



DISCUSSION GUIDE

GRADE: 8

MONTH: NOVEMBER

THEME: PLANNING FOR NEXT YEAR

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 adapted to be taught in a weekly “advisory” class period.

This *Grade 8 November* packet includes:

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

DISCUSSION GOALS:

Help students reflect on their academic plan.

Help students revise their plans as needed.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

What are my academic goals?

How am I doing with my academic plan?

WEEK 1:

REVIEW HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS



Paterson Public Schools Advisory Curriculum Framework

Ask students to discuss the ***HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA REQUIREMENT REFLECTION***. As they talk, though, ask them how they'll get from where they are today –8th grade students – to where they hope to be next year (High School and Innovative Academies). What will it take to realize their dreams?

- Distribute copies of your school's ***HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENT REFLECTION***.
- Review the requirements with students.
- Discuss the types of classes students should take. How will their work now affect their future in high school and beyond? For instance, explain that their grades and standardized assessment scores will help determine what level classes they will be registered for (below level, regular or honors). Let students discuss in pairs if you wish.

**MATERIALS
NEEDED:**

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

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENT reflection

**STUDENT
PRODUCTS:**

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

Updated portfolio. Each student should update his or her portfolio by adding a ***HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA REQUIREMENT*** reflection in the *Learner (Academic Development)* section.



WEEK 2:

DISTRIBUTE HIGH SCHOOL PLAN

In the High School Plan students tentatively select a Career Pathway and then describe the types of courses they believe they need to take during high school to pursue a career within their pathway. Students have by now completed the career cluster interest survey in 6th and 7th. What career paths have they found themselves interested in? Has it changed from year to year. Remind students they will complete the survey once again this year. The results will be used to help place them in the appropriate program in High School.

Stress again the distinction between **minimum graduation requirements** (what students must take to graduate) and the courses counselors **recommend** they take to prepare for postsecondary education and careers. For instance 4 years of mathematics or science, especially if choosing a career within these fields, medicine, engineering, etc.

Advisors think back to your own days in high school. What courses did you take? Are there any courses you wished you had taken? What advice do you wish someone had given you in 8th grade?

Let students know that **next week will be a “work sample roundup,”** and that they should bring work from first marking period to add to their portfolios.

**MATERIALS
NEEDED:**

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

HIGH SCHOOL PLAN reflection

**STUDENT
PRODUCTS:**

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

Updated portfolio. Each student should update his or her portfolio by adding the *HIGH SCHOOL PLAN* reflection.



WEEK 3:**REVIEW THE HIGH SCHOOL PLAN**

Allow students time to complete their *High School Plan* if needed. Remind students that they will complete a Career Cluster Survey next month again and to keep in mind the career pathways that most interest them.

Ask the school guidance counselor for a list of the Innovative Academies Paterson has to offer. Discuss the programs and how they fit in the different clusters with the students to better prepare to take their interest surveys.

WORK SAMPLE ROUNDUP

Make today's lesson a "work sample roundup" from the first marking period. Ask students to organize the samples of work from each of their classes to add to their portfolios today. Ask students to make sure they check each item on their checklists as it is added. Ask them to think about why they are adding each item: Is it good work? Does it show improvement? Does it show a new skill? What makes it worth saving?

You might want to remind students to use their checklists (which should be kept with their portfolios) to keep track of items they're adding to their portfolios. Make sure students remember how to add items to their portfolios and that they are keeping their portfolio checklist handouts up-to-date.

Since students should be accustomed to keeping portfolios by now, you might want to use this opportunity to check in with them or follow up on their academic improvement plans.

**MATERIALS
NEEDED:**

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

First marking period progress reports/report cards.

**STUDENT
PRODUCTS:**

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

Updated portfolio. Each student should update his or her portfolio by adding the work samples.





REFLECTION

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

NOVEMBER - 8TH GRADE

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.

In each of these areas, register for the most advanced class level you can manage.

All New Jersey Students need to pass the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA).

High school students who do not demonstrate proficiency on one or more sections of the HSPA may participate in the Special Review Assessment process to demonstrate that they meet the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards.





REFLECTION

NJ HIGH SCHOOL PLAN

NOVEMBER - 8TH GRADE

Name: _____

WHAT ARE YOUR LONG-TERM DREAMS?

Which career pathway seems most interesting to you?

- Agriculture, Science, and Natural Resources
- Art, Media, Communications, and Design
- Business, Management, and Finance
- Education, Social, and Health Services
- Engineering, Science, and Technology

Which careers are you most interested in within this pathway?

Career Idea #1: _____

Career Idea #2: _____

Career Idea #3: _____

What type of education do you think these careers will require?

- A high school education
- A 2-year degree (Associate’s Degree) from a community or technical college
- An apprenticeship
- A 4-year degree (Bachelor’s Degree) from a 4-year college or university
- Post-graduate education (such as a medical or law degree)

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO SUCCEED IN HIGH SCHOOL?

Based on the information above, please check the boxes below that apply to you.

I need to take 3 or 4 years of math because _____

I need to take 3 or 4 years of science because _____

I need to take a foreign language during high school. I'd like to take _____

I need specialized classes (such as music or computer programming). I'm interested in:





RESOURCE GUIDE

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR LEAD ADVISORS AND INTERESTED TEACHERS ON:

GRADE 8 – NOVEMBER PLANNING FOR NEXT YEAR

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 has been adapted to 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.
- **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 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 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 **Planning for Next Year**. The Essential Questions are:

- What are my academic goals?
- How am I doing with my academic plan?

Over the course of the year, your students will have a number of opportunities to think about their goals and dreams for the future and to learn what they will need to do to achieve those dreams. This month's discussion focuses on a tangible step your students can take to move toward their long-term goals.

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 academic plans to realize those dreams. By considering their dreams for the future – and then thinking carefully about what it will take each year to move toward 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 goals" (such as all committing to register for at least one honors course)?
- **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:

- **Ask students to discuss their academic improvement plans for next year with their families.** This will hopefully be just the beginning of ongoing discussions students will have with their parents and families about their long-term goals.
- **Ask your school guidance counselor speak to your students about their high school choices .**

PREPARING FOR NEXT MONTH:

Next month’s Paterson Pathways session is focused on helping students explore career possibilities and assess their interests. Here’s how you can plan ahead for next month:

- **Investigate your school’s access to career planning resources.** Your school likely has access to an array of career planning and interest assessment resources. Investigate your school’s resources (or ask your lead advisor or school guidance counselor to brief you) so that you can help your students use them. If your school does not have career planning resources available, you might want to turn to the free resources at www.careervoyages.gov.
- **Obtain copies of *CAREER CLUSTERS INTEREST SURVEY* and *CAREERS INTEREST REFLECTION* for each student.**
- **Invite one or two community members to discuss their careers with your students (*OPTIONAL*).** *If you wish*, ask interested community members (perhaps parents or HSC members) to discuss their career choices – and educational needs – with your students.

N.J.C.C.C.S LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY

LISTENING

- | | |
|----------|---|
| 3.4.8.A1 | Listen actively for a variety of purposes such as enjoyment and obtaining information. |
| 3.4.8.A2 | Listen attentively to a variety of speakers. |
| 3.4.8.B2 | Demonstrate competence in active listening by interpreting and applying received information to new situations and in solving problems. |

WRITING

- | | |
|----------|--|
| 3.2.8.A2 | Generate ideas for writing through reading and making connections across the curriculum and with current events. |
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- 3.2.8.B2 Write a range of grade appropriate essays across curricula (persuasive, personal, descriptive, issue-based)
- 3.2.8.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)
- 3.2.8.D2 Gather, select and organize information appropriate to a topic, task and audience.

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

- 9.2.8.C1 Demonstrate respect and flexibility in interpersonal and group situations.

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:A1 Improve academic self-concept (Display a positive interest in learning).
- A:A2 Acquire skills for improving learning (Demonstrate how effort and persistence positively affect learning).
- A:A3 Achieve school success (Demonstrate dependability, productivity, and initiative).

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

- C:B2 Identify career goals (Demonstrate awareness of the education and training needed to achieve career goals).

