionable content. It also prohibits sharing of personal information and enables better tracking of sent and received messages.



## Weekly Gateway Prompts

Students and mentors will be writing on topics designed, in conjunction with Search Institute, to address the goals and mission of the program. Topics cover identifying career aspirations, visualizing how current efforts will play into future success, developing tangible goals and more. Educators should consider:

- Integrating the Gateway Prompts into their curriculum
- Spending a few minutes before sending messages unpacking the weekly topic
- Holding regular class discussions on the content and themes of mentor messages

## Cloud Summit

Students get a chance to meet their mentor at the Cloud Summit. This is held midway through the program at the company location. Depending on the size of the participating school, multiple Cloud Summits may be held to accommodate all students and mentors. Students usually take an office tour and participate in activities focused on building professional soft skills. The Cloud Summit gives students a real-life context for their messages, so be sure to encourage attendance as much as possible.



### Cloud Summits typically include . . .



Mentor and Student  
Introductions



"Getting to Know  
You" Activity



Lunch or Snack  
(provided by company)



Workplace Tour  
or Overview

## Preparation Checklist

- Request a substitute
- Have students notify their other teachers of when they'll be gone
- Prepare your students by talking about the day's agenda and behavioral expectations
- Secure bus transportation (connect with BestPrep about cost, if necessary)
- Prepare a few comments about your experience in the program and the benefits of connecting with a mentor
- Ask 2-4 students to officially thank mentors and share the highlights of their experience thus far

## Educator Timeline

### Pre-Connection

- ☐ Meet with BestPrep staff to determine how Cloud Coach fits into your curriculum.
- ☐ Introduce the Cloud Coach program to your students. Use the BestPrep-provided PowerPoint, which emphasizes why mentors are involved and why students should take full advantage of the opportunity and their role.
- ☐ Have students practice using their school email account prior to sending their first message; make sure they know their login information in advance.
- ☐ Plan time for students to participate in the first online survey. This feedback is crucial to the program's success. The survey takes, on average, five minutes to complete. A link to the survey will be provided by BestPrep.
- ☐ Work with BestPrep to schedule time for a company representative to present on their business in-class before the program starts.

### During the Connection

- ☐ Help students write their best messages by encouraging them to write more than just an answer to the weekly Gateway Prompt. How they spend their time, interests, class assignments, jobs, etc. are all good topics.
- ☐ Ensure each student message starts with answering any questions their mentor asked in the last exchange. The goal is for messages to be conversational.
- ☐ Have students continually work on honing their spelling, grammar, and communication skills.
- ☐ Adapt the process to students who are struggling or short for time as best you can; it is always better to send a short message instead of no message at all.
- ☐ Have the student continue on to the next topic even if they have not received a message from their mentor.
- ☐ Notify BestPrep if a student is added or removed from your class roster. We will work with the coordinator and mentor(s) to inform or provide an additional mentor.
- ☐ Debrief messages in class each week. The discussion will reinforce recurring themes.

## Before and During the Cloud Summit

- ☐ Notify BestPrep staff if any student(s) can't be photographed while at the Cloud Summit.
- ☐ Prepare students for the Cloud Summit. Share the agenda, appropriate clothing recommendations, and behavior expectations (see Cloud Summit Etiquette document).
- ☐ Ask students for dietary restrictions and communicate that information to BestPrep staff.
- ☐ Work with your school administration to make sure logistics for the Cloud Summit have been determined for your class.
- ☐ Get students excited about participating in the Cloud Summit by sharing the agenda and stressing the importance of attending this one-time event.

## Post-Connection

- ☐ Plan extra time for students to read the last message from their mentor and then participate in the final online survey (mandatory).
- ☐ Students should complete the survey after reading their final message.
- ☐ Complete an online educator survey to share your feedback on the experience.



### Cloud Coach Timeline and Progression of Message Exchange

| Weekly Timeline                        | What's Happening                                                                                                                        | Student Action                                                                           |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1-2 Weeks Before Program Starts</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educator introduces the program</li> <li>Company presenter talks about their business</li> </ul> |                                                                                          |
|                                        | Pre-program survey completed by all students                                                                                            | Participate in pre-program survey (mandatory)                                            |
| <b>Week 1</b>                          | Mentors send 1st message                                                                                                                | Student Responds                                                                         |
|                                        | Students respond to their mentor's first message in class                                                                               | Introduce self to mentor. Ask about mentor's job, responsibilities, interests, etc.      |
| <b>Week 2</b>                          | 2nd message sent                                                                                                                        | Student responds                                                                         |
| <b>Week 3</b>                          | 3rd message sent                                                                                                                        | Student responds                                                                         |
| <b>Week 4</b>                          | Cloud Summit held at company                                                                                                            | Participate in the Cloud Summit. Make every effort to attend.                            |
|                                        | 4th message sent                                                                                                                        | Respond to Cloud Summit questions. Ask mentor follow-up questions about your experience. |
| <b>Week 5</b>                          | 5th message sent                                                                                                                        | Student responds                                                                         |
| <b>Week 6</b>                          | 6th message sent                                                                                                                        | Student responds                                                                         |
| <b>Week 7</b>                          | 7th message sent                                                                                                                        | Student sends their final message.                                                       |
| <b>Week 8</b>                          | Mentors send last message                                                                                                               | Students read their mentor's final message.                                              |
|                                        | Post-program survey completed                                                                                                           | Participate in post-program survey (mandatory)                                           |