High School Transformation:

Background

In 2015, the Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness (PWR) Act was signed into law. The Act included multiple policy actions intended to better prepare students for postsecondary and career readiness. The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) is working with stakeholders to develop a framework to address these needs. The PaCE framework provides a helpful organizing frame for improving postsecondary and career preparation.

This framework focuses on three major areas:

1. **Academic Readiness:** At their core, these three frameworks embrace the idea that students should complete their secondary education ready for credit-bearing college coursework (i.e., requiring no English or math remediation in college), and having earned some early college credit via Advanced Placement or dual credit coursework.

2. **Post-Secondary Education Exploration:** These frameworks encourage students to plan for and connect to postsecondary education from the secondary school classroom.

3. **Career Exploration and Preparation:** Both the PWR Act and the State's ESSA plan emphasize the importance of providing students with opportunities to explore career pathways and gain meaningful work-based learning experiences.

Ultimately, the goal of this approach to college- and career-readiness is to better prepare young people for what comes after high school, both in terms of making informed choices, as well as being adequately prepared to enter their postsecondary pathway of choice more efficiently. It is important to note, however, that while these frameworks support essential elements of the CCRI and CCPE, they do not meet all the requirements to receive a CCPE on your high school diploma.

**Why is this important?**

Ultimately, the goal of this approach to college- and career-readiness is to better prepare young people for what comes after high school, both in terms of making an informed choice, as well as being adequately prepared to enter their postsecondary pathway of choice more efficiently. It is important to note, however, that while these frameworks support essential elements of the CCRI and CCPE, they do not meet all the requirements to receive a CCPE on your high school diploma.
Illinois 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 financial aid assessments with family members.

**By the end of 6th grade**
- A student should be supported to:
  - revisit career cluster interest
  - survey and take a career interest assessment with a family member

**By the end of 7th grade**
- A student should be supported to:
  - complete a career cluster survey
  - attend a career exploration day
  - complete a unit on career planning

**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 career planning

**By the end of 9th grade**
- A student should be supported to:
  - visit at least one workplace aligned with career interests
  - complete an orientation course to a particular career cluster or cluster grouping
  - select a career pathway (CP) within a career cluster of interest
  - begin determining eligibility for AP courses
  - 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)

**By the end of 10th grade**
- A student should be supported to:
  - revisit the career survey
  - participate in a mock job interview
  - create a resume and personal statement
  - identify an internship opportunity related to the CP
  - determine readiness for college-level coursework in math/ELA
  - complete or enroll in at least one early college credit opportunity
  - attend a college fair
  - visit at least 3 PS institutions
  - take at least one college entrance exam

**By the end of 11th grade**
- A student should be supported to:
  - attend a PS affordability workshop with a family member
  - A student should know:
    - educational requirements, cost, expected entry level, and midpoint salary for occupations in selected CP
    - different types of PS credentials and institutions
    - general timing of PS entrance exams and applications
    - entrance requirements, including standardized test requirements

**By the end of 12th grade**
- By 12/31 of 12th grade a student should have:
  - completed 3 or more admissions applications to PS institutions
  - met with a school counselor to ensure all steps in the PS admissions process are completed on time
  - attended a FAFSA completion workshop
  - completed the FAFSA

**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
  - complete a unit on financial literacy
  - take a financial literacy assessment with a family member
  - attend a PS options workshop
  - create a unit on career planning
  - complete a unit on education and career related to the CP

**Post-Secondary Education Exploration, Preparation, and Selection**

- Financial Aid and Literacy