

GEAR UP: College and Career Preparation Standards 6–12

K20 Center for Educational and Community Renewal

	6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade
Career Pathway Exploration	 6.1 (K) Students will explore the importance of early planning for college education and careers, recognizing the flexibility of changing goals and the existence of multiple pathways to success. 6.1.1 Students will articulate why planning for postsecondary education and a career at an early age is beneficial for their future opportunities and decision-making. 6.1.2 Students will explain how career and education plans can evolve over time, demonstrating an understanding that goals and interests may change. 	including traditional four-year colleges, community colleges, career technical education programs, apprenticeships, military service, and direct entry into the workforce.	 describe the habits, skills, and resources that contribute to effective academic preparation (e.g., study routines, time management, seeking help). 8.1.2 Students will explain how attendance, GPA, course choices,



Goal Setting

- **6.2 (S)** Students will engage in goal-setting by identifying, planning, and monitoring personal and academic goals.
 - **6.2.1** Students will brainstorm at least two short-term goals—one personal and one academic—and develop a simple action plan, including steps, resources, and a tentative timeline for achieving each goal.
 - **6.2.2** Students will track and document their progress toward achieving their goals over the school year, using tools such as journals, charts, or digital apps.

- **7.2 (S)** Students will engage in goal-setting by **8.2 (S)** Students will engage in goal setting by identifying, planning, and monitoring personal identifying, planning, and monitoring personal and academic goals.
 - **7.2.1** Students will revisit their goals from the previous academic year and reflect on their progress and, if necessary, adjust their goals or strategies to address challenges and stay on track.
 - 7.2.2 Students will build on their previous goals-setting experiences, and establish two new goals—one short-term and one longer-term—along with at least one accountability strategy (e.g., partnering with a peer, regular teacher check-ins) to help maintain motivation and track progress.

- and academic goals.
 - 8.2.1 Students will review and assess their previous goals, examining which strategies were most effective and why. They will then connect these insights to potential postsecondary pathways, explaining how past successes and challenges can inform future educational and career planning.
 - **8.2.2.** Students will identify at least two individuals in their community who have pursued different postsecondary pathways, engage them in conversations about their educational and career experiences, and summarize the key insights gained in a short reflection or presentation.
 - **8.2.3** Students will develop a career pathway plan that includes specific milestones, potential obstacles, and resources or supports.

Self-Management

- **6.3 (S)** Students will identify effective time management skills and personal motivators, analyzing how these factors influence their behavior, decision-making, and goal achievement in personal and academic contexts. focus, resilience, and confidence.
 - **6.3.1** Students will identify strategies for prioritizing tasks, creating schedules, and using tools (e.g., planners, digital apps) to manage their time effectively.
 - 6.3.2 Students will identify factors that inspire or drive them, such as interests,

- **7.3 (S)** Students will practice strategies for managing time effectively and regulating emotions, enabling them to set and pursue personal and academic goals with greater
 - 7.3.1 Students will practice prioritizing tasks, creating schedules, and using tools (e.g., planners, digital apps) to manage their time effectively.
 - 7.3.2. Students will recognize and label common emotions (e.g., anger, disappointment, enthusiasm) and
- **8.3 (S)** Students will demonstrate self-management skills by managing time effectively, regulating emotions, and developing strategies for overcoming challenges to achieve personal and academic success.
 - **8.3.1** Students will demonstrate the ability to prioritize tasks, create schedules, and use tools (e.g., planners, digital apps) to manage their time effectively.
 - **8.3.2** Students will identify their emotions and practice strategies (e.g.,



- values, rewards, recognition, or personal aspirations.
- **6.3.3** Students will use identified motivators to create plans or strategies for achieving personal or academic goals.
- describe how these emotions can either support or hinder their goal-setting and achievement.
- **7.3.3** Students will regularly document how their emotions impact their actions, decision-making, and progress toward set goals, making adjustments to their plans as needed.

mindfulness, self-reflection) to stay focused, calm, and motivated during challenges.

Academic Preparation

- **6.4 (S)** Students will apply algebraic thinking to represent, analyze, and solve mathematical problems, demonstrating an understanding of mathematical relationships and patterns.
 - Clarification Statement: To achieve this standard, instruction should align to grade-level state standards for mathematics, focusing on concepts such as recognizing patterns, understanding variables, creating equations or expressions, and solving problems using algebraic reasoning.
- **6.5 (S)** Students will foster curiosity, inquisitiveness, wonder, and imagination by applying scientific reasoning and engineering practices to investigate, analyze, and explain phenomena in the natural and designed worlds, phenomena in the natural and designed demonstrating an understanding of scientific relationships and patterns.
 - Clarification Statement: To achieve this standard, instruction should align to grade-level state standards for science and engineering.

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6.6 (S) Students will compose clear and well-structured expository texts to explain, inform, or describe a topic, using evidence and logical organization to effectively convey their ideas.

- **Clarification Statement:** To achieve this standard, students will engage in writing tasks aligned with grade-level state standards for English Language Arts, focusing on crafting explanatory texts with a clear purpose, coherent organization, and supporting details.
- 6.7 (K) Students will investigate and analyze the 7.7 (K) Students will investigate and analyze structure of knowledge by exploring how concepts, ideas, and disciplines are organized, connected, and applied across various contexts. connected, and applied across various
 - **6.7.1** Students will identify how concepts and ideas are categorized and linked within a subject area (e.g., themes in literature, branches of science, or mathematical domains).

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- the structure of knowledge by exploring how concepts, ideas, and disciplines are organized, contexts.
 - 7.7.1 Students will explore and explain how knowledge in one subject relates to and supports understanding in another (e.g., how mathematics supports science or how history influences art).
- and belief in their own capacity for growth and learning by recognizing that intelligence and abilities can be developed through effort. opportunities and resources.
 - 7.8.1 Students will reflect on instances where effort and persistence led to improvement or success, reinforcing their belief in their ability to grow.

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- 8.7 (K) Students will investigate and analyze the structure of knowledge by exploring how concepts, ideas, and disciplines are organized, connected, and applied across various contexts.
 - **8.7.1** Students will use their understanding of the structure of knowledge to approach and solve interdisciplinary problems, showing how organized knowledge supports real-world applications.

Self-Efficacy and **Awareness**

- **6.8 (A)** Students will demonstrate self-efficacy and belief in their own capacity for growth and learning by recognizing that intelligence and abilities can be developed through effort. effective strategies, and access to opportunities effective strategies, and access to and resources.
 - **6.8.1** Students will explain the concept of a growth mindset and identify how it differs from a fixed mindset.
- 7.8 (A) Students will demonstrate self-efficacy 8.8 (A) Students will demonstrate self-efficacy and belief in their own capacity for growth and learning by recognizing that intelligence and abilities can be developed through effort, effective strategies, and access to opportunities and resources.
 - **8.8.1** Students will show confidence in their ability to complete tasks, solve problems, and learn new skills independently or with appropriate resources.



6.9 (A) Students will demonstrate self-confidence by recognizing their ability to overcome external barriers and obstacles in order to achieve personal and academic goals.

- **6.9.1** Students will examine various external obstacles (e.g., lack of resources, time constraints, social pressures) that might hinder their progress toward goals.
- **6.9.2** Students will brainstorm and select strategies (e.g., seeking support, adapting plans, using community resources) to address each identified obstacle.

7.9 (A) Students will demonstrate self-confidence by recognizing their ability to overcome external barriers and obstacles in order to achieve personal and academic goals. order to achieve personal and academic goals.

- **7.9.1** Students will revisit previously identified external obstacles (e.g., lack of resources, time constraints, social pressures), reflect on the effectiveness of the strategies they used to address them, and adapt or add new strategies as needed to continue making progress toward their goals.
- 7.9.2 Students will practice consistent efforts to reach their goals despite setbacks, applying problem-solving strategies and learning from challenges.

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- **8.9.1** Students will practice consistent efforts to reach their goals despite setbacks, applying problem-solving strategies and learning from challenges.
- 8.9.2 Students will articulate their belief in their own capabilities, sharing their successes and strategies used in overcoming external barriers with peers or teachers.

Self-Advocacy

6.10 (A) Students will demonstrate a willingness **7.10 (A)** Students will demonstrate a to accept help by recognizing and trusting individuals and resources that can support their trusting individuals and resources that can personal, academic, and social growth.

• **6.10.1** Students will recognize individuals (e.g., teachers, counselors, family members, peers) and community resources (e.g., tutoring programs, online forums) that provide reliable assistance.

willingness to accept help by recognizing and support their personal, academic, and social growth.

> 7.10.1 Students will practice asking for help in various situations—academic tasks, social or emotional challenges—demonstrating respectful communication.

8.10 (A) Students will demonstrate a willingness to accept help by recognizing and trusting individuals and resources that can support their personal, academic, and social growth.

> • **8.10.1** Students will learn strategies (e.g., active listening, showing respect, maintaining confidentiality) to foster mutual trust with those offering help.



Sense of Self

6.11 (A) Students will recognize and explore their developing academic and social identities by reflecting on personal experiences, finding role models from similar backgrounds, and fostering a positive sense of self within a broader social context.

- **6.11.1** Students will identify personal traits (e.g., interests, talents) and describe at least one social group they belong to (e.g., family, cultural community, school club), examining how group membership begins to shape their sense of self.
- **6.11.2** Students will complete a simple reflection or class activity (e.g., a "Who Am I?" collage) that explores their emerging racial/ethnic identity or other prominent social identities, recognizing how these aspects contribute to their uniqueness.
- **6.11.3** Students will demonstrate active listening, empathy, and respectful interaction in both one-on-one and group settings, thereby strengthening their interpersonal and social skills.

7.11 (A) Students will recognize and explore their developing academic and social identities by reflecting on personal experiences, finding role models from similar backgrounds, and fostering a positive sense of fostering a positive sense of self within a self within a broader social context.

- 7.11.1 Students will investigate the meaning of their heritage—interviewing family members, reading about cultural traditions, or exploring historical figures—and discuss how this knowledge enhances their self-understanding.
- **7.11.2** Students will identify at least two individuals (historical or contemporary) who share one or more of their social or cultural identities and have achieved success. explaining how these role models inspire them academically or personally.
- 7.11.3 Students will build and maintain positive connections with peers and educators by offering help, seeking assistance, and showing respect for diverse perspectives in classroom activities.

8.11 (A) Students will recognize and explore their developing academic and social identities by reflecting on personal experiences, finding role models from similar backgrounds, and broader social context.

- 8.11.1 Drawing on prior reflection and research, students will articulate a personal statement of identity (written or presented), emphasizing pride in their background and any other prominent social identities.
- **8.11.2** Students will reflect upon how their sense of identity—now more fully developed—can support their future academic, personal, and social goals. Students will outline at least one way they can continue to nurture their positive self-identity in high school and beyond (e.g., joining cultural clubs, seeking mentorship, celebrating heritage).
- **8.11.3** Students will participate in group projects or discussions, clearly articulating ideas and providing constructive feedback, thereby improving their communication abilities and teamwork proficiency.



	9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade
Career Pathway Exploration	 9.1 (K) Students will explore and evaluate the cost-benefit aspects of different postsecondary pathways. 9.1.1 Students will identify at least three possible postsecondary pathways (e.g., four-year college, community college, technical school, military service) and outline the typical duration and major requirements of each. 9.1.2. Students will determine specific high school courses, standardized tests (e.g., ACT, SAT, ASVAB), application forms (e.g., FAFSA, college applications), and resources (e.g., scholarships, grants) needed for each pathway. 9.1.3 Students will research and compare the costs (e.g. tuition, fees, living expenses) of these pathways and estimate their potential return on investment (ROI), taking into account projected career salaries or wages. 	plan for potential postsecondary pathways by identifying key milestones. • 10.1.1 Students will examine and outline the key processes involved in multiple postsecondary pathways, including applications, financial aid, interviews, standardized testing, essay writing, performance requirements, and portfolio creation, summarizing the steps, deadlines, and resources needed for each. • 10.1.2 Students will create a visual or written timeline showing the major milestones (e.g., admissions deadlines, financial aid applications, enrollment requirements) and time commitments for various postsecondary pathways (e.g., traditional four-year	 11.1 (K) Students will demonstrate a clear understanding of essential processes for accessing postsecondary education, including financial aid (FAFSA), scholarships, and applications for colleges, universities, and career technical programs, by recognizing key deadlines and required documentation. 11.1.1 Students will outline the steps and deadlines for completing the FAFSA and other financial aid applications (including required documentation an annual renewal), demonstrating they can effectively plan and secure funding for postsecondary education. 11.1.2 Students outline the steps, necessary documentation, and deadlines to apply for match and fit schools and career technical assistance centers 11.1.3 Students will identify scholarships to support access to postsecondary pathways and apply for scholarships. 	familiarity with postsecondary support available (e.g., tutoring centers, counseling services, academic advising) and identify available campus resources that support student success once admitted or enrolled. • 12.1.1 Students will research and present at least three on-campus or virtual resources (e.g., tutoring centers, counseling services, academic advising) that are typically offered by postsecondary institutions, explaining how each resource can support student success. • 12.1.2 Students will discuss the support available through postsecondary campuses with their family.



- 9.1.4. Students will discuss postsecondary pathway interests and plans with their families.
- 10.1.3 Students will meet with school counselors or other school staff about match and fit schools and other college and career options.
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- 11.1.4 Students will discuss steps required to prepare for postsecondary pathways with their families.

- **9.2 (K)** Students will evaluate dual enrollment opportunities, explore various college and career options, and connect advanced coursework (including math and electives) to college and career readiness.
 - 9.2.1 Students will map out how advanced math courses such as Algebra II, Pre-Calculus, or Statistics align with college and career preparation standards, explaining how mastery of these subjects supports their future academic or career goals.
 - 9.2.2 Students will select two elective subjects (e.g., art, technology, social sciences) and describe how the structure of knowledge and "ways of knowing" in these courses contribute to broader educational and career pathways.

- 10.2 (K) Students will evaluate dual enrollment opportunities, explore various college and career options, and connect advanced coursework (including math and electives) to college and career readiness.
 - **10.2.1** Students will identify at least two potential advantages (e.g., cost savings, accelerated degree completion) and two possible drawbacks (e.g., time constraints, transferability issues, GPA) of dual enrollment, evaluating how these factors influence their educational plans.



Goal Setting

- college and career aspirations, identify potential obstacles, and outline strategies to overcome them, demonstrating a belief in their own capability to achieve these goals.
 - **9.3.1** Students will identify at least two college and career aspirations (e.g., attending a four-year college, earning a technical certification) and list initial obstacles (e.g., finances, academic requirements), proposing one basic strategy to address each.
- 9.3 (A) Students will articulate their 10.3 (A) Students will articulate their 11.3 (A) Students will articulate their 12.3 (A) Students will articulate their college and career aspirations, identify potential obstacles, and demonstrating a belief in their own capability to achieve these goals.
 - **10.3.1** Building on their identified aspirations, students will research specific programs or institutions, detail at least two new potential obstacles (e.g., admission deadlines, standardized test requirements), and refine their strategies to address each, demonstrating increased confidence in their ability to succeed.
- 10.4 (S) Students will develop and apply self-management strategies—such as effective time management, stress regulation, and management, stress regulation, and a focus on optimism—to persevere toward their personal and academic aspirations.
 - **10.4.1** Students will design a schedule that accommodates academic responsibilities, extracurricular activities, and personal time, evaluating each week's effectiveness and making adjustments to maintain a healthy, productive lifestyle.

- college and career aspirations, identify potential obstacles, and demonstrating a belief in their own capability to achieve these goals.
 - 11.3.1 Students will create a preliminary roadmap (e.g., scheduling standardized tests, drafting application essays, seeking financial aid advice) to overcome previously identified obstacles, sharing how each step enhances their readiness and reinforces their belief in their ability to achieve college and career goals.
- 11.4 (S) Students will develop and apply self-management strategies—such as effective time management, stress regulation, and a focus on optimism—to persevere aspirations.
 - **11.4.1** Students will set at least one personal or academic goal and document the strategies they use to remain hopeful and motivated, noting how positive thinking and self-encouragement affect their progress.

- college and career aspirations, identify potential obstacles, and outline strategies to overcome them, outline strategies to overcome them, outline strategies to overcome them, demonstrating a belief in their own capability to achieve these goals.
 - 12.3.1 Students will finalize and implement their action plans by completing key steps (e.g., submitting applications, applying for scholarships, meeting with advisors), evaluating how effectively each strategy supported their aspirations, and demonstrating a strong belief in their capability to transition to their chosen postsecondary paths.
 - 12.4 (S) Students will develop and apply self-management strategies—such as effective time management, stress regulation, and a focus on optimism—to persevere aspirations.
 - **12.4.1** Students will reflect on a difficult situation (e.g., a challenging project or personal setback), describe the steps they took to demonstrate resilience, overcome obstacles, and evaluate how self-management skills contributed to a successful outcome.

Self Management

- 9.4 (S) Students will develop and apply self-management strategies—such as effective time a focus on optimism—to persevere aspirations.
 - **9.4.1** Students will create and follow a weekly schedule that prioritizes assignments, extracurricular activities, and personal commitments, reflecting on any adjustments needed.



Academic Preparation

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- 9.8 (S) Students will strengthen both 10.8 (S) Students will strengthen both 11.8 (S) Students will strengthen both skills, refine academic writing, and develop strategic test-taking, reading, and interview techniques to and interview techniques to excel excel academically and prepare for college and career success.
 - 9.8.1 Students will establish independent study routines (e.g., daily scheduling, note-taking) and practice effective group study techniques, such as assigning roles and sharing resources, to improve overall academic performance.
 - 9.8.2 Students will write short expository essays, focusing on clear

- collaborative and independent study collaborative and independent study collaborative and independent study collaborative and independent study skills, refine academic writing, and and career success.
 - 10.8.1 Students will amplify group study sessions by setting common goals and using digital tools (e.g., shared documents, online flashcards) to prepare for tests, while also practicing strategic reading and test-taking techniques (e.g., annotating passages, timing strategies).
 - 10.8.2 Students will improve expository essays

- skills, refine academic writing, and and interview techniques to excel and career success.
 - 11.8.1 Students will draft preliminary college application essays, emphasizing personal voice, clarity of ideas, and alignment with application prompts, using peer and teacher feedback to refine content.
 - 11.8.2 Through simulated scholarship or college admissions interviews, students will practice

- skills, refine academic writing, and develop strategic test-taking, reading, develop strategic test-taking, reading, develop strategic test-taking, reading, and interview techniques to excel academically and prepare for college academically and prepare for college academically and prepare for college and career success.
 - 12.8.1 Students will produce polished application essays by applying advanced editing techniques (e.g., careful proofreading, nuanced word choice) and incorporating feedback from peers, counselors, or mentors to achieve a high level of quality and precision.



organization, logical flow, and proper grammar, as a foundation for more advanced writing in later grades.

by incorporating stronger evidence, refining their transitions, and demonstrating greater precision and clarity in their written communication.

articulating personal goals, academic achievements, and extracurricular experiences, focusing on confidence, professionalism, and active listening.

12.8.2 Students will combine strategic reading, time management, and technology-based resources (e.g., online practice tests) to maximize their performance on standardized exams, while continuing to refine independent study routines to transition smoothly into postsecondary academics.

and Awareness

Self-Efficacy 9.9 (A) Students will demonstrate belief in their own capacity for growth and learning by recognizing developed through effort, effective strategies, and access to opportunities and resources.

> • 9.9.1 Students will show confidence in their ability to complete tasks, solve problems, and learn new skills independently or with appropriate resources.

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- **9.10 (A)** Students will demonstrate ability to overcome external barriers and obstacles in order to achieve personal and academic goals.
 - 9.10.1 Students will practice consistent efforts to reach their goals despite setbacks, applying problem-solving strategies and learning from challenges.
 - 9.10.2 Students will articulate their belief in their own capabilities, sharing their successes and strategies used in overcoming external barriers with peers or teachers.
- 9.11 (A) Students will cultivate self-awareness by leveraging personal strengths, identifying areas for growth, engaging in ongoing self-evaluation, and fostering intrinsic motivation.
 - **9.11.1** Students will reflect on their individual strengths (e.g., creativity, analytical thinking) and describe how to use these abilities to demonstrate perseverance and productively in academic or personal contexts, without depending on

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 - 10.10.2 Students will articulate their belief in their own capabilities, sharing their successes and strategies used in overcoming external barriers with peers or teachers.
 - 10.11 (A) Students will cultivate self-awareness by leveraging for growth, engaging in ongoing self-evaluation, and fostering intrinsic motivation.
 - **10.11.1** Students will pinpoint at least two areas in need of improvement (e.g., time management, teamwork) and develop a plan to address these gaps, incorporating specific action steps or resources.
 - **10.11.2** Students will set regular checkpoints (e.g.,

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- **11.11 (A)** Students will cultivate self-awareness by leveraging personal strengths, identifying areas personal strengths, identifying areas for growth, engaging in ongoing self-evaluation, and fostering intrinsic motivation.
 - **11.11.1** Students will identify common causes or triggers of conflict (e.g., miscommunication, differing values) and practice at least two strategies (e.g., active listening, compromise) to de-escalate and resolve disagreements.

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 - 12.11 (A) Students will cultivate self-awareness by leveraging personal strengths, identifying areas for growth, engaging in ongoing self-evaluation, and fostering intrinsic motivation.
 - **12.11.1** Students will examine a recent conflict they experienced, analyze their response, and develop a plan to apply more effective conflict management techniques (e.g., using "I" statements, seeking mediation) in future situations.



them as a sole source of success.

weekly journal entries, peer feedback sessions) to assess their progress, make adjustments based on challenges encountered, and reflect on lessons learned.

Self-Advocacy

10.12 (A) Students will recognize and seek support from trusted adults, utilize and expand their personal networks, and develop effective strategies for asking for help to enhance college and career readiness.

- 10.12.1 Students will identify at least three adults in their school or community (e.g., teachers, counselors, mentors) who can offer academic, personal, or career guidance, explaining the types of support each adult can provide.
- 10.12.2 Students will practice clear communication strategies (e.g., email etiquette, scheduled appointments, concise questions) for seeking assistance.

11.12 (A) Students will recognize and seek support from trusted adults, utilize and expand their personal networks, and develop effective strategies for asking for help to enhance college and career readiness.

- 11.12.1 Students will map out their current network of support (e.g., family, friends, educators, community organizations), identifying how each connection can aid in college and career readiness.
- 11.12.2 Students will identify and reflect on situations in which reaching out to an adult or peer is most beneficial.

12.12 (A) Students will recognize and seek support from trusted adults, utilize and expand their personal networks, and develop effective strategies for asking for help to enhance college and career readiness.

- 12.12.1 Students will develop a plan to expand their network—attending school or community events, joining clubs, or connecting on professional platforms—and document their progress in creating new relationships that further their academic and career goals.
- 12.12.2 Students will recognize how to advocate for student disability services and accommodations in postsecondary education options.
- 12.12.3 Students will practice clear communication strategies (e.g., email etiquette, scheduled appointments,



Sense of Self

9.13 (A) Students will recognize and 10.13 (A) Students will recognize explore their developing academic, personal, and social identities by reflecting on personal experiences, finding role models from similar backgrounds, and fostering a positive sense of self within a broader social context.

• 9.13.1 Students will join or initiate at least one schoolor community-based organization aligned with their personal or social identities (e.g., cultural clubs, service groups), documenting how participation strengthens their sense of self and fosters connections with mentors and like-minded peers.

and explore their developing academic, personal, and social identities by reflecting on personal experiences, finding role models from similar backgrounds, and fostering a positive sense of self within a broader social context.

> • **10.13.1** Building on prior involvement, students will take on a leadership or advocacy role (e.g., planning events, mentoring younger peers, leading campaigns) in a school or community group that reflects their identity, explaining how this leadership experience contributes to personal growth and broader social impact.

11.13 (A) Students will recognize and explore their developing academic, personal, and social identities by reflecting on personal experiences, finding role models from similar backgrounds, and fostering a positive sense of self within a broader social context.

> • **11.13.1** As part of college and career readiness activities, students will create a personal statement or capstone project linking their developing identity to college and career goals (e.g., essays for college applications, portfolios for technical programs). They will articulate how their unique background, values, and strengths position them for success in future academic or career pathways.

concise questions) for seeking assistance.

12.13 (A) Students will recognize and explore their developing academic, personal, and social identities by reflecting on personal experiences, finding role models from similar backgrounds, and fostering a positive sense of self within a broader social context.

> • **12.13.1** Students will evaluate how their self-awareness and engagement with diverse communities over high school have influenced their academic choices and college and career aspirations, setting at least one specific, identity-informed goal for transitioning to college, the workforce, or other college and career pursuits.