Future Ready:

Building Postsecondary and Career Awareness in Middle School

Presenters

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- Rachel Graham, Director of Programs, Lefkofsky Family Foundation
- Ana Moya, Manager, Professional Learning Communities, Illinois Student Assistance Commission

Background of PaCE

July 2016: The PWR Act is signed into law and partners the four education agencies to develop and establish a system to ensure high school students are college and career ready

July 2017: Deadline for education agencies to adopt and recommend a framework that outlines the Illinois PaCE Framework

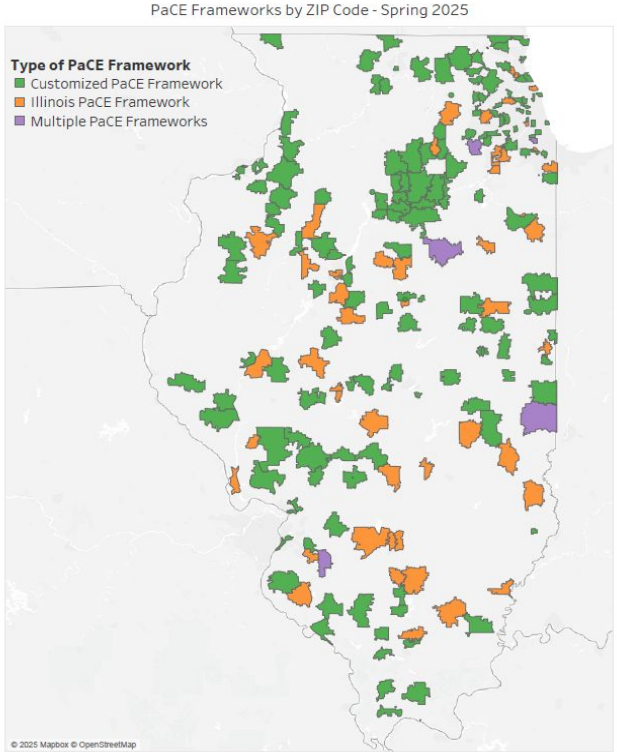
May 2022: Public Act 102-0917 signed into law and builds upon the PWR Act with a focus on PaCE and College and Career Pathway Endorsements

July 2023: The four state education agencies adopted and publicized an updated Illinois PaCE Framework

July 2024: Chicago Public Schools (CPS) **July 2025:** All other public schools implements and posts their PaCE Framework in a prominent area of website

PaCE Frameworks Across the State

- ISAC has identified 276 schools and districts who are implementing PaCE
  - 180 customized (58 w/ISAC)
  - 60 adopted Illinois PaCE
- We have created a repository of frameworks, available at www.isac.org/pace



Purpose of a Framework

- Serves as a tool to guide college and career readiness efforts
- A framework provides:
  - Sustainability – enables college and career readiness efforts to be replicated from year to year
  - Accountability – allows all staff to understand the expectations for college and career readiness at each grade level
  - Flexibility – can be adjusted to meet the needs of the student population and scaled-up as needed

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

ISAC Illinois Student Assistance Commission · Illinois State Board of Education · ICCB Illinois Community College Board · IBHE Illinois Board of Higher Education

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Illinois PaCE Framework - MS

IllinoisPaCE

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

ISAC Illinois Student Assistance Commission

Illinois State Board of Education

ICCB Illinois Community College Board

IBHE Illinois Board of Higher Education

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Components of the Middle School Framework

ISBE, ICCB, IBHE, ISAC
7/1/2023

GEARUP ILLINOIS

By the end of 8th grade

By the end of 7th grade

By the end of 6th grade

- A student should be exposed to:
  - Understand concepts
- A student should be supported to:
  - Action items or experiences

Aspiration

GOAL: Develop self-awareness and form an identity consistent with postsecondary success

Benchmarks:

- Students should be exposed to:
  - Information about and examples of a wide range of careers (6th grade)
- Students should be supported to:
  - Explore their interests (6th grade)
  - Engage in guided self-reflection (7th grade)
  - Articulate aspirations (7th grade)
  - Envision a positive future (7th grade)
  - Explore barriers to aspiration (8th grade)
  - Articulate personal strengths(8th grade)
  - Identify sources of motivation (8th grade)

Planning

GOAL: Learn the skills necessary to develop and successfully execute a plan for the desired postsecondary outcome

Benchmarks:

- Students should be exposed to:
  - Language that emphasizes individual skills, strengths, and assets (6th grade)
  - The concept of career clusters of interest (8th grade)
  - Relationship between community service/extracurricular activities and postsecondary career goals (8th grade)
- Students should be supported to:
  - Practice their strengths (6th grade)
  - Explore their habits (7th grade)
  - Create or change a habit (7th grade)
  - Record their progress (7th grade)
  - Explore career interests (7th & 8th grade)
  - Develop an educational plan for at least one career interest (8th grade)
  - Compare possible financial futures (8th grade)
  - Complete a career cluster survey (8th grade)
  - Attend a career exploration day (8th grade)

Self-Advocacy

GOAL: Focus on building a strong and supportive social network that can guide them to and through postsecondary education and into a successful career

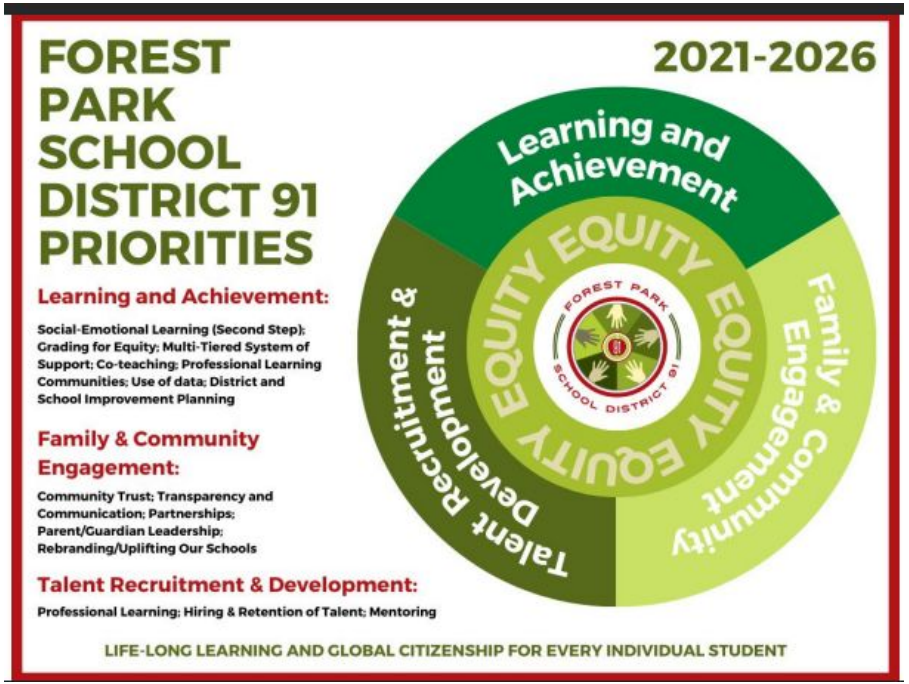
Benchmarks:

- A student should be exposed to:
  - Practices that develop a growth mindset (6th grade)
  - A financial literacy unit in a course or workshop (8th grade)
- A student should be supported to:
  - Develop their confidence in their abilities (6th grade)
  - Explore their strengths (7th grade)
  - Effectively ask for help (7th grade)
  - Understand growth mindset (7th grade)
  - Demonstrate a growth mindset (8th grade)
  - Explore learning styles (8th grade)
  - Map a support network (8th grade)
  - Complete a unit on education planning (8th grade)

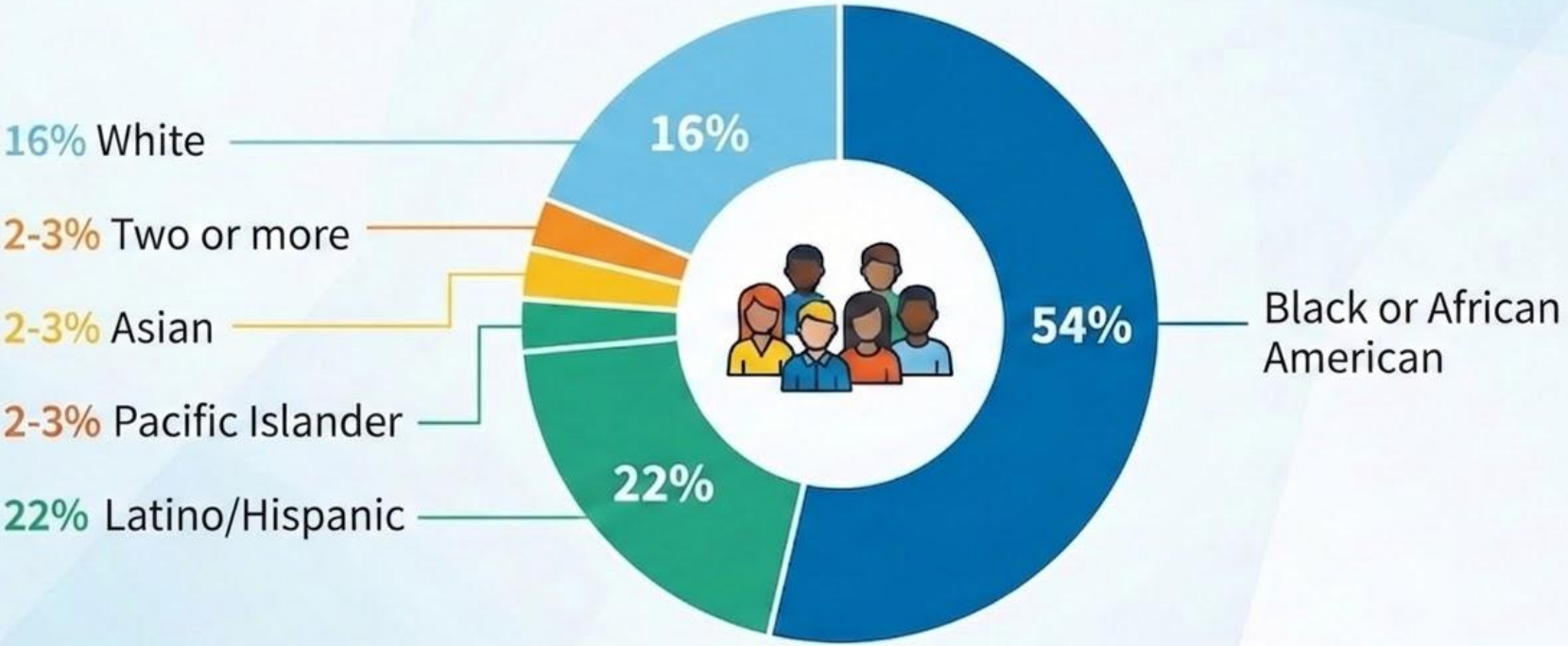
Forest Park School District 91

Forest Park SD91:

- K-8 district
- 2 primary elementary (292 students)
- 1 intermediate elementary (203 students)
- 1 middle school (188 students)



Forest Park Middle School



Resource to Support BOTH SEL and PaCE Framework

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Relevant, Meaningful & Engaging

Grade 6 - Unit 3/Lesson 1: Organizing My Life

CASEL Competencies

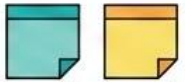
- Self Awareness. Integrating personal and social identities; Linking feelings, values, and thoughts
- Self-Management. Using planning and organizational skills
- Social Awareness. Showing concern for the feelings of others

Illinois PaCE

- Language that emphasizes individual skills, strengths, and assets
- Develop their confidence in their abilities

Relevant, Meaningful & Engaging

Grade 6 - Unit 3/Lesson 1: Organizing My Life

- Discuss the difference between “wants” and “needs”
- Sort everything they would like to do in the next week into 
  a. Need to do… and Want to do…
- Categorize the list
  a. Cognitive - building knowledge or skill
  b. Physical - wellbeing
  physical wellbeing
  c. Spiritual - supporting goals and vision
  d. Emotional - things that bring joy
- Supporting our community
  a. Others with their needs
  b. What support they need for themself

Structured Time

Advisory Details

Grades 6-8: “advisory”
8:05 - 8:27 AM

4 days/week - dedicated to Success Bound

Completion Rates

82% Completion Rate
(combined average)

8th grade - 70%

7th grade - 78%

6th grade - 89%

Implementation Supports and Designs

Local Implementation Team

- Train the Trainer
- BOY, MOY, EOY
  - Pulse Check
  - Implementation survey
  - Local lesson tracker
- Optional Office Hours

School/Teacher Supports

- Initial overview for teachers
  - Unit overview at the start of each quarter
  - Weekly planning template (in the beginning)
  - Regular communication with SB site director

Successes

- Teachers felt supported throughout the implementation
- Students were engaged in the activities (meaningful)
- Teachers connected SB outcomes to other content
- Career interest & exploration

Challenges

- Structured time (advisory too short)
- Accommodations for students with diverse learning needs (wordy lessons)
- Integration with Google Classroom

Implementation Models

One of the biggest questions is when does this fit? Who leads this work?

Who leads this work?

Champion

Time in the week:

stronger together

ILLINOIS EDUCATION AND CAREER SUCCESS NETWORK

Sample Activity: Class Trip Checklist

Oh my goodness! We had an anonymous and very generous donor give us some money to go on a class trip! But we need to plan out the trip ourselves. What steps do we need to take to make sure we have a good time?

1. What is our goal?
2. Let's create a travel checklist with action steps we can take to have a good time.
3. Write your action step on the sticky note provided to you.
4. Post your sticky note on our Class Trip Checklist.

Connect to PaCE Framework

Let's hear from you?

1. How does this activity and the rest of the lesson align to the pace framework?
2. What are some other ways you have or could frame up a goal setting lesson?

Q&A

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Upcoming Events

March 25: Illinois Work-Based Learning Innovation Network (I-WIN) Webinar – Expanding Health Sciences Pathways: Regional Models for High-Quality Work-Based Learning (Virtual)

April 21: PaCE Curriculum Training - in-person

April 27: Success Network Webinar – Fostering Unity for Rural Education (Virtual)

ILLINOIS EDUCATION AND CAREER
SUCCESS NETWORK

Thank You

Advance ILLINOIS
EVERY STUDENT WORLD READY

EdSystems
EDUCATION SYSTEMS CENTER at NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

ISAC
Illinois Student Assistance Commission