



HB3296/Public Act 102-0917 Overview

Governor Pritzker signed Public Act 102-0917 (HB3296) into law on May 27, 2022. HB3296 builds from the 2016 Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness (PWR) Act and many years of dedicated work by communities statewide to develop and implement high-quality college and career pathways systems that ensure students are prepared for whatever comes after high school.

This new legislation advances the work laid out in the PWR Act by centering on two of its core components: the Postsecondary and Career Expectations (PaCE) Framework and the College and Career Pathway Endorsements (CCPE). While both of these frameworks have already been adopted by districts across Illinois, HB3296 establishes new expectations for districts serving students in the relevant grades (6–12 for PaCE and 9–12 for CCPE) to either implement these frameworks locally or to opt-out after taking several factors into consideration.

What are the PaCE and the CCPE frameworks?

Postsecondary and Career Expectations Framework

The Illinois PaCE Framework was developed with extensive input gathered from stakeholders and subject matter experts to provide guidance to students, families, and educators on what types of experiences and information a student should have in order to make the most informed decision about college and career planning, beginning in 8th grade and continuing through high school. The framework is organized around three key areas: Career Exploration and Development; Postsecondary Education Exploration, Preparation, and Selection;

and Financial Aid and Literacy. The Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) provides extensive training and supports for districts adapting and implementing the PaCE Framework.

College and Career Pathway Endorsements

To earn a CCPE on a high school transcript, a student must complete an individualized learning plan, engage in a career-focused instructional sequence (including early college credit), participate in work-based learning, and demonstrate readiness for college-level English and math. Students earning the CCPE will develop technical and essential employability competencies, earn in-demand credentials, and be prepared to launch rewarding careers.

What's expected of districts?

Districts¹ are expected to address the requirements of HB3296 by **July 1, 2025** in two ways:

- **For districts enrolling students in any of grades 6–12:** Adopt and commence implementation of career exploration and career development activities for each of grades 6-12 in accordance with a framework that substantially aligns to the Illinois PaCE Framework.
- **For districts enrolling students in any of grades 9–12:** Either (i) independently, (ii) through an area career center, or (iii) through an inter-district cooperative, apply to ISBE to offer CCPE in at least one endorsement area beginning with the high school graduating class of 2027. The district must apply to ISBE to offer one additional endorsement by 2029 and a third by 2031, if a

¹ Chicago Public Schools has a year earlier timeline for implementation than other districts under HB 3296, reflecting existing efforts CPS has in place relating to both PaCE and CCPE.

district has more than 350 students enrolled (the State median enrollment for high school-serving districts). By July 1, 2025, districts must either apply to ISBE for the number of endorsement areas specified in the law or the school board must adopt a timeline for implementation meeting the expectations of the law.

Districts may elect to opt out of implementation of any or all of these provisions by school board action to adopt a set of findings that considers the below factors, reporting this decision and findings to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE):

- The school district's current systems for college and career readiness.
- The school district's cost of implementation balanced against the potential benefits to students and families through improved postsecondary education and career outcomes.
- The willingness and capacity of local businesses to partner with the school district for successful implementation of pathways other than education.
- The willingness of institutions of higher education to partner with the school district for successful implementation of the pathway and whether the district has sought and established a partnership agreement with a community college district incorporating the provisions of the Model Partnership Agreement under the Dual Credit Quality Act.
- The availability of a statewide database of participating local business partners, as provided under the Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Act, for the purpose of career readiness and the accessibility of those work experiences and apprenticeships listed in the database to the students of the school district.
- The availability of properly licensed teachers or teachers meeting faculty credential standards

for dual credit courses to instruct in the program required for the endorsement areas.

How will State agencies support districts to meet these requirements?

While there are already many supports in place for districts to implement both the PaCE Framework and the CCPE, the State's education agencies are expected to further solidify this support for implementation in the following ways:

- **Update the PaCE Framework** by July 1, 2023 to extend to grade 6 and include any other appropriate revisions or updates deemed appropriate in consultation with appropriate stakeholders.
- **Publish and maintain a current database of employer champions** for work-based learning and career readiness systems and programs on ISBE's website by July 1, 2024. ISBE is expected to consult with a statewide organization representing business and manufacturing in relation to the employer champion program.



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