

Heritage High School - Senior Planning Guide

Welcome Class of 2026!



August 15, 2025

Whether you are returning or new to us this year, I want to welcome you to your best year yet. Senior year can be a blur as you keep one foot in the present and begin to stake the other very firmly into the future. You have a great deal of information to take-in. Throughout the year, be sure to:

- **Take care of one another-** there is potential for a lot of senselessness between here and June. Many seniors make mistakes that they never could have imagined. Steer yourself and your classmates steadily. Talk with parents. Get help from an adult. Don't carry burdens in isolation or try to solve problems too big for you to handle.
- **Tend to your goals-** all of you have mandatory courses towards graduation. Take care of these every day. Procrastination and senioritis have extended too many of your classmates' high school careers. Please support each other as fellow Huskies so you will all graduate together in June.
- **Keep your ears and eyes open-** opportunities and timelines can come pretty quickly. Be ready for them. Have your resume and a draft scholarship essay on-hand.
- **Leave your legacy-** what impact will you leave on Heritage High School? How will we be better, how will the community be kinder, because you were here?

Best of luck for this year. You can do this- and we are here to help!

Jo Ellen Newhouse, Principal

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Message from Student Services

Welcome Seniors and Senior Families to your Senior year!

In this guide you will find information to help you succeed and thrive at Heritage High School during your Senior year. There's also important information about all Senior events - the who, what, where, and what to wear. If at any time this year you need help, please don't hesitate to reach out to your counselor or any of the support staff found on the next page. We're here to help and excited to celebrate your graduation. It is our sincerest hope that each student who walks across the stage at graduation is excited about their next steps.

We fully support each student's goal of becoming [Enrolled](#), [Enlisted](#) or [Employed](#).

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Senior Support Contact List

Name	Assignment	Phone 570-5600	E-Mail
Toria Greene	Students in grades 10-12 with last names A-Ge	Ext. 20658	tgreene@wcpss.net
Brandy Lyons	Students in grades 10-12 with last names Gf-Ng	Ext. 20696	blyons@wcpss.net
Colleen Santos	Students in grades 10-12 with last names Nh-Z	Ext. 20647	cmsantos@wcpss.net
Angelique Burris	Husky Academy (Freshman Academy)	Ext. 20698	aburris2@wcpss.net
Lauren Weaver	Mid-Year Graduates, Dean of Students	Ext. 20687	lweaver2@wcpss.net
Yvonne Corcho	Student Assistance Program Counselor (SAP)	Ext. 20649	ycorcho@wcpss.net
Sharon Yosef	Intervention Coordinator	Ext. 20690	syosef@wcpss.net
Dawn Beaster	Career Development Coordinator	Ext. 20654	dbeaster@wcpss.net
Susan Waldrum	Financial Aid Access Counselor	Ext. 20701	swaldrum@wcpss.net
Blaire Savage	Student Services Technician	Ext. 20701	bbsavage@wcpss.net
Pat Jenks	Registrar/Records	Ext. 20646	pjenks@wcpss.net
Kim O'Hara	Data Manager	Ext. 20699	kohara@wcpss.net

How to Stay Informed

Both Parents and Students are invited to sign up for Remind to receive text messages about important info and opportunities:	Text the code corresponding to your current grade level & last name to 81010 <table><tr><th>Student's LAST NAME</th><th>Class of 2026</th></tr><tr><td>A-Ek</td><td>@HHS26a-ek</td></tr><tr><td>El-K</td><td>@HHS26el-k</td></tr><tr><td>L-Q</td><td>@HHS26l-q</td></tr><tr><td>R-Z</td><td>@HHS26r-z</td></tr></table>	Student's LAST NAME	Class of 2026	A-Ek	@HHS26a-ek	El-K	@HHS26el-k	L-Q	@HHS26l-q	R-Z	@HHS26r-z
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R-Z	@HHS26r-z										

Additional Info & Announcements:

- Check out the [Senior Page](#) often. We'll share copies of handouts, presentations and upcoming events.
- Follow us on Instagram @heritagehssstudentservices
- Check the calendar of events on the [Student Services homepage](#)
- Students: Listen for important announcements, check your email, take advantage of Pack Day opportunities, and review information shared during homeroom.
- Parents: Make sure you are signed up to receive Mrs. Newhouse's [Principal Weekly Messages](#) through [SchoolMessenger](#). We share important information through these messages as well. We ask that you please check your student's attendance and grades through Infinite Campus. (If you need help with your account, please contact Ms. O'Hara at kohara@wcpss.net.)

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Steps to Graduation

Graduation Requirements: Students who entered 9th in 2021-2022 must follow course, credit and testing requirements outlined by the Future Ready Core:

English: 4 Credits I, II, III, IV
Mathematics: 4 Credits NC Math 1, NC Math 2, NC Math 3, and a 4th Math Course to be aligned with the students' post high school plans. <i>In the rare instance a principal exempts a student from the FRC math sequence, the student would be required to pass NC Math 1 and NC Math 2 and two other application-based math courses.</i>
Science: 3 Credits A Physical Science course, Biology, Earth/ Environmental Science
Social Studies: 4 Credits World History; Founding Principles of the United States of America and North Carolina: Civic Literacy; American History; Economics and Personal Finance
Health/Physical Education: 1 Credit Also, successful Completion of CPR requirement outlined in NCGS 115C-81
Electives: 6 Credits required 2 Elective credits of any combination from either: Career and Technical Education (CTE), Arts Education, or World Languages 4 Elective credits strongly recommended (four course concentration) from one of the following: Career and Technical Education (CTE), JROTC, Arts Education (e.g. dance, music, theater arts, visual arts), or any other subject area or cross-disciplinary courses (e.g., mathematics, science, social studies, English, and dual enrollment courses)
Total Required Number of Credits: 22 to graduate
Additional Requirement for Graduation: Meet exit standards for the following subjects: English II, Algebra I/Math I, and Biology
World Language: Not required for graduation. For minimum admission requirements for UNC system schools, students need “two additional academic courses from English, mathematics, science, social studies, world languages, or computer science. (Note: these courses should be selected in alignment with a student’s academic and career objectives. Completion of two sequential world language courses is recommended . Check college admissions pages for their specific requirements as some colleges do require 3 credits of the same world language.)

***N.C.G.S. 115C-81(b) allows exceptions for students who have an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) that identifies them as Learning Disabled in math and states that the disability will prevent them from mastering Algebra I and above.

The Senior Conference

During September/early October, all counselors will conduct individual meetings with senior students. This is a follow up to their individual Junior Meeting. The purpose of the senior conference is to verify appropriate senior courses that will lead to a high school diploma, discuss post high school planning support and answer specific questions. This is a brief “let’s get started” meeting and seniors are expected to schedule follow up meetings with their counselors as needed. What should a senior do prior to the Senior Meeting?

- Complete [Heritage HS Senior Info Sheet](#) - mandatory for all Seniors
- Update your resume to give to your counselor (See resources on [Career Development Services](#) page)
- Prepare to talk specifics about what you’ve done this summer to prepare yourself for the senior year and what your current plans are for after high school graduation
- Write out questions you need to ask your counselor, including those about college applications or other post-graduation planning. Bring them with you to the meeting.

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Senior Year Specifics

Exam Exemptions

Seniors enrolled in courses not requiring a state mandated exam may be exempt from final exams if the Senior has an overall B average in the course and no more than 10 cumulative absences (TOTAL excused and unexcused).

College Days

In general, students who are away from school for educational reasons are granted excused absences. Seniors whose educational absence is college-related, can have the absences deemed a “college day” if proper attendance procedures are followed, and paperwork is submitted prior to the date of absence. When planning college visits, colleges and universities offer many different dates and times. Make efforts to avoid missing school days, as much as possible. [Request for Excused Absence for Educational Reason form](#)
College days count as an absence for senior exam exemptions.

College Representative, Military Reps, and Employer Visits at Heritage High

Seniors are encouraged to dialogue with admissions representatives who may offer virtual or face to face meetings with students. Most visits will occur during 3rd period and take place in the cafeteria at the Counselor Corner. Check the calendar on the [Student Services homepage](#) frequently & listen for important announcements during Advisory meetings.

Selective Service Registration

All young men in the U.S. (with very few exceptions*) are required to register with Selective Service within 30 days of turning 18. Registration is Federal law. It is also required to stay eligible for many Federal and state benefits, including student financial aid, job training, and jobs in the Executive Branch of the Federal government, such as jobs with the U.S. Postal Service. Registering with Selective Service is simple and possible online at: <http://www.sss.gov>.

Class Ranking

Class rank is generated from a student’s weighted GPA. See detailed info on GPA calculation [here](#). Senior ranking will be compiled three times during each school year:

- ❖ Late September: Initial senior class ranking date. Students can begin to request official transcripts to be sent to colleges **after this date**. Do not request transcripts prior to this date/announcement.
- ❖ Mid February: Mid-year senior class ranking date. Students may request mid-year transcripts to be sent to colleges after this date.
- ❖ June 2026: Final senior class ranking and GPA will be available LATE June. Final transcripts will be sent to colleges after this final ranking process. It is a student’s responsibility to send their final transcript to their selected college using instructions found [here](#).

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Senior Honors

Latin Honors - Determined by official GPA after the first semester of Senior year. *Any senior who believes their FINAL Spring semester grades will improve their overall GPA should contact their counselor to ask for their projected GPA to be calculated after they have completed ALL exams for second semester.*

- ❖ Students with a weighted GPA of 3.75 - 3.99 shall receive the distinction of ***cum laude***
- ❖ Students with a weighted GPA of 4.0 - 4.249 shall receive the distinction of ***magna cum laude***
- ❖ Students with a weighted GPA of 4.25 or higher shall receive the distinction of ***summa cum laude***

NC Academic Scholars – Students who complete the requirements for this academically challenging high school program are named North Carolina Academic Scholars and receive special recognition, including as a seal attached to their diplomas. Students must:

- Complete all the requirements of the NC Academic Scholars Program (see table below).
- Have an overall four-year un-weighted grade point average of 3.500.
- Complete all requirements for a North Carolina high school diploma.

Credits	
4	English I, II, III, IV
4	Mathematics (should include Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, and a higher level math course with Algebra II as prerequisite OR Integrated Mathematics I, II, III, and a higher level mathematics course with Integrated Mathematics III as prerequisite)
3	Science (Physics or Chemistry course, Biology, and an Earth/Environmental Science course)
4	Social Studies (World History, Civics/Economics, American History or AP US History, Economics & Personal Finance
1	Health and Physical Education
6	Two (2) elective credits in a second language.. Four (4) elective credits constituting a concentration recommended from one of the following: Career and Technical Education (CTE), JROTC, Arts Education, World Languages, any other subject area
3	Higher level courses taken during junior and/or senior years which carry 4.5 or 5 quality points such as: AP, IB, Dual or college equivalent course, Advanced CTE/CTE credentialing courses, Other honors or above designated courses
OR	
2	Higher level courses taken during junior and/or senior years which carry 4.5 or 5 quality points such as: AP, IB, Dual or college equivalent course, Advanced CTE/CTE credentialing courses, Other honors or above designated courses

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Senior Events

Senior Night	Thursday, August 21 at 6:30pm Heritage HS Auditorium
Students and families are invited to join Heritage HS staff and the PTSA to learn about all things Senior year. PTSA will share info about senior gear, legacy bricks, and yard signs. Counselors will share info about required Senior immunizations, how to stay informed, annual Senior events, Senior fees, ordering caps & gowns, Senior photos, graduation, post-high school planning, and much more!	
Senior Breakfast	Monday, August 25 from 6:55 to 7:50 (all of homeroom) in the Courtyard outside of the HHS Main Gym
PTSA sponsors a breakfast for all Seniors to start the year off right. Report to the small gym upon arrival to get your official schedule from your homeroom teacher, eat good food, and see your friends!	
Senior Conferences	September 3 through October 7
Seniors will meet 1:1 with all their assigned Counselor to discuss post-graduation plans	
Senior Orientation	Tuesday, September 9 during 2nd Period Heritage HS Auditorium
Counselors will meet with all students in the Auditorium to review important Senior information and tasks.	
Financial Aid Night	TBD (FAFSA opens October 1, 2025) *Scholarship Bulletins posted monthly*
Heritage HS has a Financial Aid Advisor who is here once a week September through May.	
Senior Roundup	Wednesday, October 8 from 7:25-11:00 Heritage High School (report to Auditorium at arrival)
Seniors will participate in a College, Career & Military Fair, along with breakout sessions designed to assist with their postgraduate plans. A list of College, Career & Military Fair representatives, as well as breakout session topics, will be shared prior to the event.	
Seniors not normally on campus for 1st period should plan to attend - make sure to be here by 7:25!	
College Application Week (CAW)	October 20-26 Heritage HS Media Center

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CAW is from October 20-26, 2025. During this week, many North Carolina colleges and universities waive their application fees. Heritage Counselors are available ALL 4 periods, Monday through Friday to assist with all parts of any college application. CFNC usually shares a list of participating colleges in early October.

Midyear Virtual Graduation Meeting

Thursday, November 13th at 6:30pm
Virtual meeting (will be recorded)

Learn about all things graduation - who, what, when, where, what to wear, guests, & how to be “cleared” to verify you’ve met all requirements.

Midyear Graduation

Mandatory Graduation Practice:
Monday, January 26th at 8:30am
Heritage High School Auditorium

Graduation Ceremony:
Friday, February 6th at 8:30am
Heritage High School Auditorium

Dress: Graduating Seniors will wear cap/gown and formal attire. Only approved honor cords/stoles issued by Heritage HS honor society organizations are allowed to be worn with cap/gown at official graduation events. Midyear graduates & families can find all information, including details about tickets, times, and dress [here](#).

Senior Send Off (Virtual Meeting for Graduation Information)

Thursday, April 23rd at 6:30pm
Virtual Meeting (will be recorded)

Learn about all things graduation - who, what, when, where, what to wear, guests, & how to be “cleared” to verify you’ve met all requirements.

Senior Day (Mandatory)

June 3 all day
Heritage High School

Seniors will begin the day with an informal graduation practice (casual wear OK) in the Auditorium. Students will receive information about missing “graduation clearance” items shared previously during homeroom. Students will then move into the Auditorium for a slideshow and transition outside for catered lunch and an afternoon of fun!

Awards Day (Mandatory)

June 4 7:30-9:30
Heritage High School Auditorium

Come celebrate Seniors as we recognize their hard work & accomplishments.

Baccalaureate Service

June 14 @ 2:00
Hope Lutheran Church

Seniors and their families are invited to this community-sponsored event.

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Graduation

June 15 @ 12:00

Raleigh Convention Center

Dress: Graduating Seniors will wear cap/gown and formal attire. Only approved honor cords/stoles issued by Heritage HS honor society organizations are allowed to be worn with cap/gown at official graduation events. Midyear graduates & families can find all information, including details about tickets, times, and dress [here](#).

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What's After High School? The 3 E's: [Enrolled](#), [Enlisted](#), [Employed](#)

Begin with the end in mind. It is our sincerest hope that each student who walks across the stage at graduation is excited about their next steps. We fully support each student's goal of becoming [Enrolled](#), [Enlisted](#) or [Employed](#). The following pages provide resources and information for each of these three post-graduation pathways:

[Enrollment in Continuing Education](#) (2- and 4-year colleges)

- Includes checklists, breaks down the college application process - including parts of the applications, transcripts, Scholarships & Financial Aid (FAFSA & RDS), ACT/SAT testing, recommendation letters, choosing a college and more
- See [Instructions for Sending Transcripts](#)

[Enlistment](#)

- Includes information about local military reps, ASVAB testing, military academies, and college ROTC programs

[Employment](#)

- Includes information about career planning and career exploration

Additional helpful sites include:

[Senior Page](#)

- Includes information about important steps to complete at the start and end of the year, Senior photos, Senior programming & events, etc.

[Graduation Page](#)

- Includes all information about when, where & what to wear, as well as information about graduation tickets and how Seniors are "cleared for graduation"

[Heritage Career Development Coordinator site](#)

- Includes information about Career & College Exploration, Job Shadowing, Internships, Apprenticeships, Military, Entry-Level Employment, Leadership, Pre-College & Community Programs, Resume/Cover Letter Writing, Interviewing Skills