

# Navigating the Future:

## An In-Depth Look at the Illinois PaCE Framework

**Presented by:**

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Access Services



# Agenda

1. Background of PaCE
2. PaCE Curriculum
3. PaCE Implementation Practices
4. Resources

# Background of PaCE

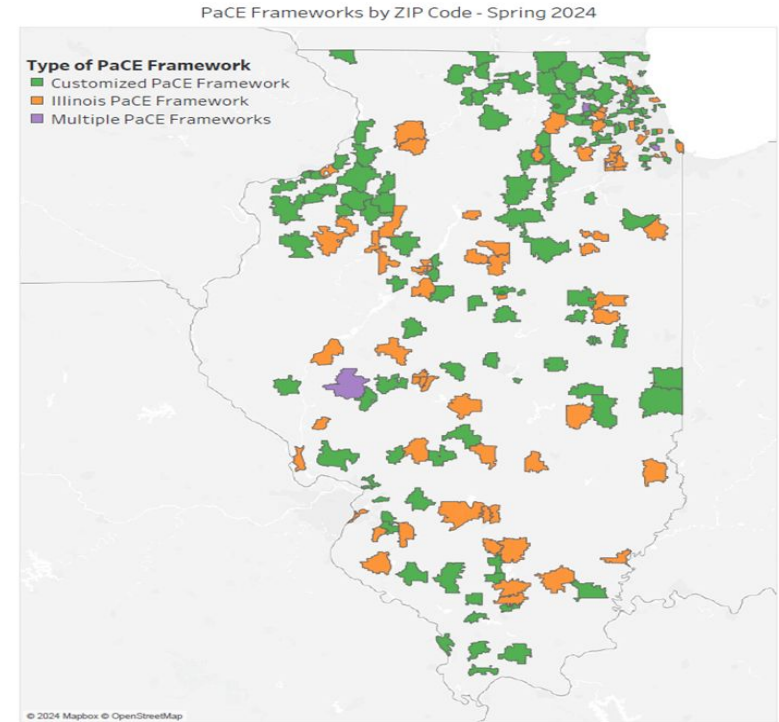
# Public Act 102-0917 – Adopting and Implementing PaCE for School Districts

## ● No later than July 1, 2025

- A school district (other than CPS) shall adopt and commence implementation of career exploration and career development activities in accordance with a PaCE Framework for grades 6 – 12
- A school district's framework shall be available in a prominent location on the district's website
- A school district (other than CPS) serving grades 9 – 12 must have elected to implement CCPEs or must have opted out of implementation

# PaCE Frameworks Across the State

- As of 2/7/25, ISAC has identified **240 schools and districts** who are implementing PaCE
  - 180 customized (57 w/ISAC)
  - 60 adopted Illinois PaCE
- We have created a repository of frameworks, available at [www.isac.org/pace](http://www.isac.org/pace)



# Illinois PaCE Framework - MS



## Illinois PaCE Postsecondary and Career Expectations

At the middle school and early high school level, the Illinois Postsecondary and Career Expectations (PaCE) Framework is designed to provide students with guided exploration of postsecondary planning and options in a manner that is consistent with adolescent development. Meaningful participation in post-secondary preparation programs requires that students perceive college and/or career as possible and probable. Too often, programs are designed to serve only students who already have a college-going or career-oriented identity. The developmental work in the middle school framework is intended to prepare students to more fully engage with the PaCE Framework throughout the critical high school years.



### By the end of 6th grade

#### A student should be exposed to:

- information about and examples of a wide range of careers
- language that emphasizes individual skills, strengths, and assets
- practices that develop a growth mindset

#### A student should be supported to:

- explore their interests
- practice their strengths
- develop their confidence in their abilities

### By the end of 7th grade

#### A student should be supported to:

- engage in guided self-reflection
- articulate aspirations
- envision a positive future
- explore their habits
- create or change a habit
- record their progress
- explore career interests
- explore their strengths
- effectively ask for help
- understand a growth mind set

### By the end of 8th grade

#### A student should be supported to:

- explore barriers to aspirations
- articulate personal strengths
- identify sources of motivation
- explore career interests
- develop an educational plan for at least one career interest
- compare possible financial futures
- complete a career cluster survey
- attend a career exploration day
- demonstrate a growth mind set
- explore learning styles
- map a support network
- complete a unit on education planning

#### A student should be exposed to:

- the concept of career clusters of interest
- relationship between community service/extracurricular activities and postsecondary (PS)/career goals
- be exposed to a financial literacy unit in a course or workshop



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# Illinois PaCE Framework - HS



## Illinois PaCE Postsecondary and Career Expectations

Each student should have an individualized learning plan to help make decisions about career and post-secondary (PS) education or training, to plan a course of study, and to make financial aid assessments with family members.



### By the end of 9th grade

#### A student should be supported to:

- complete a career cluster survey
- complete a career interest survey
- attend a PS options workshop
- select course work for PS/career plans aligned with the ISBE College and Career Readiness Indicators
- enroll as appropriate in early college credit courses
- outline a plan for community service and extracurricular activities related to PS plans
- attend a basic financial aid presentation with a trusted adult

#### A student should know:

- one or two careers for further exploration
- the relationship between HS coursework, attendance, and grades to PS plans
- importance of community service and extracurricular activities to PS and career plans
- general cost ranges of various PS options

### By the end of 10th grade

#### A student should be supported to:

- visit at least one workplace aligned with career interests
- participate in activities related to their career cluster of interest
- select a career area of interest: enroll in career pathway (CP) as available
- explore opportunities along the Work Based Learning Continuum.
- connect and build relationships with 2-3 adults to support the PS and career selection process
- review coursework, and PS/career plans in relation to the ISBE College and Career Readiness Indicators (every year)
- attend a basic financial aid presentation with a family member

#### A student should know:

- educational requirements, cost, expected entry level, and midpoint salary for occupations in selected CP
- skills related to career interests
- different types of PS credentials and institutions
- general timing of PS entrance exams and applications
- benefit of early college credit opportunities to PS access and completion

### By the end of 11th grade

#### A student should be supported to:

- revisit the career interest survey
- participate in a mock job interview
- create a resume and personal statement
- complete an experience within the Work Based Learning Continuum.
- determine readiness for college-level coursework in math/ELA and enrollment in either "catch up" or "speed up" course
- complete at least one early college credit opportunity
- attend a college fair
- visit at least 3 PS institutions
- take at least one college entrance exam
- complete a Postsecondary Plan Workshop

#### A student should know:

- application deadlines, test timing, cost, and preparation for industry-based certification for CP
- entrance requirements, including application deadlines, for expected PS programs of study
- 3-5 match schools, one safety, one reach school for PS program of study
- negative impact of remediation on PS goals
- financial aid deadlines for chosen PS options

### By the end of 12th grade

#### By the end of 12th grade a student should be supported to:

- complete at least two team based challenges.
- obtain an internship opportunity related to the CP if applicable
- if applicable, receive industry-based certification(s) related to the CP
- address any remedial needs in math/ELA
- complete a financial aid offer workshop

#### A student should know:

- how CP courses and experiences articulate to degree programs at PS options
- estimated cost of chosen PS options
- affordability of PS options in relation to expected entry-level career salary and anticipated debt
- terms and conditions of any scholarship or loan

#### By 12/31 of 12th grade a student should have:

- completed 3 or more admissions applications to PS institutions
- ensure all steps in the PS admissions process are completed on time
- attended a Financial Aid Application completion workshop
- completed a financial aid application



# PaCE Curriculum for 6th -8th Grade





# PaCE Framework for 6th - 8th Grade



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Building the Future We Want



# Ready, Willing, and Able

- Savitz-Romer and Bouffard suggest an adolescent developmental approach to college readiness and success.
- They discuss five core developmental stages that are crucial for students:
  - Envisioning
  - Believing
  - Aiming
  - Organizing
  - Connecting



# Aspiration



Here the goal is to develop self-awareness and form an identity consistent with postsecondary success.

## Envisioning:

Students in the **Envisioning** stage are developing self-awareness and self-reflection skills while exploring their environment and navigating the identity conflicts that accompany answering the question "Who am I?". Students in the envisioning stage are beginning to form a college going identity with an inner dialogue that includes statements such as "people like me go to college".

## Believing:

Students in the **Believing** stage have achieved a level of self-awareness that allows them to begin using their experiences to create a positive self-concept. Realizing and building upon personal assets and using them to further develop self-efficacy is essential during this stage.



# Planning



We want students to learn the skills necessary to develop and successfully execute a plan for the desired postsecondary outcome.

## Aiming:

Students in the **Aiming** stage have progressed from questioning their college-going identity and their ability to succeed in the post-secondary space, to focusing on setting goals and beginning to recognize the value of effort. Activities and exercises requiring students to acknowledge their own intrinsic motivations to their achieve goals help students progress through this stage.

## Organizing:

Students in the **Organizing** stage have developed a strong enough sense of self and awareness of their future goals to progress to fine-tuning the self-regulation skills they will need to continue achieving. Focusing on identifying potential barriers and creating healthy habits to assist with adapting to them as they arise are critical during this stage.



# Self-Advocacy



Ideally, students will develop the skills necessary to persist through challenges and to build a strong and supportive social network that can guide a student to and through postsecondary education and into a successful career.








## Connecting:

Students in the **Connecting** stage have overcome identity related obstacles to seeing themselves as a future college students and have developed habits to be successful once they have entered that setting. They are now looking to marshal the support of their peers and families. In order to ensure students feel connected to those around them, provide opportunities for open dialogue and accessible communication.



# PaCE Curriculum Structure

Our goal is to provide engaging lessons and activities to help students understand and connect to what post secondary planning looks like for them. All the lessons have an anchor lesson followed by supplemental lessons. Each set of lessons is customizable by the order in which you choose to teach them. Facilitators must start with the anchor lesson, then can choose which supplemental lessons work best for time allowance and content. If the lessons need to be completed in a specific order, it will be indicated in the facilitator instructions.

	<b>Must Complete</b> Then choose, one or more of the following:
	<b>WRITING</b>   This content area includes reflective writing, personal narrative, and comparative analysis.
	<b>MAKING</b>   This content area is focused on tactile learning, including, art, craft, design and building. It can be incorporated into Maker Spaces.
	<b>READING</b>   This content area includes fiction and non-fiction reading, reflection, reaction, and comparative analysis.
	<b>DISCUSSION</b>   This content area is focused on speaking and listening skills, primarily in interactive group settings, including project-based learning.
	<b>MEDIA</b>   This content area incorporates film, music, video, and online research.
	<b>PRACTICAL</b>   This content area includes lessons correlated to math, science, social sciences, business and other areas for real world application.



## ANCHOR LESSON Strength in Our Stories



A student should be exposed to:

- Planning
  - Language that emphasizes individual skills, strengths, and assets

- RWA Category: Aiming



## STRENGTH IN OUR STORIES

### Story & Asset Card Match

### GROWTH MINDSET

Young person acts on the belief that skills and abilities can be "grown" or developed, as reflected in the statement, "The mind is a muscle." In contrast, a person who has a fixed mindset acts on the belief that skills and abilities are fixed and unchangeable.

When I'm playing basketball, nothing else matters. I'm not angry. I'm not tired. I'm just happy and whatever feelings I had before are gone. I think I feel perfectly content there because you get to learn new things and you can get better as an individual and you could think you can't do something but with more practice you can. So it makes me feel like I can do anything that I put my mind to.



# 7th Grade

- Explore Habits
- Create or Change a Habit

## WHAT'S YOUR MARSHMALLOW?

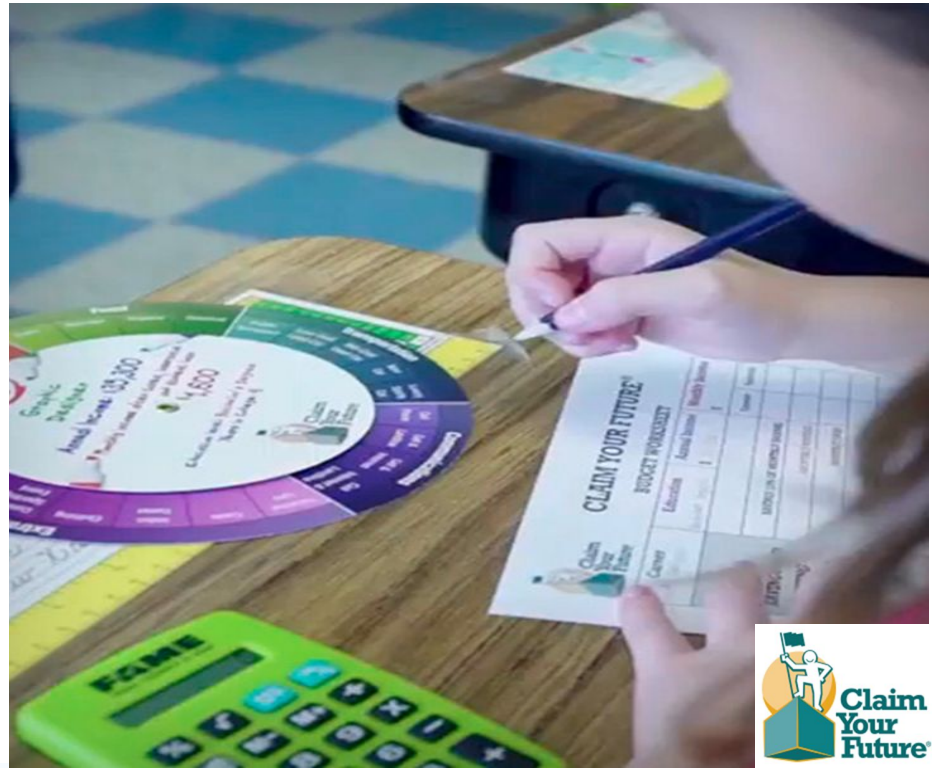
- Students watch the TED Talk “Don’t Eat the Marshmallow”
- They list and name their own temptations that often lead to procrastination, distraction, and keeping them from completing tasks
- The activity is intended to address issues with self regulation and introduce the concept and benefits of delaying gratification.





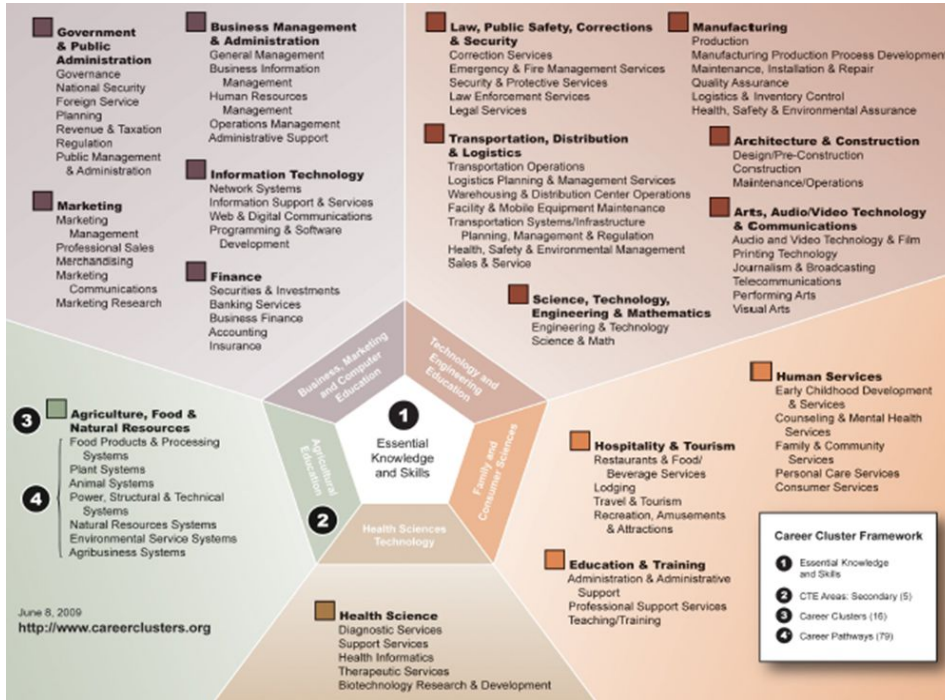
# 8th Grade

- Explore Career Interests
- Compare Possible Financial Futures



# 8th Grade

- Understand the Concept of Career Clusters
- Complete a Career Cluster Survey



## CAREER ASSESSMENT

Discover what you are interested in by taking this simple assessment.  
Your personality, interests, abilities, talents, skills and values all make up who you are.  
This can be a big help in determining what type of career path you'd like to pursue.

### STEP 1

#### DOER

- Fix mechanical things
- Take a woodworking class
- Take an auto mechanics class
- Work outdoors
- Operate motorized machines or equipment
- Build things
- Work alone
- Tend/train animals
- Plant a garden
- Read a blueprint
- Play a sport

Total

#### CREATOR

- Sketch, draw or paint by hand or computer
- Play in a band or orchestra
- Create photographs
- Act in a play
- Design fashions or interiors
- Read fiction or poetry
- Attend concerts, theater, or art exhibits
- Work on crafts
- Work according to your own rules
- Use your imagination to do something original
- Write stories and poetry

Total

#### THINKER

- Perform scientific projects
- Study the stars
- Solve a problem
- Investigate something
- Read scientific books or magazines
- Use logic and analytics
- Use a microscope
- Do complicated calculations
- Understand physics laws and theories
- Learn about a new subject area
- Do lab experiments
- Create software, websites, or videogames

Total

### STEP 2

#### DOER CAREER PATHS

Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources  
Information Technology  
Architecture and Construction  
Energy  
Manufacturing  
Transportation, Distribution and Logistics

#### CREATOR CAREER PATHS

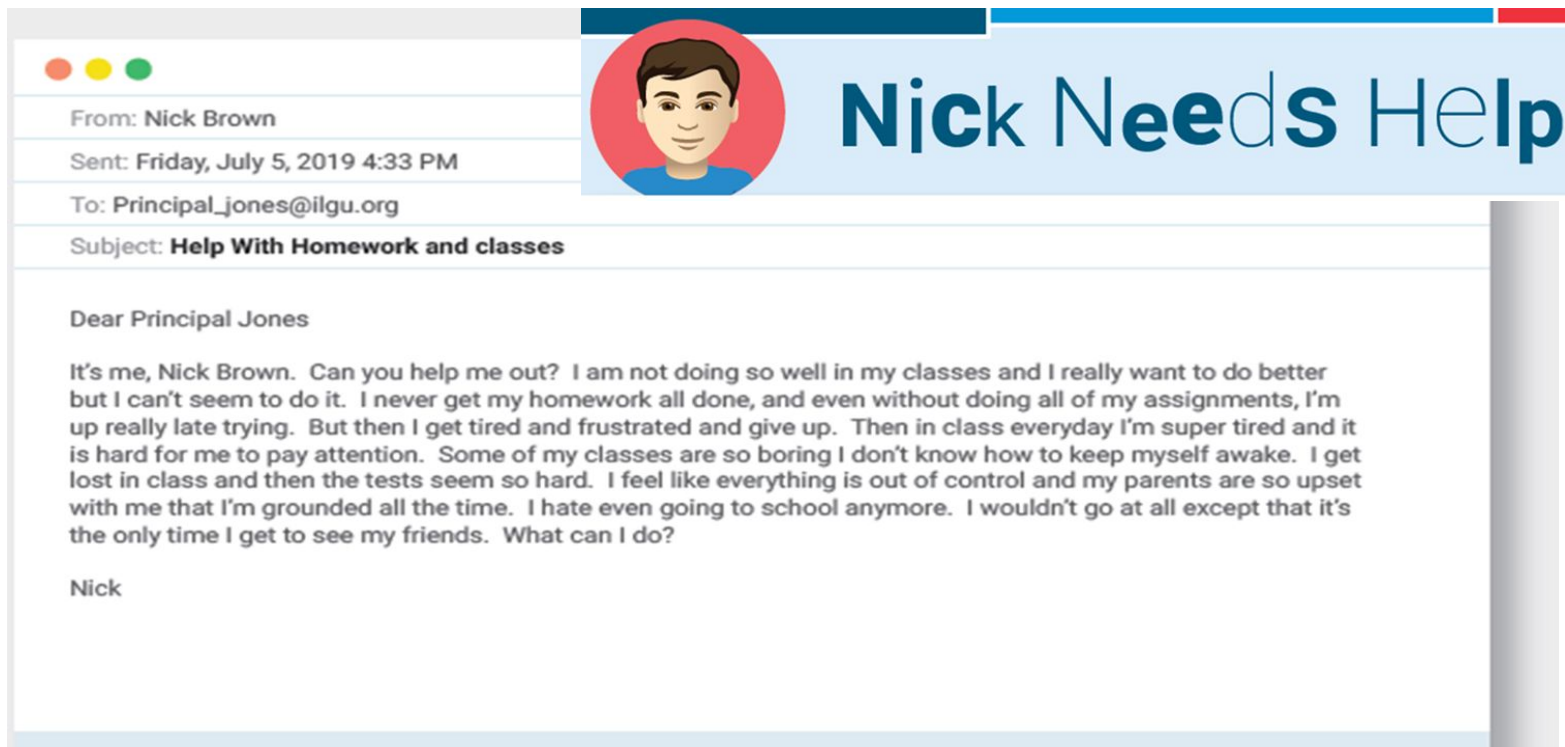
Arts, A/V Technology and Communications  
Human Services  
Marketing, Sales and Service  
Education and Training  
Architecture and Construction  
Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

#### THINKER CAREER PATHS

Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources  
Business, Management and Administration  
Finance  
Health Science  
Information Technology  
Energy

# 8th Grade

- Demonstrate a Growth Mindset
- Map a Support Network



# PaCE Implementation Practices

# Implementation Planning in PaCE

Identify areas of strengths and needs

Identify current and potential partnerships

Identify priorities within each domain of PaCE

Identify success metrics

Create an implementation timeline

Share and communicate plan for goal(s)

Re-evaluate each year

# Three Step Implementation

- PaCE Implementation is three step process
  1. Taking an Inventory – Identify areas of strength and need
  2. Prioritize Gaps – Brainstorm potential activities to improve or expand
  3. Action Plan – Puts your plans in motion
- *Best practice:* Use ISAC's implementation worksheets

# Say It With Me, Document!

- Your PaCE Framework helps you document the benchmarks you want your students to meet
- One way you can support your learning community is by documenting the lessons you learn along the way:
  - Things that DID or DID NOT work
  - Areas for improvement
  - Best practices
- Documentation allows you to evaluate and reassess the work you accomplished from year to year
- How can we share these results with others?

# Meeting Students Needs

- Be mindful of the programs in your school and what this means for the needs of your students
- How are you ensuring that all students are making relevant connections to their futures from what they're being exposed to?
  - A student in AP course vs a student in academic probation
  - A student in drama club vs a student in sports
  - A student who is in culinary vs a student who is in nursing classes



# Let's Set the Stage

- When examining your tracking efforts, consider the following data you already collect or would be useful to collect:
  - Are you tracking CCRI and CCPE data?
  - Do seniors take an exit survey? Parents?
  - What data do you get from your college and career readiness platform? (e.g., Naviance, Xello, SchoolLinks, etc.)
  - Financial Aid Application Completion Initiative?
  - Do you know how many first-generation students you have?
  - Do you track family demographics and household sizes?
  - Do you know how many students attend community college? Enter a trade? Attend a 4-year university right away?

# At first glance, what does your data tell you?

- Data can expose where gaps in equity exist
- Combine two different categories of data to draw new conclusions
  - **Students who complete a financial aid application** and **household size**: are there more two-parent households completing a financial aid application than one-parent households?
  - **Students who complete a resume writing workshop** and **demographic information**: are there more middle-income students available to come after school for a workshop?
  - **Students who file a financial aid application** and **preferred parent language**: are there more English-speaking families filing a financial aid application than Spanish-speaking families?

# Who has access to the data?

- Involve everyone on your implementation team
  - If only one person has access to the data, the team cannot think creatively about current or future programming
  - Be willing and proactive about sharing data with key players who need the information
- Use your community—talk to students, staff, administration, and partnerships
  - Each of these groups has a unique perspective on what programming is offered and being tracked
  - They might even already have data to share!

# Resources

# Collaboration in Education

## Middle school to high school

- Collaboration will ensure the work is spread out, especially with exposing students to the career benchmarks

## High school to high school (if applicable)

- Collaboration will help with resources, activities and possibly opening access for families to have double the opportunities to complete an activity

## Middle school, High School, and Community college

- Collaboration will ensure that the community college can be a partner in providing resources, all three entities can align the students experience as a cohort model

## High School to local Universities and Trade Schools (If Nearby and accessible)

- It can be beneficial to have a close relationship with the local admissions, career, and financial aid offices to see what they can help with- especially if a good portion of your students go there

## ROE and corresponding district office

- Collaboration will ensure that all college and career readiness efforts align as well as the resources available to meet these efforts

# Building Effective Partnerships

When building an effective partnership, think about the following:

1. How does the partnership benefit both sides?
2. Think outside the box on who to collaborate with- who is missing?
3. Understand that everyone brings different skills to the table
4. Make space for changing dynamics (Workforce developments over time)
5. Know that everyone has different ideas of success
6. Communicate expectations up front. Consider creating:
  - Guides on job-shadowing, Internships, team-based challenges, guest speakers, etc.,
  - Evaluation of student's participation
  - Surveys for students on how the experiences went

# Identifying Collaborators

- Implementation efforts benefit from having partners that support students before, during, and after high school
- Connection during each time makes transitions easier for students, for example:
  1. Career exploration activity for middle school students can guide them to choose an elective class in a career area of interest in high school
  2. Understanding financial aid options helps a high school student make an informed decision about where to enroll
  3. Career fair hosted by school district or ROE with employers from the community and surrounding area helps students be exposed to different opportunities in their area

# Who Are Your Local Business Partners?

- Where can you find them?
  - Chamber of Commerce meetings
  - Connecting with your local worknet
  - Partners at other schools/colleges
  - Personal connections when appropriate (e.g., English Teachers dad is an electrician at a longstanding local company)
- How can they be utilized?
  - Assisting with a mock interview process
  - Guest speakers
  - Hosting a group of students for a job shadowing day
  - Providing Internships
  - Reviewing resumes with students



# Don't Forget about Local Unions!

- Union representatives are in a unique position to connect students with career options that align with their interests and aptitudes
- Local Unions provide a range of supports for students
  - Hands-on opportunities
  - Apprenticeship opportunities
  - Job shadowing
  - Participation in career fairs

# Partnership with Community College

- Community colleges offer a wide range of resources, supports, and pathways for students
- How do you partner with your community college now? (e.g., dual credit, transitional Math and/or English)
- What options are available to continue and expand the partnership? (e.g., college application workshop, college and career fair, financial aid workshop, job and/or student shadowing)
- Continuous collaboration benefits you and the community college by tailoring supports and efforts to meet the needs of the student population

# ISAC Supports all Domains of PaCE



- We provide many supports for families, schools, and regions in the literacy domain – this is not the only domain we provide support with!
- Every year we host the College Changes Everything (CCE) Campaign and Conference, which supports both the career and postsecondary domains
- We provide monthly professional development webinars on topics, such as:
  - Postsecondary Options
  - Supporting Students Through Summer and Verification Melt
  - Federal Loan Repayment Options
  - Working with Special Student Populations, and more!

# ISAC is Your Community Partner

- We have developed several initiatives to support partners across the state
  - First Generation Scholars Network
  - ISACorps
  - Illinois College Access Network (IllinoisCAN)
- We partner with local, state, and national organizations to share resources and to help communities learn and build new partnerships
  - Illinois Association of College Admission Counseling (IACAC)
  - Illinois School Counselor Association (ISCA)
  - Illinois Education and Career Success Network
  - National College Attainment Network (NCAN)

# You Are A Valuable Resource!

- No matter where you are in the process, chances are there is someone who can learn from you such as:
  - Deciding which framework to adopt
  - How to plan for implementation
  - Action planning specific benchmarks
  - Gathering data
  - Re-evaluating