



DISCUSSION GUIDE

GRADE: 7

MONTH: MAY

THEME: MAKING THE TRANSITION

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 May* packet includes:

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

DISCUSSION GOALS:

- Review student experiences in 7th grade.
- Help students prepare for next year.
- Celebrate!

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

What do I want to do next year?
How can I succeed?



WEEK 1:**UPDATE PORTFOLIOS**

This will be students' last month of advisory for the school year. At the end of this session, students will be expected to add completed **FOUR-YEAR PLAN** reflection (from January) to their portfolios. Do they want to update their plan? This is the time to do so.

COMPLETE THE CONFERENCE EVALUATION RUBRIC this month after conferences are held. Give the students time to complete the rubric. Discuss their impressions of the student led conference.

Most students have now completed their second student led conference. Review the results of the Student-Led Conferences. How did they go? What were the families' reactions? What would you have improved? What did you learn in the conferences that you can use in oral presentations in the future? How do you think the conferences you participated in will benefit you as you prepare for high school interviews next year?

MATERIALS NEEDED:

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

FOUR-YEAR PLAN reflection (from January)

THE CONFERENCE EVALUATION RUBRIC reflection (from April)



WEEK 2:**REVIEW THE YEAR**

Remind students that at some point during the next two weeks your students will complete their student-led conferences. Remember that it is your role to be as encouraging and steady a presence for them as possible.

At this meeting, ask each student to retrieve the annual goals statement he or she created at the beginning of the school year. Ask students to read their goal statements from earlier this year. *(Please NOTE that these goal statements must be returned to the portfolios, as your students will review them one more time next September as a way to begin the new school year. If you are worried that students will misplace their goal statements, you may wish to copy them ahead of time so that your students are working from copies rather than originals.)*

Look back at the year that's nearly over. Discuss with students what they thought was best – and worst – about their year. Did advisory help? Why or why not? What advice would they give to incoming 7th graders about succeeding next year? What did they learn this year? Where did they make progress? If you have been taking photos of advisory activities, you may want to show a slide show documenting your year. Or you may want to give students the opportunity to review the work in their portfolios and see how they've progressed from the beginning of the year.

Then lead them in a short discussion about what they have written. Reviewing one of the first documents your students wrote as 7th grade students – their goals for the year, which they wrote last September – will be a helpful way to assess what they've learned and how they've grown this year. That self-assessment will even more helpful because of the content of their goal statements, which looked ahead through the entire 7th grade year. Your students may find that they've accomplished all their goals; but, equally likely, they may not have. In fact, they might find that they've accomplished quite a bit this year, just not what they expected to accomplish.

This portion of the discussion helps students revisit the work they've done this year in setting goals, focusing on their goals for 7th grade. By reviewing what they said they wanted to achieve – and what they've actually accomplished – your students will be able to reflect on what they've learned and how they've grown this year, and that will set the stage for their work next year.

Ask students if they achieved their annual goals. How? If not, why not? Does the beginning of the year seem like a long time ago? How have

they changed over the course of the year?

What have their Paterson Pathways advisories taught them? And how have these lessons influenced their goals for this year and life after high school?

You may also lead further discussion on the Student Led Conferences. How did they go? How do this years conferences compare to last years? What will they do different next time?

**MATERIALS
NEEDED:**

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

ANNUAL GOALS reflections from last September. Students will review their annual goals during this lesson.

STUDENT-LED CONFERENCE FEEDBACK reflections for students, parents and advisors.



WEEK 3:**PLAN FOR NEXT YEAR**

What challenges and opportunities will next year bring? Discuss what your students can expect next year when they are 8th graders. Are there clubs, activities, or leadership positions they can take on as 8th graders? Are there activities they didn't pursue this year that they want to try next year? What about their courses? How many will be taking advanced or honors courses?

Setting these plans now will help bring closure to the school year, allowing students an opportunity to summarize and synthesize the work they've done during the year in Paterson Pathways – in their student-led conferences, in their academic improvement plans, and in their plans for postsecondary education and eventual careers. Planning for next year will also help students look ahead several years beyond, helping students see themselves as students and as learners (engaged and motivated at school).

Students can also use this time to update and finalize portfolios. Remember, these portfolios will continue to follow students to the 8th grade. Make sure everything is in the appropriate area and secure. This will be a great tool students can use if the high school, they wish to attend, requires an interview upon applying.

**MATERIALS
NEEDED:**

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

**STUDENT
PRODUCTS:**

Your students will be expected to create two products from this lesson.

Updated portfolio. Each student should update his or her portfolio by checking portfolio contents and adding student work, all Student-led conferences material and reflections. This will be the last check for the school year.



WEEK 4:**CELEBRATE!**

Your students have nearly completed their second year of middle school. How did they do? What have they learned? How does this compare to 6th grade?

Celebrate the year and the community you've formed with your advisory group. Talk with students about their plans for the summer... and remind students that you expect to see them in the fall.

**MATERIALS
NEEDED:**

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

Pizza, balloons, cookies or other treats to celebrate the end of the year.



STUDENT FEEDBACK

STUDENT-LED CONFERENCE

Name:

Advisor's Name

DEAR STUDENTS: Congratulations! You did it!

You organized a student-led conference to showcase your work. How did it feel? What did you learn?

Don't forget to complete your performance rubric to assess how you did. And please answer the two questions on this form and return it to your advisor today.

OVERALL COMMENTS

Overall, was your student-led conference worthwhile?

Yes No

Should the school hold student-led conferences next year?

Yes No

Please share additional comments about your conference below:

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO YOUR ADVISOR



Paterson Pathways



Paterson Public Schools Advisory Curriculum Framework

THANK YOU!



Paterson Pathways



Paterson Public Schools Advisory Curriculum Framework



PARENT FEEDBACK

STUDENT-LED CONFERENCE

Student's Name (OPTIONAL):

Student's Grade:

PARENT CONFERENCE FEEDBACK

*PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM BEFORE YOU LEAVE THE SCHOOL
THANK YOU!*

DEAR PARENTS: Thanks for taking the time to attend your child's conference. Please let us know what you thought, and how we can improve. And thanks for everything you do to support your child!

OVERALL COMMENTS

Was your child's student-led conference worthwhile?

- Yes
 No
 Don't know

Should the school hold student-led conferences next year?

- Yes
 No
 Don't know

LEARNER DEVELOPMENT *(What have I accomplished in school this year?)*

Did the conference help you learn what your child has accomplished in school this year?

- Yes
 No
 Don't know

Were you able to see samples of your child's work from different classes and subject areas?

Yes

No

Don't know

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Did you learn about your child's plans for academic improvement and graduation?

Yes

No

Don't know

Did you learn about your child's plans for next year's classes?

Yes

No

Don't know

CAREER DEVELOPMENT (*What do I hope to do in the future?*)

Did you learn about your child's plans and goals for the future?

Yes

No

Don't know

Did you learn about your child's hopes for education after high school?

Yes

No

Don't know

CITIZEN (*Who am I?*)

Did your child share what makes him or her unique and what is most important to him or her?

Yes

No

Don't know

Did you learn about your child's involvement in activities at school and in the larger community?

Yes

No

Don't know

Please share additional comments



ADVISOR FEEDBACK

STUDENT-LED CONFERENCE

Name (OPTIONAL): _____

Advisor's Name (OPTIONAL): _____

DEAR ADVISORS: Thank you! We made it! We've completed student-led conferences.

Let us know what you think about the conference structure.

Overall, were the student-led conferences worthwhile?

Yes No

Should the school hold student-led conferences next year?

Yes No

Please share additional comments about your conferences below:



RESOURCE GUIDE

BACKGROUND IN FORMATION FOR LEAD ADVISORS AND INTERESTED TEACHERS ON:

GRADE 7 – MAY MAKING THE TRANSITION

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.

**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 discussion.

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 discussion. 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 **Making the Transition**. The Essential Questions are:

- What do I want to do next year?
- How can I succeed?

Over the course of the year, your students have had a number of opportunities to think about both short-term and long-term goals and dreams. This month's guide asks students to harness those goals and plan for the next year.

Help students reflect on what they've learned this year. How have their goals and dreams changed as they've experienced their second year of middle school? How has Paterson Pathways changed the way they think about school, or about their futures?

Make sure your students consider the essential questions for this discussion as they work: What do I want to do next year? How can I succeed?

**COMMUNITY-
BUILDING
OPPORTUNITIES:**

Part of the aim of the Paterson Pathways curriculum is to help students grow into a larger role in their community. Each discussion 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 plans to realize those dreams. By considering their goals for the next year – and then synthesizing their academic, social, and personal plans into those goals – your students will be more likely to continue to think of themselves as learners and as students for the years to come.

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 goals” (such as all committing to graduate on time)? How many of your students will be coming back to school in the fall? How can you encourage them – and how can they encourage each other – to make the most of their summers and the most of 8th grade next year?
- **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:

- **Create a poster or slide show of your activities from the year.** What has your advisory group done this year? If you have time, collect photos or other mementos and create a poster, slide show, or video of your year together. Do you have photos of students at their student-led conferences? Programs from assemblies or plays? Choose music and create a year in review to celebrate the end of 7th grade.
- **Host a graduation party for your 8th grade partner group.** The Paterson Pathways curriculum suggested that your 7th grade group partner with an 8th grade group for a discussion about school activities and traditions. Use this opportunity to invite your 8th grade partners to a celebration of their graduation.
- **Have lunch together as an advisory group.** As another way of celebrating the end of the year, order pizza or have students bring sack lunches, and have lunch together.

WRAPPING UP THE YEAR:

To conclude your role as a Paterson Pathways advisor for the year, please **complete the survey on the next two pages** and return it to your lead advisor. Your comments will help your school adapt and adjust the Paterson Pathways curriculum and format.

Thanks for everything you’ve done to help your students succeed this year!



NJCCCS: LANGUAGE ARTS**LISTENING and SPEAKING**

- 3.4.7A1 Demonstrate active listening behaviors in a variety of situations.
- 3.4.7B2 Exhibit proficiency in integrating oral reading with listening, writing, and viewing.
- 3.3.7A5 Participate in an informal small group discussion
- 3.3.7A7 Participate in class discussion appropriately.

WRITING

- 3.2.7D1 Gather, select, and organize information appropriate to a topic, task, and audience.
- 3.2.7D4 Write responses to literature and develop insights into interpretations by connecting to personal experiences and referring to textual information.
- 3.2D14 Maintain a collection of writings (e.g. a literacy portfolio)

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 (Apply knowledge of aptitudes and interests to goal setting).
- A: C1 Relate school to life experiences (Understand how school success and academic achievement enhance future career and vocational opportunities).



PERSONAL and SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

PS: B1 Self knowledge applications (Identify long and short term goals).



ADVISOR SURVEY

END-OF-YEAR EVALUATION

Name (OPTIONAL):

Advisory Group's Grade Level:

DEAR ADVISORS:

We depend on you! Thank you for everything you've done to help your students succeed this year.

HOW DID PATERSON PATHWAYS WORK FOR YOU AND YOUR STUDENTS?

The Paterson Pathways lesson format and schedule were effective:

Yes

No

Don't know

Please comment:

The discussion guides and reflections I was provided helped me organize advisory sessions:

Yes

No

Don't know

Please comment:

The background information in the Paterson Pathways *Resource Guides* was helpful:

Yes

No

Don't know

Please comment:

Paterson Pathways helped me organize community activities with my students:

Yes

No

Don't know

Please comment:

Please continue on the next page.

PLEASE RETURN TO YOUR SCHOOL'S LEAD ADVISOR

Paterson Pathways has helped my students do better academically:

Yes

No

Don't know

Please comment:

Paterson Pathways has helped my students do better socially as part of the life of our school or community:

Yes

No

Don't know

Please comment:

Paterson Pathways has helped my students make clear plans for the future:

Yes

No

Don't know

Please comment:

General comments or suggestions about Paterson Pathways: