

## Mentor Guide

Strengthening student motivation to succeed in school and beyond.

### Cloud Coach Overview

BestPrep's newest program Cloud Coach is a derivative of its successful email mentoring program, eMentors, which was introduced by BestPrep in 2003. eMentors, a one-on-one emailing experience, is a platform for students to explore careers, identify workplace skills and to learn how to communicate with a business mentor.

Using the infrastructure from the successful eMentors program, BestPrep created Cloud Coach to help students identify career interests and aspirations and to help them learn what actions they can take to ensure future success.

### Program Objectives

Through participating in the Cloud Coach program, students will:

- Develop a relationship with a mentor that emphasizes motivation and effort as success factors
- Think forward to identify aspirations and related career interests
- Act now to be on track to graduate and achieve future goals

### Weekly Commitment

Mentors are asked to review the Weekly Gateway Prompts and initiate correspondence with their assigned student. Each week, mentors send a message to their student before a weekly deadline. Mentors guide and lead the conversation each week and are key to helping your student work toward the program's objectives. Students and mentors commit to nine email exchanges and one face-to-face meeting.

### Gateway Prompts

BestPrep worked with the Search Institute to develop Gateways that relate to the program's overall goal. These Gateway Prompts provide the structure for the weekly emails and focus on helping students identify their aspirations, develop their personal brand, and visualize how their current efforts will play into their future success. Each week, mentors will reflect on last week's topic and introduce the current week's topic. This information, suggested talking points, and accompanied research are provided at the start of the program.

#### SAMPLE GATEWAY PROMPTS

- Personal interests and hobbies
- Future aspirations
- Importance of school
- Goal setting
- Learning from mistakes
- Overcoming obstacles

### The Process

- Review this guide as well as any other material provided by BestPrep or company coordinator.
- Watch the online training video to learn the general overview of the program including timeline, in-person meeting information, and message process guidelines.
- After watching the video, complete a short, online volunteer agreement form.
- Build a relationship with your assigned student; send a message by the designated deadline.
- Arrange your schedule to participate in the Cloud Summit coordinated for your connection.
- Complete an online evaluation at the end of the program.

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## Cloud Summit

The Cloud Summit is a one-time in-person meeting between students and mentors; typically held at the mentors' worksite. Because of its importance in building the relationship, we ask that you make every effort to attend. Please reserve the time and date on your calendar once notified.

Every event includes an overview of the company and time for the student and mentor to get to know one another. If held over lunch, a meal is served. Mentors often have the chance to showcase their worksite by providing a tour. Tours may be organized for groups or led individually. The Cloud Summit may also include other structured activities that help to facilitate conversation between mentors and students.



## Program Boundaries

**These boundaries have been in place to help mentors know what is and is not allowable.**

- Cloud Coach is a school based program; all activities take place at the school or the employer site and are supervised by school or program staff.
- The primary activity is the exchange messages. Therefore, personal contact is limited to the face-to-face meeting arranged by the program.
- Keep student information confidential. Communication concludes upon the final scheduled email exchange.

**The following are not permitted in the Cloud Coach program.**

- A request to borrow something.
- An invitation to an outing or social event; this includes invitations to other school events.
- The use of personal email accounts, or any email address not issued by the school or company.
- A request for contact outside the program parameters.
- Sharing cell or home phone numbers, addresses.
- A request to join a student or mentor's social network.
- Rude or disrespectful statements.
- Refrain from giving gifts to individual students; should the company choose, giving a small gift to every student is acceptable.

## Before We Go

Through Cloud Coach you may have the opportunity to connect and meet students from different backgrounds and cultures other than your own. The success of Cloud Coach depends on many factors, foremost among them is your ability to be trusted by your assigned student. Being sensitive, understanding, and validating their stage in life and unique situations helps students feel comfortable and the experience be successful.

**How can you make the most impact?**

- Follow through on your commitment.
- Write the weekly messages, keeping on schedule with the topics, by the designated deadline.
- Make every effort to attend the Cloud Summit; inform your on-site coordinator if you can't be there.
- Connect with BestPrep staff if you have any questions or concerns.
- Once you make the commitment, stick with it. If you can't continue, please inform your on-site coordinator now so another mentor can be identified and the student has a positive experience.

**Thank you for making a commitment to impact the lives of Minnesota youth!  
Through your help, we'll inspire students to succeed in school and beyond!**