

e-college mentoring

Preparing high school students for college success through instruction and mentoring.

e-College Tips for College Mentors

Welcome to e-college! Being a mentor for a high school student is an important undertaking, and your time and commitment to support a student with a disability is greatly appreciated. By giving a small amount of your time, you are providing a high school student with priceless information, encouragement, and resources. Hopefully, you will find the process to be rewarding for yourself as well, as it provides you with an opportunity to reflect on your current skills, knowledge, and goals. You might even learn something new about yourself or the world from your mentee.

“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” ~ Maya Angelou

How it works:

- e-college is conducted entirely via email; one per week for eight weeks.
- All emails are filtered through the high school teacher. Only the high school teacher and the college disability coordinator will have the college mentors’ email addresses -- mentors and mentees will not exchange contact information.
 - You will receive only their first name and their teacher’s email address. They will receive only your first name. This is a privacy protection for both of you.
 - Only share other personal information with your mentee to the degree that you are comfortable sharing.
- The high school teacher will have been provided with the mentor/mentee matches by the college disability coordinator and will contact you one week before the class begins with details about the class schedule.
- The high school student will write you a letter which will be sent to you via email by the teacher.
- Emails will arrive the same day each week. The specific day will be determined by the high school teacher.
- Ideally, you, as mentor, will respond within 24 hours.
- If you stop getting emails from a student or for some reason cannot respond to the student’s letter, you should notify both the college disability coordinator and the high school teacher.
- You will be asked to respond to 8 emails over 8 to 10 weeks (depending upon school breaks).

Download all documents free at: www.nlsec.org. Click on “Secondary Transition” in the Quick Links, then “e-college”.

Supported by Minnesota Department of Education

Collaboration efforts of Lake Superior College, Northern Lights Special Education Cooperative, College of St. Scholastica, and The University of Minnesota Duluth

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What a mentor's response should look like:

- Each week has a specific focus which will be reflected in your mentee's questions. We have provided you with summaries of those lessons as well as tips on what to write about and resources you can review. Go to www.nlsec.org Click on "Secondary Transition" in the Quick Links, then e-college. Under Start Up Materials, click on "Guide...."
- Responses should be in the 2 to 4 paragraph range but write as much as you need. Some topics will be much easier and more personal than others.
- Share only things about yourself with which you are comfortable.
- Find ways to personally relate to what the students are saying. Tell them about the obstacles you have encountered and what skills you needed to overcome them.
- Share your advice on any topics they discuss and acknowledge the things they share with you, trying to answer all of their questions. If you are unsure of how to respond, utilize the resources mentioned above, or ask your college disability coordinator.
- Teach by example. Use your best writing skills to demonstrate the importance of quality writing in college. Use proper grammar and always use appropriate language.
- Always stay positive and encouraging. Acknowledge their willingness to reach out and communicate with someone new!
 - At the same time, be honest about your experiences; both negative and positive. Do not "sugar coat" the difficulties in adjusting to college life.
- Keep the conversations going by asking questions that get the student thinking about the future and by sharing your experience.
- If you are not receiving emails, or if there are any issues of concern, please contact your college disability coordinator.

Thank you for being a mentor!

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