



Senior Notes

October 2025

This newsletter is e-mailed monthly to all Seniors who provided a functional e-mail address in the 'Senior Profile' assignment in the Class of 2026 canvas course available to all Seniors. If the student provided a functional e-mail for a parent/guardian, we also e-mail it to that address. This newsletter is also available on the HRHS website main page and is posted to the Class of 2026 canvas course.

Counselors work with students based on last name

Ms. Dunn	Last Name A-E	Keya.dunn@cabarrus.k12.nc.us
Ms. Dusch	Last Name F-K	Danah.dusch@cabarrus.k12.nc.us
Ms. Habjanic	Last Name L -Q	Kathy.habjanic@cabarrus.k12.nc.us
Mr. Whalen	Last Name R-Z	Damon.Whalen@cabarrus.k12.nc.us

Order your Cap & Gown!

Order online at www.Jostens.com or in-person during lunches on October 15th. Pay less by ordering now! Prices increase as the year progresses.

Senior Pictures Ready for Preview & Yearbook Selection

Attention Seniors! 📸 Your yearbook pictures are here and ready for you to review! 🎉 Every senior must select their favorite photo for the yearbook. If you don't choose, one will be picked for you! Check out our helpful video that shows you how to view and select your picture.

[Preview and Yearbook Selection](#)

Order Your Yearbook Today!

Order your yearbook at www.yearbookforever.com Prices increase October 2nd.

Don't forget the Senior Ads!

Parents can honor their senior by purchasing a Senior Ad in the yearbook. Order online at www.yearbookforever.com

HICKORY RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL

CLASS OF 2026

SENIOR BULLS

SENIOR YARD SIGNS - \$20

Pay on www.k12paymentcenter.com
Include Student's First and Last Name

contact us: Emily.Pleasants @cabarrus.k12.nc.us

Senior Exam Exemption

Seniors who have had a successful semester can choose not to take their final exam(s) in December and/or May under these circumstances:

1. Have been absent from that class no more than 3 times during the semester. This includes excused and unexcused absences. Remember: 4 tardies equal 1 absence.
2. Have an average final grade of 80 or higher just before the date of the exam.
3. The exam is not a state exam or a CTE exam that requires proof of learning. If you're not sure, ask your teacher.
4. No suspensions during the semester.

Military

If you are planning to join a branch of the military after high school, take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) test. This is a 'qualifying' test that helps determine your eligibility for careers within the service. This is a self-paced, online test taken on the campus of Central Cabarrus High School. Sign up for the October 8th administration [here](#). There will be another administration of the ASVAB on April 8, 2026. That sign up link will be posted closer to the April 8th date.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Vocational rehabilitation is a program that assists individuals with disabilities or serious health conditions in preparing for, obtaining, maintaining, or returning to suitable employment. Services, managed by state and federal programs, can include vocational counseling, skill assessments, training, assistive technology, and job placement to help people achieve economic independence and overcome barriers to work. More Info at <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/eipd>. Or contact Madena Ratliff (Rehabilitation Counselor) at madena.ratliff@dhhs.nc.gov.

Demonstrations of Interest (DOI)

Colleges try to determine which students are really interested in them. They use this information to decide who to offer a seat to in the hopes that those who showed a lot of interest will accept the offer. There are many ways to demonstrate your interest in a college.

1. Attend the 'Future Fair' at the Cabarrus Arena on October 15th from 6-8pm at the Cabarrus Arena & Event Center.
2. Open the colleges' e-mails to you. Colleges have technology that tells them if you open their messages and how many times you check their websites.
3. If a college rep. is visiting your high school, go to their presentation/meet with them.
4. Visit the college campus. If you can't go in-person, join a virtual tour.
5. Apply during the 'early action' window in October.
6. In your essays and anytime you meet a representative from the college, explain why you are interested in this specific college/program.
7. After you apply for admission, answer their messages promptly and apply for any scholarships they recommend.

College/University In-Person Open Houses and Tours

If you have not already visited colleges that you are interested in, it is not too late! Most colleges offer in-person and virtual tours this Fall. You can sign up for a tour or open house by going to the college's website. This is the best way to know if the college is a good fit for you. Colleges track your visits to determine how likely you are to accept a seat should they offer you one, so visiting increases your chances of being offered a seat.

Scholarships!

Scholarships will be advertised throughout the school year in this newsletter. You will find them at the end of this newsletter every month. Please read through them every month because some of the biggest dollar amounts come with Spring scholarships. You will also find scholarship search engines listed at the end of this newsletter. When we learn about a scholarship with a quick deadline, we will advertise it by making an announcement in your senior canvas course.

Early Decision and Early Action

If you find a college that you know is right for you, consider applying by the early action deadline. Applying early gets you an answer earlier from the college, but before you commit to anything, be aware of what you are committing to. Early Decision is **binding** and prevents further exploration of other colleges, so it is usually not in the student's best interest. This website explains the differences between Early Decision and Early Action:

<http://www.collegeboard.com/student/apply/the-application/104.html>

NC Residency Certification Number

To be billed the less expensive "In-State" rather than "Out-of-state" tuition at your college in North Carolina, you will need your Residency Certification Number (RCN). Visit www.ncresidency.org and complete the process to receive your RCN. You will then provide this number to colleges as a part of the application process. This can be completed before, during, or after submitting the college application, but your School Counselor recommends completing it before you submit your application(s).

Transcript Information

Colleges will require that you send your *official* transcript as part of your application. Usually, you will send it electronically. Here's how...

1. **Online** at www.CFNC.org You order it sent through the online 'Transcript Manager' to ANY two or four-year college located in North Carolina.
2. **Online** at Common App. Many colleges use this platform and will ask you to enter your School Counselor's e-mail address into your application. Your School Counselor receives a message from the Common App and uploads your official transcript directly to the site. You are notified through Common App that your transcript has been sent. This counts as one of your free transcript requests.
3. **Paper** option: Complete a transcript request form for each place you want to send one. The blank form is available on the senior canvas course and in the Student Services Office. E-mail the completed transcript request form to Lisa.ryan@cabarrus.k12.nc.us or drop off your paper copy in the School Counseling Office. These cost \$5.00 each after you have requested 3 through Common App or paper.

Please do not ask your School Counselor to e-mail your transcript to college coaches, admissions officers, scholarships etc. **We are not allowed to e-mail your transcript because Cabarrus County Schools does not consider e-mail to be secure for your private information.**

Once your official transcript has been sent, it is very important that you do not make any changes to your Spring high school schedule. This is due to the fact that the colleges you are applying to are looking to see that you are taking a challenging schedule for your entire senior year. They can see that on your transcript, so your transcript is a very important part of your application. If you are thinking of changing your Spring schedule in any way, request that change before your transcript is sent.

Letters of Recommendation

Some colleges and universities require letters of recommendation along with your application for admission. When asking someone to write a letter of recommendation for you, consider the following tips:

- Ask for letters **at least 2 weeks** before the application deadline.
- Be sure to use a [Letter of Recommendation Request Form](#), which provides valuable information to the writer. Blank forms are available in your 'Class of 2026' canvas course.
- Be courteous and polite when requesting letters of recommendation. Remember that you are asking the person to do something extra for you and they do not have to agree.
- Ask adults you know can write a strong letter for you. If someone doesn't know you well enough to advocate for your admission, you should ask someone who knows you better and can write a strong letter on your behalf.
- Provide all necessary information, forms, addresses, and envelopes to complete and submit the letter of recommendation. Make sure you follow the directions on how to send the letter to the college.

UPCOMING EVENTS

UNC SYSTEM VIRTUAL OPEN HOUSES!

The UNC System is hosting a Virtual Open House for prospective students and their parents. Admissions Counselors from each institution will share helpful information about the admissions process and current students from each university will share about their college experience and answer your questions live. Virtual sessions during the weeks of October 6 & 13, 2025 via Zoom. [Register HERE!](#)

<i>Monday, October 6th</i>	<i>Tuesday, October 7th</i>	<i>Wednesday, October 13th</i>	<i>October 14th</i>
Fayetteville State University	Appalachian State University	UNC Asheville	East Carolina University
NC State University	Elizabeth City State University	UNC Chapel Hill	NC Central University
UNC Greensboro	NC A&T university	Western Carolina	UNC Charlotte
UNC School of the Arts	UNC Wilmington	Winston-Salem State University	UNC Pembroke

Upcoming Future Fair

There is something for every senior at the Future Fair on Wednesday, October 15, 2025 from 6:00 – 8:00 pm at the Cabarrus Arena & Events Center! Students and parents are invited to speak with admissions representatives of public and private universities in North Carolina. Please use this [StriveScan registration link](#) to register in advance. You can use your StriveScan barcode to share your information with college representatives. This demonstrates your interest in their college. Military recruiters will also be available to speak with interested families. Employers will also be available to meet with students who wish to enter the work force right after high school.

STRIVE  SCAN

REGISTER FOR A
BARCODE

STRIVEFAIR.COM

Use Snapchat or Camera app



Register now to get a barcode for the college fair.
Show your barcode to colleges who will scan it
to send you more information about their schools.
It's free and saves you time.



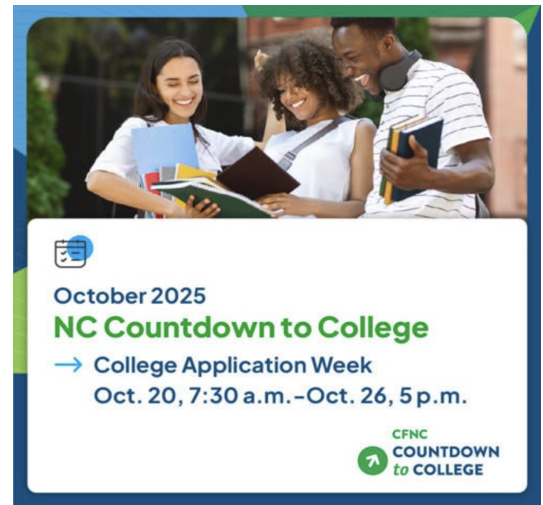
Resume Writing & Interview Skills Workshop

Juniors and seniors: where you're looking for a part time job, apply for college, or aiming for that awesome internship, knowing how to brag about yourself professionally is a skill that will take you far! Join us Tuesday, October 28th at JM Robinson High School from 6:00pm-8:00pm for a fantastic opportunity presented by CCS HR and Student Services Departments. More information can be found [here](#).

Countdown to College (C2C) supports college access every October by helping high school seniors complete 3 steps: residency, financial aid, and college applications. Many North Carolina colleges and universities participate in C2C by waiving application fees during College Application Week, October 20-26, 2025. With typical application fees of \$25 to \$75 per college, you could save hundreds of dollars on fees.

Students must apply using www.cfnc.org to participate in the free application week.

[Check out which colleges are participating.](#)



SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

Use these online tools to find scholarships. In addition to these search tools, some 'featured' scholarships are listed below and included at the end of every edition of the Senior Notes.

<https://www.myscholly.com/>

<http://www.fastweb.com/college-scholarships>

<http://www.onlineschools.org/financial-aid/minority/>.

<https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/scholarships>

<https://www.scholarships.com/>

AWS Welder Training Scholarship Award: \$1,000. *Requirements:* senior seeking welding training in a certificate program less than two years in length through a trade school, community college or other facility providing welder training. For more information and to apply: [AWS Foundation Welder Training Scholarship | Supporting Aspiring Welders](#) *Deadline:* Nov. 30, 2025.

Army ROTC Scholarship *Award:* \$5,000/semester to apply toward tuition OR room/board.

Requirements: senior planning to enroll in a 4-year participating university. Students do not have to be in ROTC in high school to apply for this scholarship. Apply and earn admittance at university and pass an Army physical. Students join ROTC as an elective. No commitment to service in your first year. After your first year, you are asked to commit to the Army active duty or reserve. For more information (including which colleges participate), visit

<https://www.goarmy.com/careers-and-jobs/find-your-path/army-officers/rotc/scholarships> *Deadlines:* Oct. 13, 2025 or January 19, 2026 or March 16, 2026.

Belk scholarship *Discipline:* merit-based to Davidson College. *Award:* full-ride. *Requirements:* the scholarship selection criteria include academic achievement, deep intellectual curiosity and commitment/ability to impact local and global communities. HRHS can nominate two seniors for this scholarship. E-mail keya.dunn@cabarrus.k12.nc.us to request the nomination form. Return your completed nomination form to the Student Services office by Friday October 3, 2025. To apply with or without a nomination, complete your application to Davidson College. Apply for the scholarship at www.Davidson.edu/belk by *Deadline:* November 15, 2025.

Burger King Scholars *Award:* up to \$60,000. *Requirements:* unweighted GPA 2.5 or higher, enrolling in a 2 or 4-year college/university or vocational/trade school. Application opens October 15, 2024. For more information and to apply: <https://burgerking.scholarsapply.org/> *Deadline:* December 15, 2025.

Cheatum-White Scholarship for NC A&T University / NC Central University

Award: Full-Ride. *Requirements:* US Citizen, minimum weighted GPA 4.0. ACT/SAT scores optional. Exceptional qualities of character and leadership. Significant involvement in extracurricular activities. Demonstrate a strong commitment to service. *Deadline:* Nov 15, 2025. For more information and to apply, use links below.

NC A&T - <https://www.ncat.edu/honors/cheatham-white-scholars.php>

NCCU - <https://www.nccu.edu/usp/cheatham-white-scholarship-program>

College Board Opportunity (Big Future) Scholarships *Award:* \$500-\$40,000. You can earn a chance at scholarships when you complete tasks to prepare for college. Log into your SAT/College Board account and complete tasks.

<https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/pay-for-college/bigfuture-scholarships#> Every task you complete puts your name into a drawing for scholarship money. The earlier you start, the more chances you have to win. Drawings are done at the end of every month through February 2026. The tasks are:

1. Start your career list
2. Build your college list
3. Start your scholarship list
4. Strengthen your college list
5. Complete the FAFSA
6. Apply to colleges

Greenhouse Scholarship

Award: up to \$5,000 for one year. Renewable for four years. *Requirements:* GPA 3.5 or higher, annual household income below \$80,000. Excellent leadership skills, commitment to their community. Plan to enroll in a 4-year university in Fall 2026. There are 4 rounds to the application process. Visit:

<https://scholaroo.com/scholarship/greenhouse-scholarship/>

Deadline for round one: November 14, 2025.

Jefferson Scholars and Walentas Scholars Program to the University of Virginia

Award: full-ride to the university. *Requirements:* high school senior who is nominated by HRHS because he/she demonstrates excellence and exceptional potential in the areas of leadership, scholarship and engaged citizenship. To learn more, visit: <https://www.jeffersonscholars.org/scholarships> If you would like to be considered for nomination, e-mail keya.dunn@cabarrus.k12.nc.us by deadline: October 31, 2025.

Lenoir-Rhyne Tuition-Free Guarantee *Award:* Full tuition for four years. *Requirements:*

First-year students from NC or SC with a family annual gross income (AGI) of \$100,000 or less will receive financial aid covering tuition. More Info at <https://www.lr.edu/admission-and-aid/guarantee>

Levine Scholarship *Discipline:* merit-based to UNC Charlotte. *Award:* full-ride valued at \$124,000.

The award covers full tuition, housing, meals, mandatory fees and provides a stipend for books and summer experiences. Scholars are also provided additional funding to support civic engagement opportunities and professional development. *Requirements:* Service, academic excellence, and leadership are qualities that are required for a Levine Scholar. Students can be nominated by their high school or can be self-nominated. Every senior who asks to be nominated will be nominated. E-mail keya.dunn@cabarrus.k12.nc.us to request the nomination form. Return your completed nomination form to the Student Services office by Friday, October 3, 2025. Please visit UNC Charlotte's Premier Merit Scholarship Program - Levine Scholars Program for more information

Morehead-Cain Scholarship *Discipline:* UNC Chapel Hill, merit-based *Award:* Full-ride scholarship *Requirements:* Character, scholarship, physical vigor, leadership *Deadline:* Application opens on August 15. All materials are due on October 15, 2025. To self-nominate go to <https://www.moreheadcain.org/application-eligibility/>

NC State Goodnight Scholarship

Award: \$24,000. Goodnight Scholarship office will invite students in mid-December 2025 who have applied to NC State and meet the following criteria: Family income less than \$120,000 (confirmed via the FAFSA), interested in a STEM career or teaching STEM subjects and a history of exceptional academic performance. An invitation to apply will be sent to the e-mail address the student listed on their NC State application. Students who are concerned that they will not receive an application can self-nominate between November 3rd and December 1st by completing an online form at <https://goodnight.ncsu.edu/first-year/>

Park Scholarship *Discipline:* NC State University, merit-based *Award:* Full-ride scholarship

Requirements: applicants must represent scholarship, leadership, service, and character. Applicants must have a minimum unweighted 3.8 GPA. *Deadline:* November 1. To self-nominate go to <https://park.ncsu.edu/apply/>

Robertson Scholars Leadership Program *Discipline:* merit-based to UNC Chapel Hill and/or Duke University. *Award:* full ride and summer stipend. *Requirements:* The scholarship selection criteria include purposeful leadership, strength of character, intellectual curiosity and Collaborative Spirit. Students should apply for this scholarship directly at www.robertsonscholars.org. *Deadline:* October 15 for early notification and November 15 for regular notification.

2025 United States Senate Youth Program and Scholarship *Award: \$10,000. Requirements:*

High school senior who is representing peers in an organization that relates to government, public affairs, history and/or community service. To learn more and to apply, visit:

<https://ncdpi.instructure.com/courses/6560/pages/united-states-senate-youth-program>

Deadline for the completed application: October 5, 2025 *Deadline to submit letters of recommendation:* September 28, 2025

2025 Service Academy Nominations

There are 5 Service Academies that students can apply to be nominated to: US Military Academy at West Point, US Naval Academy, US Air Force Academy, US Merchant Marine Academy, US Coast Guard Academy. Requirements: age 17, US Citizen, NC Resident, Medical/Physical and academic requirements of the academy. If you are selected, after graduation you are obligated to serve in the military for 5 years. To learn more and to apply, visit: [Academy Nominations - U.S. Senator Ted Budd \(senate.gov\)](#)

Deadline to apply: October 31, 2025 by 5pm.

Voice of Democracy Scholarship *Award: \$35,000. Requirements:* Democracy-loving senior willing to express themselves in regard to this theme: 'Is America Today our Forefathers' Vision?' For more information and to apply, [Youth Scholarships - VFW](#) *Deadline:* October 31, 2025.

The North Carolina Gateway to Wake Forest University *Award:* tuition and living expenses
Requirements: Admitted students from North Carolina with an annual family income of \$100,000 or less will receive financial aid covering tuition and standard living expenses. Admitted students from North Carolina with an annual family income between \$100,000 and \$200,000 will receive financial aid covering tuition. Admitted students from North Carolina with an annual family income between \$200,000 and \$300,000 will receive financial aid covering 50% of tuition.

<https://financialaid.wfu.edu/types-of-aid/ncgateway-to-wfu/>

North Carolina Teaching Fellows

NCTF is a state funded forgivable loan program designed to prepare and retain future NC educators in the areas of Elementary, STEM, and Special Education. *Requirements:* A NC high school senior, a student applying to an educator preparation program at one of the ten Teaching Fellows partner institutions. Application opens October 1st, 2025. Students will be required to complete an application, submit a high school transcript, provide 2 letters of recommendation, and respond to 3 essay questions. For more information and to apply, visit:

<https://myapps.northcarolina.edu/ncteachingfellows/apply>