



DISCUSSION GUIDE

GRADE: 7

MONTH: JANUARY

THEME: PLANNING FOR LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

PATERSON PATHWAYS:

CLEAR, CAREFUL, AND CREATIVE PLANNING FOR LIFE BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL

USING THIS DISCUSSION GUIDE:

Paterson Pathways is a life skills and planning curriculum for students in grades 6 through 8. This Discussion Guide is part of the Paterson Pathways series. It has been designed to be taught in a single, weekly “advisory” class period.

This *Grade 7 January* packet includes:

- A weekly **Discussion Guide**,
- Ready-to-copy **student Reflection(s)**, and
- A **Resource Guide** with background information for advisors.

DISCUSSION GOALS:

Help students review their dreams for life after high school.

Help students learn more about the types of education and training available after high school.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

What will I do after high school?
How can I prepare?

WEEK 1:

REVIEW HIGH SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

Students will have many opportunities to explore and research different options over the course of middle school and during high school. This discussion is designed to help alert students – and their parents – to the full range of options they can pursue. It also introduces the courses students must take in high school to graduate and encourages them to do more than the minimum, by pointing out that going to college requires more than the minimum course load.

Discuss how students can prepare for postsecondary education. In 6th grade students discussed high school requirements in terms of years. This year they will be introduced to the concept CREDITS, explain this is also the language used in colleges. Distribute the ***HIGH SCHOOL COURSE REQUIREMENTS*** reflection. Explain that the minimum needed to graduate from high school is not enough to prepare students for most postsecondary options. It's important that they do MORE than the minimum.

**MATERIALS
NEEDED:**

HIGH SCHOOL COURSE REQUIREMENTS reflection

Student portfolios must be available to students at every session.

WEEK 2:

DISCUSS POSTSECONDARY OPTIONS

This discussion helps students continue to explore their postsecondary options by allowing them to learn about programs and majors at one or two local colleges. It will also help students make the connection between careers that sound interesting and the type of education they'll need for that career.

In addition, they'll be able to see how local colleges can help them prepare for a future career.

To prepare for this lesson, you can obtain and copy program information from a local community or technical college and/or a local four-year university. You will then be able to review that information with their students and help each student find a major or a program of study that will help him or her reach a dream career.

Introduce postsecondary options. Distribute the *POSTSECONDARY INFORMATION* Reflection and review it with your students. The most important points for them to remember from this handout are that: (a) nearly every career requires some type of education after high school; and (b) there are many different postsecondary options – something for everyone.

Discuss educational needs for different careers. Next talk about the careers students are interested in. What type of postsecondary education do different careers require? How can students find out what they need to do? You might want to help students by sharing your expertise or use an on-line resource (your lead advisor will have ideas) to help.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

POSTSECONDARY INFORMATION reflection

Student portfolios must be available at every session.

WEEK 3:

PATERSON COLLEGE GUIDE

Among our students' choices after high school is more learning, whether it is in college or technical schools. **The Paterson College Guide** written for Paterson students by Paterson students at John F. Kennedy High School, helps students explore their options. Paterson students are pictured throughout the guide. Your students may know some of them.

The Paterson College Guide can provide the basis for many discussions. Today's discussion will focus on the steps students will take throughout their four years of high school to ensure they have met all requirements needed to apply to college.

Find the article describing the actions students should take year by year.

- **Discuss the importance of taking PSAT, SAT, SAT subject tests, AP** at the appropriate grade levels to ensure colleges receive the results on time.
- **Stress deadlines** when it comes to registering for classes each year (so they get their choices), or tests (so they get their test site choice), and especially when applying for FAFSA and the colleges. Colleges are not going to accept excuses, all requirements must be met for entrance.

Remind students that this is no different than the **ANNUAL GOALS** they have written in September. In September of each year of high school they should continue to set goals for that year to stay on target.

Tell students they should take the guide home and continue to read the rest of the articles. They will obtain plenty of information from the students writing the guide specifically for Paterson students.

**MATERIALS
NEEDED:**

Student portfolios. Students will need access to their portfolios at each advisory session.

The Paterson College Guide Obtain copies from Paterson Education Fund through your Lead Advisor

WEEK 4:

DISCUSS LONG-TERM GOALS

By combining information about themselves and who they are with information from their Academic Inventories, annual goals, long-term dreams, and career explorations, your students will have the opportunity to synthesize what they've explored so far during Paterson Pathways and turn it into a blueprint for the next five or six years of their lives. Help students reflect on what they've learned so far this year. How have their goals and dreams changed during their first two years of middle school? How has Paterson Pathways changed the way they think about school, or about their future? At the beginning of the school year, your students were asked to develop a set of goals for their 7^h grade year.

Discuss students' goals for the year. Have students retrieve the Annual Goals they developed from their portfolios. Lead students in a discussion about their goals. What did they hope to achieve this year? Have they succeeded? What kind of help do they need to achieve their goals?

**MATERIALS
NEEDED:**

HIGH SCHOOL & BEYOND PLAN reflection

Student portfolios must be available to students at every session.

**STUDENT
PRODUCTS:**

Your students will be expected to create one product from this lesson:

Draft of a *HIGH SCHOOL AND BEYOND PLAN* reflection



REFLECTION

POSTSECONDARY INFORMATION

JANUARY- 7TH GRADE

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

Name _____

What do you dream about doing? No matter what you want to do, you'll probably need to stay in school after you graduate from high school. That's because nearly every job today requires "postsecondary" (after high school) education.

There are many different options for postsecondary education... it just depends on what you want to do!

APPRENTICESHIP. Do you want to earn a paycheck while you learn a job? Would you like to work one-on-one with someone who's experienced? In an apprenticeship, you learn a highly skilled job (in manufacturing or high tech, health care, public safety, cooking, or construction) by working with an expert. Apprenticeships usually last two to four years. They combine on-the-job training with classroom work. Apprentices earn a paycheck the entire time.

COMMUNITY OR TECHNICAL COLLEGE (TWO-YEAR, ASSOCIATE DEGREE).

Many students go to community or technical college to earn a career certificate or to get a two-year (Associate) degree. You can earn an Associate degree to transfer into a four-year university and continue on toward a four-year degree. Or you can go straight into the workplace after earning your Associate degree. Careers include Cosmetology, Computer-aided Drafting and Design, Diesel and Heavy Equipment Tech, Medical Office Clerk, or Culinary Arts.

FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY (FOUR-YEAR, BACHELOR'S DEGREE).

Students who need more education usually attend a four-year college or university. You can earn a Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree. You might continue on to graduate or professional school. Or you might use your degree to go right into the workplace. You can earn a Bachelor's degree in nearly any subject imaginable, from Asian Studies to Chemistry or Engineering.

MASTER'S DEGREE. A Master's degree lets you move directly into a management-level career in a specialized field. A Master's degree usually requires at least two years of study

beyond a Bachelor's degree. You can study for a Master's degree in Business (called an MBA) or in many other fields.

DOCTORATE DEGREE. A Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.), Medical Doctor (M.D.), Juris Doctor (lawyer, or J.D.) degree usually requires at least three years of school after college and sometimes many more. A Doctorate degree allows the holder to practice a highly skilled profession.

MILITARY. Some students join the military after high school. You can join the military right away, or you can join the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) while you are in college and then be commissioned as an officer after college graduation. The military offers many different career and training opportunities... meaning that you still need to decide what you want to do before you join.



REFLECTION

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

WHAT COURSES DO YOU NEED IN HIGH SCHOOL?

What courses will you need to take in high school to succeed in college or in a career? Here's what's required to graduate, as well as what school counselors suggest you take (in addition to the minimum) to prepare yourself for the future. You must have a total of 110 credits in order to graduate.

LANGUAGE ARTS

NJ requires: 20 credits Counselors suggest: 20 credits

Being able to read well, write fluently, and communicate clearly is absolutely essential for college or for any job. Language arts (English) classes will help you do that and develop an appreciation for literature.

MATHEMATICS

NJ requires: 15 credits Counselors suggest: 15-20 credits

A good understanding of math is needed in our high-tech, 21st century world. You should aim to take math every year. Math courses include Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry, Pre-calculus, and Calculus.

HISTORY and GEOGRAPHY

NJ requires: 15 credits Counselors suggest: 15-20 credits

Social studies courses help you learn more about the world around us. These courses include Geography, Government, Civics, World History, World Cultures, US History, and Political Science.

SCIENCE

NJ requires: 15 credits Counselors suggest: 15-20 credits

Science is important for any career path, as the study of science teaches you to observe carefully and use logical reasoning to answer questions. Courses include Chemistry, Geology, Biology, and Physics.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE

NJ requires: 5 credits Counselors suggest: 5-15 credits

Most colleges require at least two years of study of a foreign language (such as Japanese, French, Spanish, Chinese, or Latin). Understanding the cultures and language of other countries is essential today. Most colleges require a minimum of 10 credits of the same language.

VISUAL and PERFORMING ARTS

NJ requires: 5 credits Counselors suggest: 5-10 credits

Studying the arts helps you learn to express yourself creatively and find new ways to interpret your surroundings. Arts courses include Art, Music, Photography, Drama, and Dance.

ELECTIVES

**NJ requires: 20 credits in general Electives
15 credits in Health & Fitness
5 credit in Occupational Education**

The elective courses you take will be determined in part by the career pathway you select when you are in 9th grade. Your high school advisor will help you develop a **Four-year Plan** that tracks the courses you plan to take each year.



REFLECTION

HIGH SCHOOL AND BEYOND PLAN

JANUARY – 7TH GRADE

Name: _____

WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS FOR THIS YEAR?

Using the Annual Goals Worksheet you filed in your portfolio, please think about the goals you developed for 7th grade, and then copy them here. You can update them or change them if you want.

GOAL 1 (Academic): This year I will _____

GOAL 2 (Career): This year I will _____

GOAL 3 (Citizen): This year I will _____

WHO ARE YOU?

What you do after high school will depend on what you're interested in. What do you like to do?

I am interested in _____. When I grow up, I want to _____

HOW DO YOU LEARN BEST?

You are in your second year of middle school. How are you doing? What can you do to improve?

To do better in school, I can _____

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO IN HIGH SCHOOL?

What do you hope to accomplish when you are in high school? Check all that apply.

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Join a sports team | <input type="checkbox"/> Join other clubs and activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Play a musical instrument |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Get a ____ GPA | <input type="checkbox"/> Take honors classes | <input type="checkbox"/> Take four years of math |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take four years of science | <input type="checkbox"/> Take a foreign language | <input type="checkbox"/> Get a part-time job |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be in school government | <input type="checkbox"/> Be a mentor to other students | <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer in the community |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Learn more about careers | <input type="checkbox"/> Learn more about postsecondary | <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate on time |

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

Based on what you know today, what do you think you'll do after high school? Check all that apply.

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Get a job right away | <input type="checkbox"/> Find an apprenticeship | <input type="checkbox"/> Get a 2-year degree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Get a 4-year degree | <input type="checkbox"/> Go to graduate school | <input type="checkbox"/> Join the military |

My ideal job is: _____



RESOURCE GUIDE

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR LEAD ADVISORS AND INTERESTED TEACHERS ON:

GRADE 7 – JANUARY PLANNING FOR LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

USING THIS RESOURCE GUIDE:

Each Paterson Pathways Discussion Guide includes a *Resource Guide* for advisors. The *Resource Guide* has been prepared as a handy reference to give you more information on the following topics:

- **Essential Questions.** Each Paterson Pathways Discussion Guide is built around a theme, and each theme includes two Essential Questions. Focusing on these Essential Questions will help your students retain information from this discussion.
- **New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards.** Each Paterson Pathways Discussion Guide is based on NJCCCS from the relevant grade's Grade Level Expectations.
- **ASCA Standards.** Each Paterson Pathways Discussion Guide is based on American School Counselor Association (ASCA) standards.
- **Classroom Activities.** This *Resource Guide* provides more information and background resources on the activities outlined above in the Discussion Guide.
- **Community-building Opportunities.** The *Resource Guide* suggests several community-building opportunities related to each discussion. You and your students can pursue them if you wish.
- **Additional Activities.** The *Resource Guide* also suggests supplemental activities for your group if you have more time, or if you want to devote more attention to a particular theme.

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ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

Each Paterson Pathways Discussion Guide is built around a theme. Each theme repeats each year to help organize the curriculum and, through this annual repetition, to help students retain key points about the lessons they are learning.

Each month's theme includes several "Essential Questions." These questions inform the content of the Discussion Guide and the student assignments, building on the theme to help students remember the key points from the lesson. These essential questions will also be used later in the year to help students organize their presentations for their student-led conferences.

This month's theme is **Planning for Life After High School**. The Essential Questions are:

- What will I do after high school?
- How can I prepare?
- How can I plan?

Last month, students completed a career cluster interest survey to determine where their career goals may lie. This month, students will explore their plans and dreams for life after high school and then **learn how to connect their dreams to what they are doing now**.

For 7th grade, that will mean learning about the opportunities beyond high school – and understanding both that they will need some level of postsecondary education to realize their dreams and also that they will need to work hard during high school to succeed.

Students will have the opportunity to dream big during this lesson, and then to explore where those dreams might take them.

Focus on the two essential questions as you lead students through the lesson. What do they dream about doing? And what do they have to learn and do to realize their dreams?

This Paterson Pathways curriculum is fundamentally about planning for the future. And this guide, coming as it does in the middle of the school year, will help students balance their short-term plans and goals with their hopes and dreams for the longer term.

Your students are now in middle school. Their decisions are important. Their performance at school matters. This discussion will help them realize that.

COMMUNITY-BUILDING

Part of the aim of the Paterson Pathways curriculum is to help students grow into a larger role in their community. Each discussion

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OPPORTUNITIES:

guide in the Paterson Pathways curriculum highlights opportunities to help students think about or actually take on a larger role in either the school community or the larger community in which they live.

This guide has a somewhat introspective focus because it is about students' individual dreams for the future and then about their academic plans to realize those dreams. By considering their dreams for the future – and then thinking carefully about what it will take to achieve those dreams – your students will have greater incentive to make good use of their time in middle and high school.

Although this Discussion Guide is based around an individual activity, there are many ways your group can help support your students.

- **Shared dreams.** Do your students have any goals or dreams in common? Can you think up any “advisory group dreams” (such as all committing to graduate on time, or all committing to register for honors courses)?
- **Common support.** One of the findings of districts that have implemented Paterson Pathways is that the support provided by the advisory group structure actually results in students doing better academically and registering for more challenging courses. How can the members of your group support each other in this way?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES:

If you have accomplished all the activities outlined in this Discussion Guide and want additional activities for your students, you may wish to:

- **Obtain detailed information about a postsecondary educational program of interest.** Students will do preliminary research to complete their Reflections. As an additional assignment, you could ask them to prepare a detailed, one- to two-page essay on a specific academic program that interests them, based on what they discovered from the College Board site or another resource. Where is it located? What would they study? What could they do after completing it?
- **Share information about the Passaic County community College “College Bound/Gear Up” program with students and their families.** Eligible students and schools may benefit from the program’s pre-college enrichment activities students can sign up for at the end of 8th grade and can continue to take part in throughout their high school years. Speak to your school guidance counselor to obtain more information.
- **Host a discussion for students and their parents or guardians with a guidance counselor or college admissions officer.** If you did not invite a college admissions officer to your advisory session, perhaps you could arrange for a lunch or after-school meeting

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between your students and their parents or guardians and a college admissions officer or guidance counselor to discuss educational options. It would be particularly helpful if students could volunteer their own interests and then hear what type of education they should acquire.

PREPARING FOR NEXT MONTH:

Next month's Paterson Pathways session is focused on helping students become a part of the school community through sports, clubs, or other activities. Here's how you can plan ahead for next month:

Get a list of school clubs and activities. Your school should have a list of all clubs, sports, and activities that are open to students. Get a copy or have your lead advisor work with school administrators to compile this information. This list will be used next month to help make your students aware of the opportunities open to them and encourage them to join.

NJCCCS: LANGUAGE ARTS

LISTENING

- 3.4.7A1 Listen actively for a variety of purposes such as enjoyment and obtaining information.
- 3.4.7A2 Listen attentively and critically to a variety of speakers.
- 3.4.7A3 Acknowledge the speaker through eye contact and use appropriate feedback and questions to clarify the speaker's message.

SPEAKING

- 3.3.7A5 Participate in class discussion appropriately.
- 3.3.7B5 Reflect and evaluate information learned as a result of the inquiry

WRITING

- 3.2.7.D1 Write for different purposes (e.g., to express ideas inform, entertain, respond to literature, persuade, question, reflect, clarify, share) and a variety of audiences (e.g., self, peers, community)
- 3.2.7.D2 Gather, select and organize information appropriate to a topic, task and audience.
- 3.2.7.D3 Develop and use knowledge of a variety of genres, including expository, narrative, persuasive, poetry, critiques, and everyday/ workplace writing.

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CAREER EDUCATION AND CONSUMER, FAMILY AND LIFE SKILLS (Grades 5-8)

9.2.7.B1 Develop and implement a personal growth plan that includes short- and long-term goals to enhance development.

ASCA STANDARDS:

The Paterson Pathways curriculum is based on the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model, to provide teachers and students with a clear way to integrate school counseling and academic achievement. This Discussion Guide focuses on the following ASCA Standards:

ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT

A:B2 Plan to achieve goals (Identify post-secondary options consistent with interests, achievement, aptitude, and abilities).