



Career Exploration: Planning

SY25 GOAL AREA 2:
We Design for ALL



2024-25 District 97 Transformation Goals

We Learn, Lead and Celebrate Together

Our District Culture
ALL Employee Professional Learning

We Design for ALL

Elementary Core Instruction Foundations
Middle School Redesign

We Align Resources

Master Facilities Plan
Comprehensive Safety Plan

We Learn Everywhere

Portrait of an Oak Park 8th Grade Graduate
Early Childhood Education



Meet the Team

Dr. Luis De Leon
Dr. Eboney Lofton
Tracy Hamm
Denise Gildon
Kasey Fleming
Nick Filipowski
Joshua Rodgers
Katie Trathen*
Nichelle Stigger*
Stacey Robertson
Sergio Torres
April Capuder
Donna Middleton
Adrienne Court
Bernard Starks
DaWanda Fountain
Laura Reeves



01

**BACKGROUND: MIDDLE
SCHOOL CAREER
EXPLORATION**

02

PORTRAIT CONNECTIONS

03

NEXT STEPS

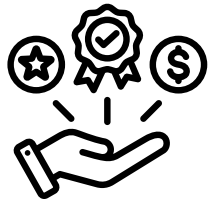
Our Why



Career Exploration at Middle Schools: The Why

Critical Development Stage – Middle school students develop critical thinking skills and shape future aspirations.

Career exploration boosts **engagement**, fosters **future planning**, and connects academics to **real-world opportunities**.



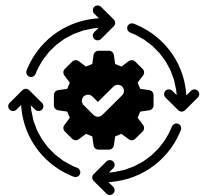
- **Benefits of Career Exploration** – Increases engagement, confidence, and academic success.



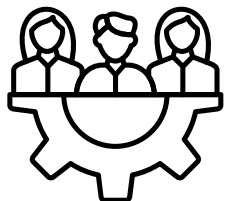
- **Positive Outcomes** – Improves graduation rates, employment prospects, and decision-making skills.



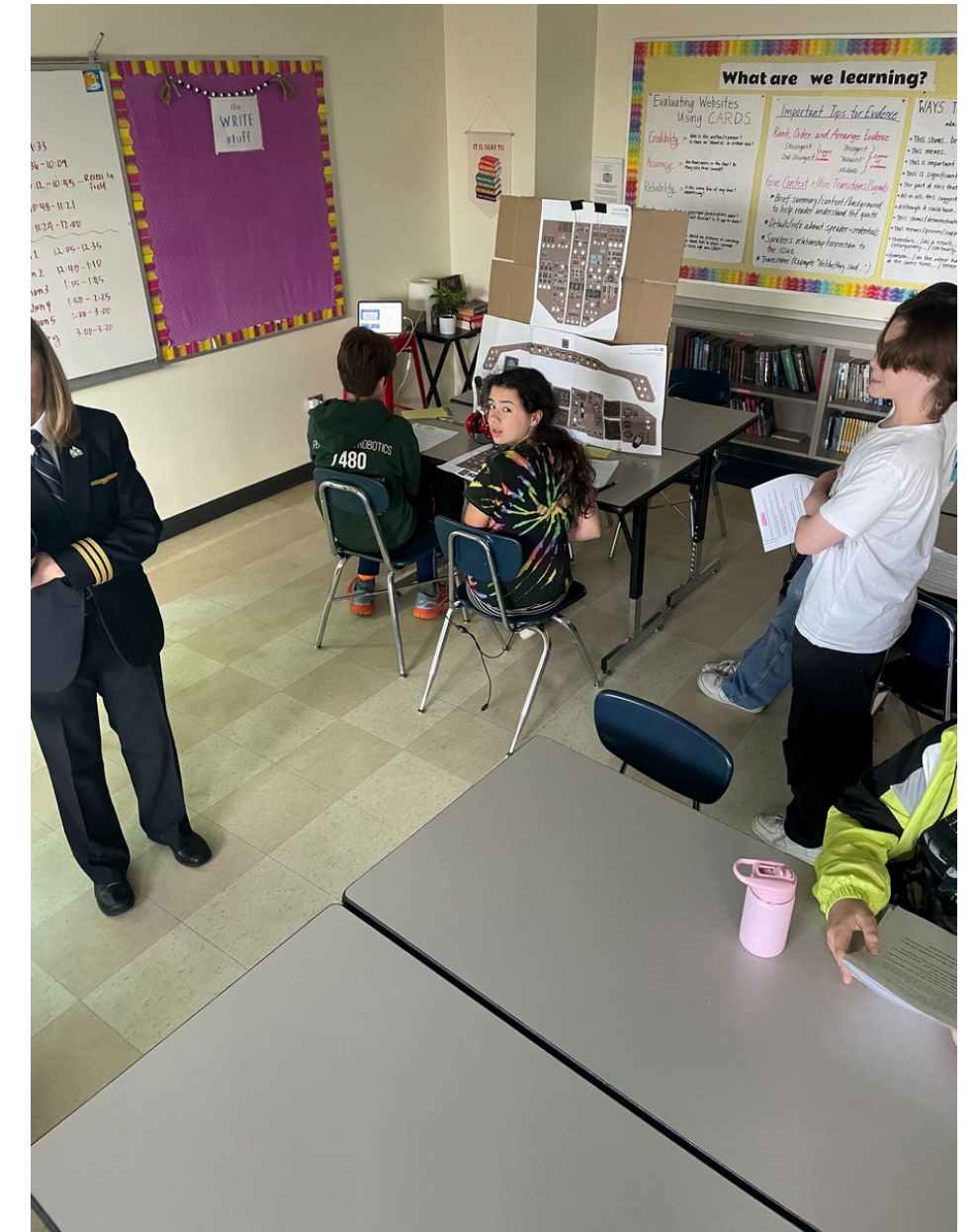
- **Student Concerns** – Many feel stressed about career choices and future planning.



- **Effective Programming** – Should be integrated throughout the school day and accessible to all students.



- **Workforce Preparation** – Helps students understand job trends and adapt to a changing labor market.

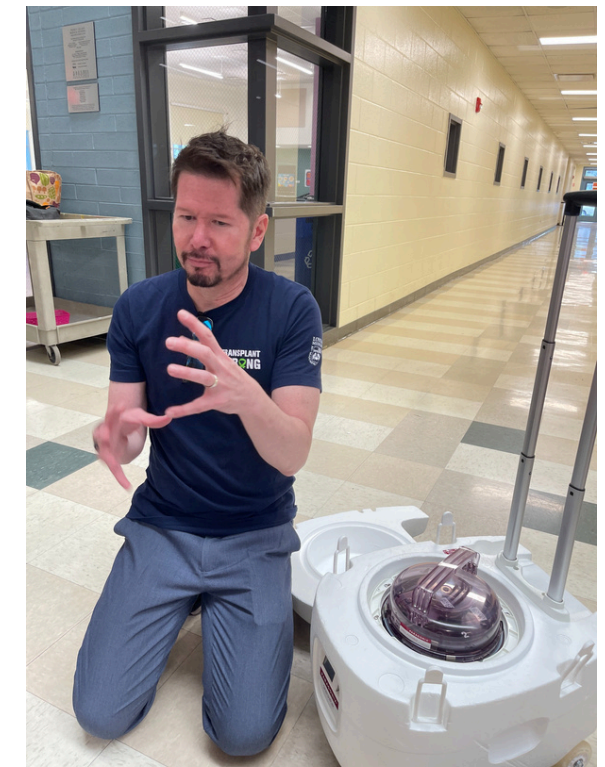
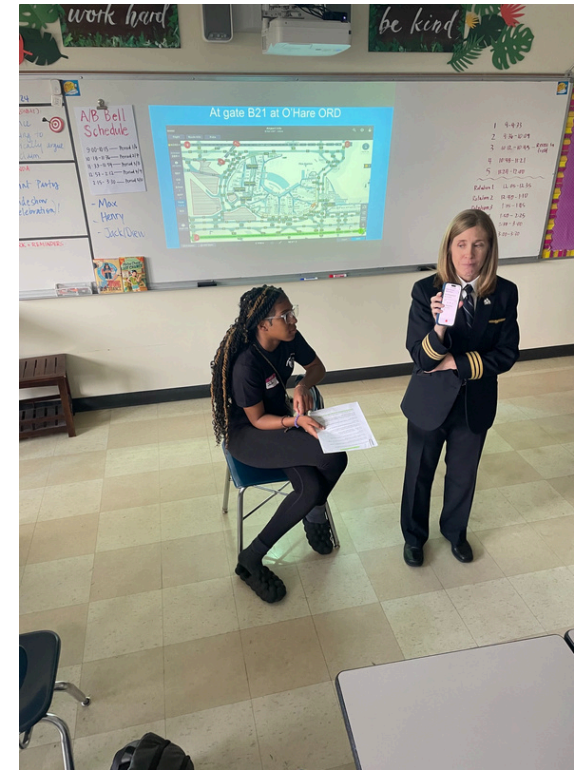




Career Exploration Expectations

The **PaCE Framework (Postsecondary Career Exploration)** 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.***

- **Requirements(July 1, 2025):**
 - Adopt and implement a PaCE Framework for grades 6-12
 - Adopt and implement career development activities in accordance with the PaCE Framework
 - Frameworks must be prominently **displayed on each district/school website.**





The PaCE Framework



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	By the end of 7th grade	By the end of 8th grade
<p>A student should be exposed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">information about and examples of a wide range of careerslanguage that emphasizes individual skills, strengths, and assetspractices that develop a growth mindset <p>A student should be supported to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">explore their interestspractice their strengthsdevelop their confidence in their abilities	<p>A student should be supported to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">engage in guided self-reflectionarticulate aspirationsenvision a positive futureexplore their habitscreate or change a habitrecord their progressexplore career interestsexplore their strengthseffectively ask for helpunderstand a growth mind set	<p>A student should be supported to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">explore barriers to aspirationsarticulate personal strengthsidentify sources of motivationexplore career interestsdevelop an educational plan for at least one career interestcompare possible financial futurescomplete a career cluster surveyattend a career exploration daydemonstrate a growth mind setexplore learning stylesmap a support networkcomplete a unit on education planning <p>A student should be exposed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">the concept of career clusters of interestrelationship between community service/extracurricular activities and postsecondary (PS)/career goalsbe exposed to a financial literacy unit in a course or workshop



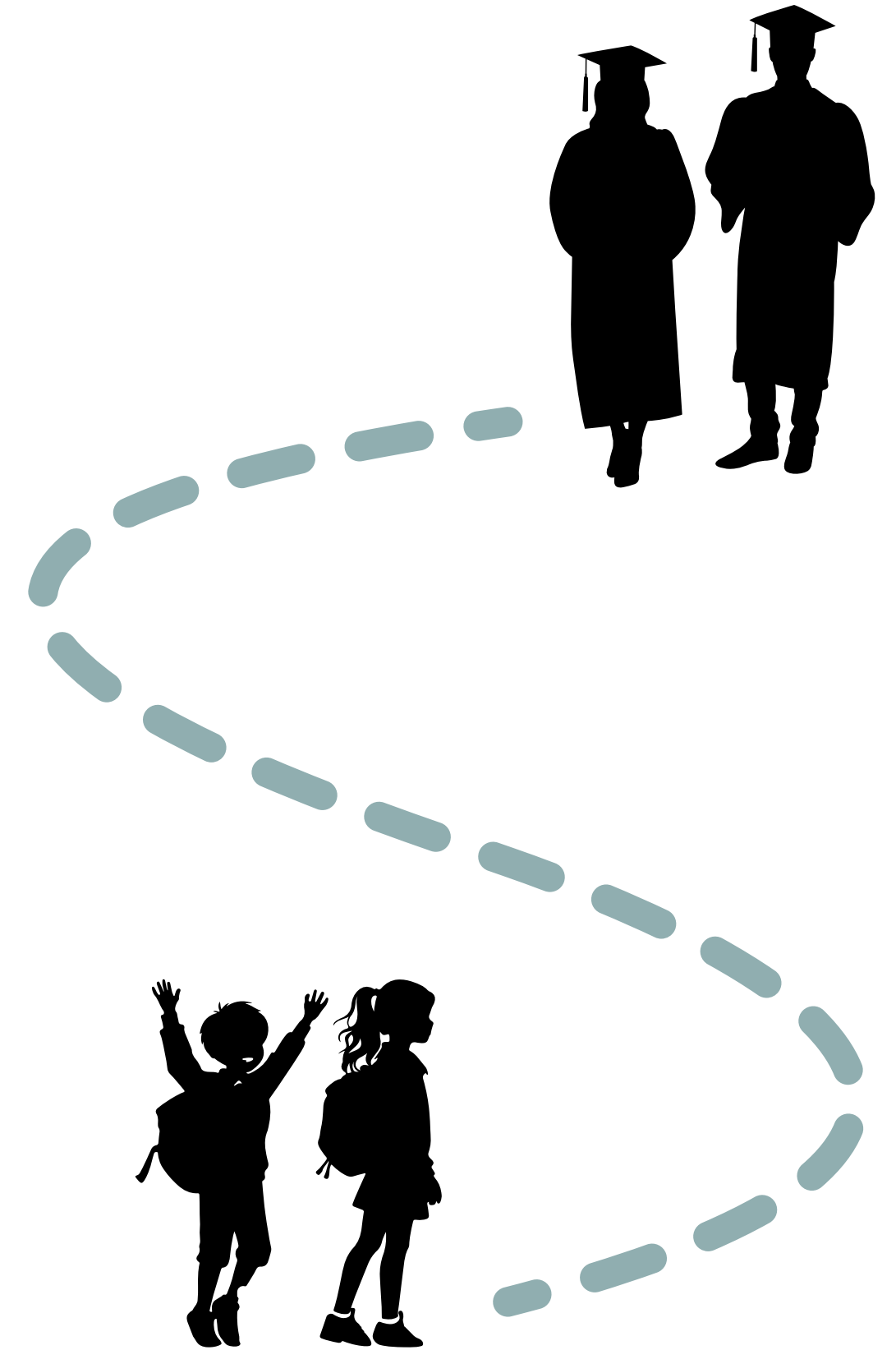
Connecting to the Portrait of an Oak Park Eighth Grade Graduate





The Portrait of an Oak Park 8th Grade Graduate is the collective vision that our community has for all District 97 graduates.

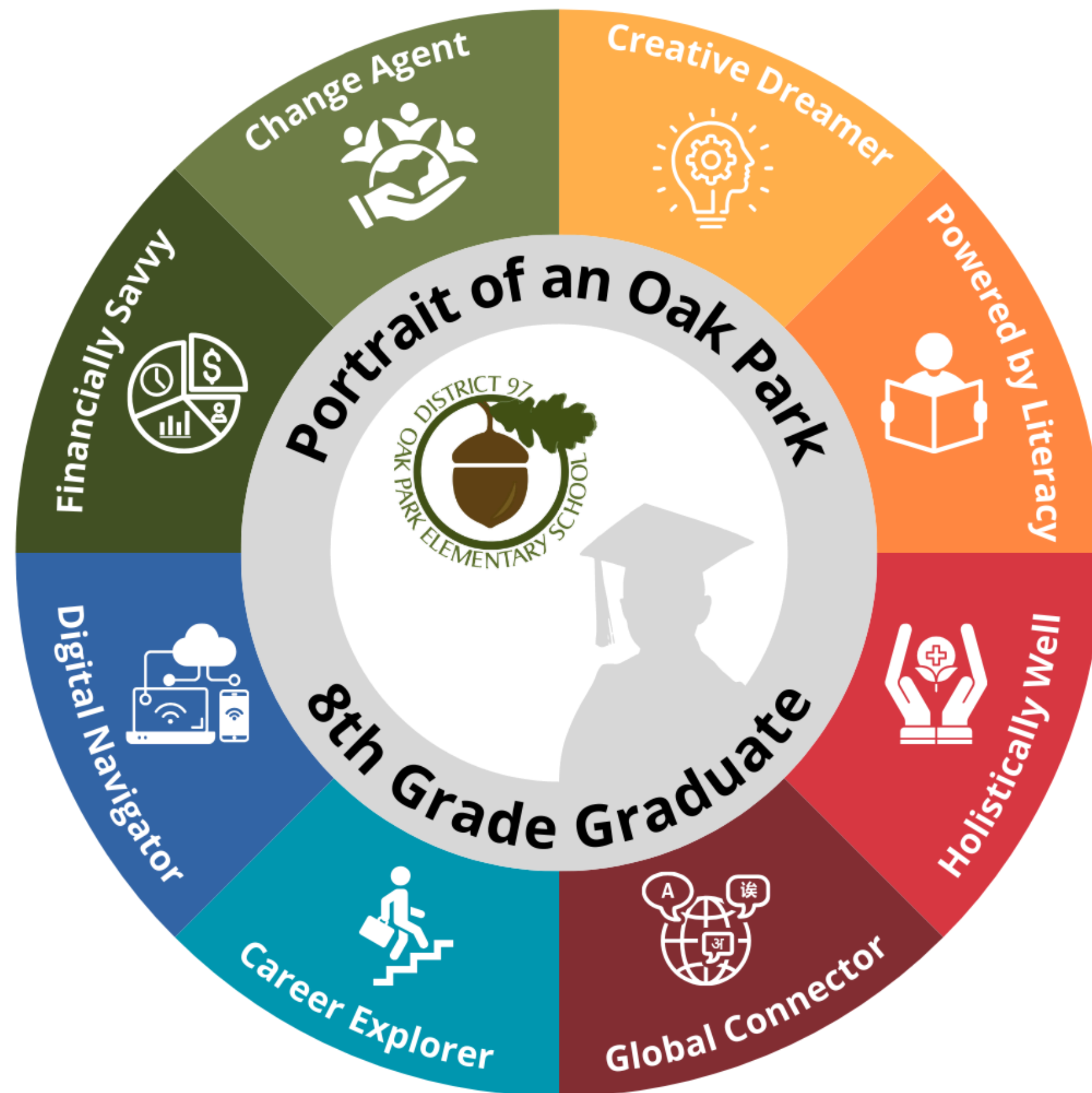
This vision will be rooted in core competencies tied to learning standards and experiences that are critical to student success in college, career and beyond.





Our Portrait

The following 8 dimensions represent the culmination of this community engagement process. Each word was carefully chosen by the Teacher Design Team to reflect both their educational expertise and the priorities and preferences of community members.





Our Portrait in Action: *Career Explorer*



Career Explorer

Graduates will explore a wide range of careers and their qualifications, including college and non-college/trade pathways. Through experiential learning and relationship development, they will practice behaviors and skills that are important for work, and connect with their own interests and passions.



Implementation Planning





Timeline

Summer 2025

- Convene design team
- Develop D97 Career Exploration Website.
- Evaluate of Career Exploration software - "School Links"

Winter 2025/ 2026 (Trimester 2)

- Inventory career exploration experiences to create consistency between schools
- Design a common career exploration unit

Fall 2025 (Trimester 1)

- Hold staff design session and create a cadence of meetings throughout the year
- Complete a career exploration audit
- Launch SchoolLinks

Spring 2026 (Trimester 3)

- Hold a common culminating event (Career Day)
- Design and expand framework for SY27





D97 Career Exploration Website



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	By the end of 7th grade	By the end of 8th grade
<p>A student should be exposed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">information about and examples of a wide range of careerslanguage that emphasizes individual skills, strengths, and assetspractices that develop a growth mindset <p>A student should be supported to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">explore their interestspractice their strengthsdevelop their confidence in their abilities	<p>A student should be supported to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">engage in guided self-reflectionarticulate aspirationsenvision a positive future <ul style="list-style-type: none">explore their habitscreate or change a habitrecord their progressexplore career interests <ul style="list-style-type: none">explore their strengthseffectively ask for helpunderstand a growth mind set	<p>A student should be supported to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">explore barriers to aspirationsarticulate personal strengthsidentify sources of motivation <ul style="list-style-type: none">explore career interestsdevelop an educational plan for at least one career interestcompare possible financial futurescomplete a career cluster surveyattend a career exploration day <ul style="list-style-type: none">demonstrate a growth mind setexplore learning stylesmap a support networkcomplete a unit on education planning <p>A student should be exposed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">the concept of career clusters of interestrelationship between community service/extracurricular activities and postsecondary (PS)/career goalsbe exposed to a financial literacy unit in a course or workshop



ISAC #F3808 07/23 (ON XX 07/23) Printed by authority of the State of Illinois

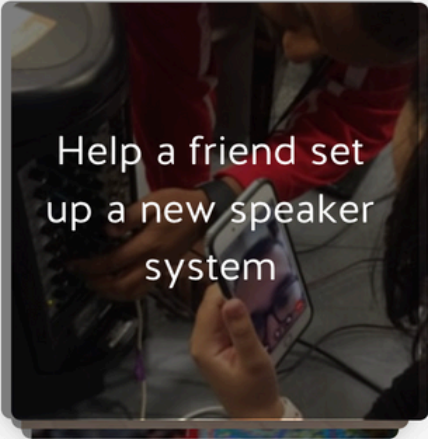


SchoolLinks

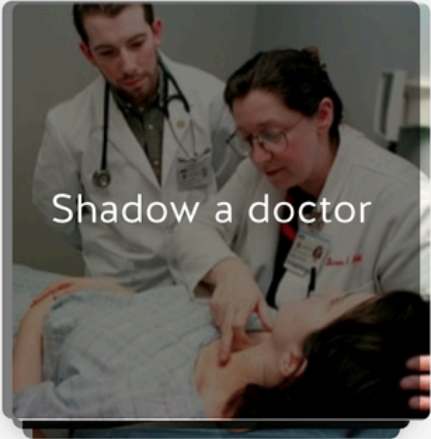


D97 Career Exploration Software Resource - School Links

Would You Rather...



OR



Based on your chosen activities, you might be interested in...



Career Center

Explore careers, ask questions, and discover opportunities in your area and across the nation.

Most Job Openings

Filter By:

☒ Bachelor's Degree Needed

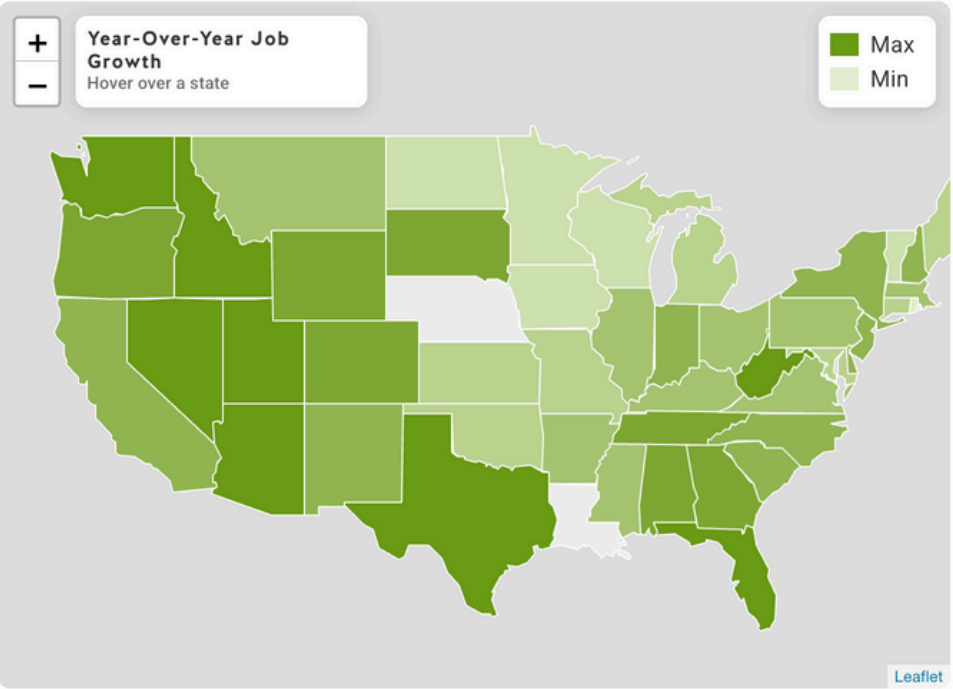
☐ Associate's Degree Needed

☐ No Degree Needed

Click on a state to view the career information related to that state.

Map View

Table View



Data provided by CareerOneStop (U.S. Department of Labor)

Most Common Careers

Most Job Openings in Illinois

[Statewide](#)

Rank		# OF JOBS
1	Software Development	22,440
2	General and Operations Managers	8,780
3	Computer Systems Analysis	6,440
4	Investment Sales and Trading	6,400
5	Financial Management	6,400
6	Registered Nursing	4,260
7	Health Service Management	4,180
8	Market Research Analysis	4,100
9	Management Consulting	3,520
10	Postsecondary Education	3,110

1 Transportation, Distribution, & Logistics

2 Manufacturing

3 Health Science

4 Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources



DISCUSSION

Thank you - Gracias!!!

Questions

