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 8th grade

A student should be supported to:
- complete a career cluster survey
- attend a career exploration day
- complete a unit on education planning
- be exposed to a financial literacy unit in a course or workshop

A student should know:
- the concept of career clusters of interest
- relationship between community service/extracurricular activities and postsecondary (PS)/career goals

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 advanced placement (AP) courses
- outline a plan for community service and extracurricular activities related to PS plans
- attend a basic financial aid presentation with a family member

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
- explore career pathways (CP)
- 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
- explore the process of obtaining an industry-based credential related to CP if applicable
- 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:
- address any remedial needs in math/ELA
- obtain an internship opportunity related to the CP if applicable
- if applicable, receive industry-based certification(s) related to the CP
- 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

Career Exploration and Development

Financial Aid and Literacy

Post-Secondary Education Exploration, Preparation, and Selection

ISAC — Illinois Student Assistance Commission

Illinois State Board of Education

ICCB — Illinois Community College Board

IBHE — Illinois Board of Higher Education

Pending Final Approval