



EAST AURORA
SCHOOL DISTRICT 131

Postsecondary and Career Expectations (PaCE) Framework

Dr. Ami Engel

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Background Information

The PaCE Framework has been adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education, Illinois Board of Higher Education, Illinois Community College Board, and the Illinois Student Assistance Commission for benchmarking key points in the college and career planning process for students.

Districts are required to develop frameworks for grades middle and high school organized around three key areas:

- Career Exploration and Development
- Postsecondary Education Exploration, Preparation, and Selection
- Financial Aid and Literacy

These frameworks must be posted on our website by July 1, 2025



Middle School Framework



Postsecondary and Career Expectations

At the three middle schools and one magnet academy, the counseling staff have created a curriculum that aligns with the the Illinois Postsecondary and Career Expectations (PaCE) Framework. The lessons and activities are geared to provide student development in the areas of academic, social-emotional development, and college and career planning.



East Aurora School District #131

By the end of 6th grade	By the end of 7th grade	By the end of 8th grade
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore a wide range of careers with the Find Your Path SchoolLinks activities. Use Inspirational Quotes PACE lesson to practice developing a growth mindset. Practice and know how to use a variety of tools to be organized with the SchoolLinks Organizational Activity. Develop language on self efficacy via the social emotional assessment in SchoolLinks. Know and understand their best learning styles by taking the SchoolLinks Learning Style Inventory. Learn personal strengths via the "Self-Discovery" SchoolLinks activity. Students will learn school policies for bullying prevention and reporting bullying behaviors. Learn pro-social skills via the Mutual Ground presentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Envision a positive future via the "Would You Rather" SchoolLinks activity. Develop future planning skills with the Jack Kent Cooke Scholarship. Articulate self-awareness through the "Identify Pie Chart." Develop positive habits via the Time Management/Prioritizing lesson. Explore personality traits related to postsecondary options via the "Student Focus" SchoolLinks activity. Develop empathy through the "True Colors" planning activity. Learn to ask for help by knowing the Bully Complaint Process and how to activate its resources. Develop a growth mindset via the "Top Skills" SchoolLinks activity. Students will learn school policies for bullying prevention and reporting bullying behaviors. Learn pro-social skills via the Mutual Ground presentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop future planning skills with mock college application. Identify personal strengths through the "Claim Your Future" activity. Develop future aspiration desires by learning about WCC and NIU Upward Bound Presentation. Learn educational planning via the "What is a HS transcript / Calculating GPA. Develop an education plan via course selection process for high school classes. Attend a Career Exploration Day event. Create positive economic habits in the "Hit the Road" financial activity. Students will learn school policies for bullying prevention and reporting bullying behaviors. Develop a growth mindset via the PSAT Score Review. Learn confidence in their abilities in the Mutual Ground presentations. Learn pro-social skills via the Mutual Ground presentation.
Aspiration	Planning	Self-Advocacy

High School Framework

East Aurora School District 131 PaCE | Postsecondary and Career Expectations

Each student should have an individualized learning plan to help make decisions about career and postsecondary (PS) education or training, to plan a course of study, and to make postsecondary decisions.



By the end of 9th grade	By the end of 10th grade	By the end of 11th grade	By the end of 12th grade
<p>A student should be supported to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> revisit career cluster interest survey and take a career interest survey in SchooLinks complete an orientation to career clusters select a career pathway (CP) within a career cluster of interest attend College & Career Fairs meet with a counselor to discuss coursework and PS/career plans using the ISBE College and Career Readiness Indicators begin determining eligibility for advanced placement (AP) courses outline a plan for community service and extracurricular activities related to PS plans begin determining eligibility for AP courses identify 2-3 adults to support the student through the PS and career selection process understand transcript and how to calculate GPA attend Post-Secondary field trip <p>A student should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how to contact their Student Support Team East Aurora High School graduation requirements one or two career clusters for further exploration and development how CP courses and experiences articulate to degree programs at PS options the relationship between HS coursework, attendance, and grades to PS plans importance of community service and extracurricular activities to PS and career plans understand the benefit of the Early College Program general cost ranges of various PS options the functionality of the College & Career Center (CCC) 	<p>A student should be supported to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> explore career cluster oriented workshop in the College & Career Center (CCC) complete an introductory course to a particular career cluster or cluster grouping select a career pathway (CP) within a career cluster of interest attend College & Career Fairs identify and participate in an opportunity related to the CP (employment and/or extracurricular) identify 2-3 adults to support the student through the PS and career selection process review coursework, and PS/career plans in relation to the ISBE College and Career Readiness Indicators (every year) complete or enroll in at least one Early College credit opportunity based on 4 year plan attend a PS financial literacy workshop attend Post-Secondary field trip <p>A student should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> East Aurora High School graduation requirements educational requirements, cost, expected entry level, and midpoint salary for occupations in selected CP how CP courses and experiences articulate to degree programs at PS options different types of PS credentials and institutions general timing of PS entrance exams and applications benefit of Early College Program credit opportunities to PS access and completion the functionality of the College & Career Center (CCC) how to explore postsecondary opportunities on SchooLinks 	<p>A student should be supported to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> revisit the career survey in SchooLinks participate in a mock job interview create a resume and personal statement identify and participate in an opportunity related to the CP (employment and/or extracurricular) complete or enroll in at least one Early College Program credit opportunity based on 4 year plan visit at least 3 PS institutions or opportunities take at least one college entrance exam identify 2-3 adults to support the student through the PS and career selection process attend College & Career Fairs consistently utilize the College & Career Center (CCC) for workshops, rep visits, panels, etc. complete a Junior Conference with Counselor <p>A student should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> East Aurora High School graduation requirements entrance requirements, application deadlines, testing deadlines, cost, and preparation postsecondary opportunities how to align their career interests with postsecondary planning how career pathway courses and experiences articulate to degree programs at postsecondary options 3-5 match schools, one safety, one reach school for PS program of study identify financial aid deadlines for chosen PS options eligibility requirements for PS scholarships how to navigate the college application process utilizing Common App and SchooLinks 	<p>By the end of 12th grade a student should be supported to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> complete 3 or more admissions applications to PS institutions meet with a school counselor to ensure all steps in the PS admissions process are completed on time attend a FAFSA completion workshop complete the FAFSA meet with counselor to ensure all graduation requirements have been met identify 2-3 adults to support the student through the PS and career selection process visit at least 3 PS institutions or opportunities obtain an internship opportunity related to the CP attend a financial aid award letter workshop attend College & Career Fairs complete or enroll in at least one Early College credit opportunity based on 4 year plan consistently utilize the College & Career Center (CCC) for workshops, rep visits, panels, etc. fulfill scholarship applications attend letter of recommendation and Common App workshop complete a Senior Conference with Counselor <p>A student should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> East Aurora High School graduation requirements how CP courses and experiences articulate to degree programs at PS options 3-5 match schools, one safety, one reach school for PS program of study estimated cost of each PS option affordability of PS options in relation to expected entry-level career salary and anticipated debt terms and conditions of any scholarship or loan request letter of recommendation, submit transcripts, & college applications through SchooLinks how to fulfill Common App if needed



Next Steps

Continue to provide career and college opportunities to our students in middle and high school

- College and Industry Field Trips - 2024/2025
- Summer Residential Camp Experiences - Summer 2025
- Pathways to Prosperity Career Showcase - October 2025

Continue to develop and refine our career pathways and our industry certification options for students

GUIDING PRINCIPLES



EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

Meet the diverse needs of all students by ensuring a safe and inclusive learning environment.



OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Utilize systems and resources that promote operational excellence, efficiency, and fiscal accountability.



COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP

Engage in continuous improvements through collaborative, student-focused, and data-driven leadership.



STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Ensure the academic success of all students by closing the opportunity gap.