

FALL 2023

Pathway to Financial Success
In Schools

Educator Program Guide

MIDDLE SCHOOL

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Program At-a-Glance

	Unit	Financial Literacy	Math	English Language Arts	Social Studies
	Unit 1 Being Financially Responsible	Puzzling Budgets	Recommendations Versus Reality: Budgeting in the Real World	Behavioral Economics and Financial Decisions	Comparing Personal and Government Budgeting
	Unit 2 Getting Paid	Multiple Job Options	Learn More, Earn More?	Career Planning 101	The Compulsory Education Act
	Unit 3 Paying Yourself First	How Interest Works	Earning Money by Saving Money	Save with Me?	The Great Depression
	Unit 4 Using Credit Wisely	Charge It?	Interest Adds Up	Credit Cards: How Are They Different?	Interest Rates: Not Just for Consumers
	Unit 5 Making Major Purchases	Can't Trick Me	Not All Cell Phone Plans Are Created Equal	What's in it for Them: Understanding a Source's Incentives	Who Has Your Back: Understanding Product Information Sources
	Unit 6 Growing and Protecting Your Finances	Invest In It	Dividends: What Are They, and Do They Matter?	The Making of a Stock Market Price	Who Owns Instagram?

Program Overview

[Pathway to Financial Success in Schools](#) empowers middle school students to take control of their financial futures. Educators can help students and their families explore comprehensive financial literacy resources to gain the tools and skills they need to make sound financial decisions and achieve their personal goals.

One way Pathway to Financial Success in Schools is different from other financial education programs is that it offers educators and students a variety of instructional resources that focus on the same financial literacy theme. At the middle school level, each of the six thematic units includes a video for students and four subject-specific lessons that build off the content of the video. The math, language arts, and social studies lessons make connections between core content standards and the financial literacy topics addressed in each video. The family and consumer sciences lessons focus solely on the personal finance concepts. In addition, each unit includes an educator-focused video that provides an overview of the topic and tips for making the content relevant for middle school students.

The program is designed to be very flexible and meet the needs of educators in a wide array of educational settings and content areas. Educators can choose to use one or all of the resources, depending on their needs and the time they have available.

Six Thematic Units

At the [middle school level](#), Pathway to Financial Success in Schools is divided into six thematic units which can be taught sequentially or in any order that aligns with your instructional goals. More information on the resources found in each unit can be found later in this guide.

- Unit 1: Being Financially Responsible
- Unit 2: Getting Paid
- Unit 3: Paying Yourself First
- Unit 4: Using Credit Wisely
- Unit 5: Making Major Financial Decisions
- Unit 6: Growing & Protecting Your Finances



**Being
Financially
Responsible**



Getting Paid



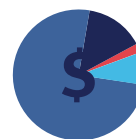
**Paying
Yourself First**



**Using Credit
Wisely**



**Making Major
Purchases**



**Growing and
Protecting Your
Finances**

Classroom Activities

Each unit offers four classroom activities to engage students in hands-on, instructor-led lessons. The activities are designed to be taught in one to two class periods, but there are options for extending each if time allows. Each activity includes the following:

- **Overview:** Brief description of the activity
- **Content Area:** The primary content area focus for the activity (math, language arts, social studies, or family and consumers sciences)
- **Themes:** The core content and personal finance themes addressed in the activity
- **Learning Objectives:** What the student should be able to do as a result of the activity
- **Standards Correlation:** Activities are aligned to the following national standards
 - Math: [Common Core State Standards](#)
 - Language arts: [Common Core State Standards](#)
 - Social studies: [The College, Career, and Civic Life \(C3\) Framework for Social Studies State Standards](#)
 - Personal Finance: [National Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences Education](#), [National Standards for Personal Financial Education](#), and [National Standards for Business Education](#)



- **Key Terms:** Essential vocabulary used in the activity
- **Materials:** What is needed to accomplish the activity—typically student handouts or minimal classroom supplies
- **Connect:** How the activity connects to students' lives, careers, technology, and/or the world
- **Prepare:** Background information for the educator
- **Engage:** Strategy to kick off the activity and get students interested in the topic
- **Teach:** Step-by-step instructional process
- **Extend:** Opportunities to expand instruction including research, action, technology, or family conversations



Unit 1: Being Financially Responsible

Videos	
For Educators	<p>3 minutes 47 seconds Budgeting and Financial Goals</p> <p>Watch this video for a refresher on budgeting basics and tips on showing students how budgets work as spending plans.</p>
For Students	<p>3 minutes 17 seconds Budgeting: What It Is and How Does It Work?</p> <p>Use this video to introduce students to the concept of budgets, how people use them, and why they are important.</p>
Classroom Activities	
Family and Consumer Sciences and Business	<p>Puzzling Budgets</p> <p><i>What is a budget, and why should you use one?</i> The lesson begins with students discussing common expenses and learning the difference between fixed and variable expenses. Students participate in a hands-on activity in which they receive pieces of several budgets and work together to compile them into ones that balance. Once the budgets are together, they review the components and answer questions about them.</p> <p>Personal finance theme: Budgeting</p>
Math	<p>Recommendations versus Reality: Budgeting in the Real World</p> <p><i>How does developing a budget help you manage your money?</i> Students practice calculating percentages by creating personal budgets. The activity begins with students considering how teens spend money and comparing their responses to national averages. Students then work in pairs to develop a budget given recommended percentages and various scenarios.</p> <p>Math theme: Ratios and percents</p>
Language Arts	<p>Behavioral Economics and Financial Decisions</p> <p><i>Why do people sometimes make financial choices they know they shouldn't make?</i> Students learn basic principles of behavioral economics by reflecting on personal financial decisions. Students evaluate incentives for a new community volunteering program and then recall personal experiences in which they have made a questionable financial decision. Students review the components of a personal narrative, write their own, and conclude by considering a more rational alternative.</p> <p>ELA theme: Personal narratives</p>
Social Studies	<p>Comparing Personal and Government Budgeting</p> <p><i>Does the government need to think about the same things you do when creating a budget?</i> Students consider what steps the government takes to create a budget. The activity begins with students creating a mock budget with a fictitious birthday gift. Students then create a life-sized Venn diagram to compare and contrast the personal and governmental budget processes.</p> <p>Social studies themes: Civics, Economics</p>

Unit 2: Getting Paid

Videos	
For Educators	<p>3 minutes 27 seconds Planning for Future Careers</p> <p>Watch this video for an overview of how education, earnings, and job outlooks relate to one another. It also provides strategies for helping students apply this information to their lives.</p>
For Students	<p>3 minutes 10 seconds What Do You Want to Be When You Grow Up?</p> <p>Use this video to help students make connections between education and income.</p>
Classroom Activities	
Family and Consumer Sciences and Business	<p>Multiple Job Options</p> <p><i>What could you be when you grow up?</i> Students explore various jobs within an industry of interest with a special focus on jobs that have various education and training requirements. To demonstrate their knowledge, students create an infographic to share with classmates.</p> <p>Personal finance theme: Careers</p>
Math	<p>Learn More. Earn More?</p> <p><i>Will getting more education guarantee that you will earn more money?</i> Students view and interpret three graphs relating to earnings and educational attainment. The activity begins with students guessing the cost of college and considering why people invest in higher education. Students then analyze data in three different graphs with information about lifetime earnings by education level, occupation, and college major. They make comparisons and draw conclusions. In doing so, students learn that information on graphs may appear straightforward, but it is important to dig deeper and ask questions.</p> <p>Math theme: Data analysis</p>
Language Arts	<p>Career Planning 101</p> <p><i>What education will your students need to land their dream jobs?</i> Students complete a short research activity in which they consider the many facets of various jobs. This activity begins with cursory information gathering about different careers in various industries. Students then participate in more in-depth research to reveal necessary education, potential salary, etc. within chosen careers before comparing results with peers to determine which jobs are likely to lead to the highest incomes over time.</p> <p>ELA theme: Researching; Speaking and listening</p>
Social Studies	<p>The Compulsory Education Act</p> <p><i>Should the government play a role in determining how many years you are in school?</i> Students will discuss the concept of compulsory education and participate in an inquiry activity on compulsory education laws and how they relate to education and income. They will explore the impact/benefits on individuals, businesses, and society as a whole. Groups of students will share their findings with the class.</p> <p>Social studies themes: Civics; Economics</p>

Unit 3: Paying Yourself First

Videos	
For Educators	<p>3 minutes 12 seconds <u>Delayed Gratification and Interest</u></p> <p>Watch this video to see the power of compound interest along with methods for encouraging students to save.</p>
For Students	<p>3 minutes 17 seconds <u>How Can You Get the Most from Your Money?</u></p> <p>Use this video to present an explanation of compound interest—what it is and how it works.</p>
Classroom Activities	
Family and Consumer Sciences and Business	<p><u>How Interest Works</u></p> <p><i>Why do you earn interest on your savings?</i> After examining sample ads for savings accounts and loan products, students participate in an interactive demonstration of how money flows through and is used by banks. In the process, they learn why and how savers earn interest on the money they deposit while borrowers are charged interest for loans.</p> <p>Personal finance theme: Saving; Interest</p>
Math	<p><u>Earning Money by Saving Money</u></p> <p><i>How much will your money be worth in the future?</i> Students learn two ways to calculate the future value of a savings account (repeating the calculation for simple interest and using the future value formula). After solving the provided problem, students conduct research to determine the interest rates paid on savings accounts at three financial institutions. In small groups, they create their own compound interest problems for peers.</p> <p>Math theme: Rate calculations including simple and compound interest</p>
Language Arts	<p><u>Save with Me!</u></p> <p><i>What should you find out about a savings account before you open one?</i> Students write a persuasive speech convincing peers to save money with their imagined “bank.” The activity begins with students completing small amounts of research on actual financial institutions. Students then formulate a “pitch” to their classmates that includes interest rates offered, potential fees and requirements, and how much the customer is expected to gain by saving over different periods of time.</p> <p>ELA theme: Persuasive writing; Supporting a claim with evidence; Speaking and listening; Research</p>
Social Studies	<p><u>The Great Depression</u></p> <p><i>Can the government protect us from another Great Depression?</i> Students complete a jigsaw activity in which they create a human time line of events and elements like the Great Depression, bank failures, the Great Recession of 2008, loss of confidence in bank institutions, and the creation of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC). Students will participate in a discussion of the differences between banking during the 1930s and contemporary banking.</p> <p>Social studies themes: Government; Economics</p>

Unit 4: Using Credit Wisely

Videos	
For Educators	<p>3 minutes 19 seconds</p> <p><u>Make Credit “Interest”ing for Students</u></p> <p>This video provides strategies for fostering student understanding of different types of credit, credit scores, and interest rates.</p>
For Students	<p>3 minutes 6 seconds</p> <p><u>What is Credit, and How do You Use It?</u></p> <p>This video introduces students to credit and how it can be used responsibly to help people purchase items they want or need.</p>
Classroom Activities	
Family and Consumer Sciences and Business	<p><u>Charge It?</u></p> <p><i>How are credit cards different from debit cards? Which one should I use?</i> Students list purchases and the payment methods used for each. They make purchase and payment decisions based on assigned identities. Students use a graphic organizer to outline the benefits and tradeoffs of various payment options.</p> <p>Personal finance theme: Credit</p>
Math	<p><u>Interest Adds Up</u></p> <p><i>How much interest will you pay for a loan?</i> Students learn that higher interest rates lead to greater total loan amounts. They play a game of “I Have, Who Has” then learn that people with better credit pay less for loans. Students calculate loan costs using an online mortgage calculator and create a scatter plot of their data to determine the relationship and line of best fit. The activity concludes with students learning steps they can take to build good credit and pay less interest in the future.</p> <p>Math theme: Percent calculations; Scatter plots; Line of best fit</p>
Language Arts	<p><u>Credit Cards: How Are They Different?</u></p> <p><i>What should you look for when selecting a credit card?</i> This activity involves students participating in a jigsaw activity. Research teams learn and answer questions about specific types of credit cards. New groups form to piece their information together and create presentations to explain the differences in each type of card and what to look for when selecting a card.</p> <p>ELA theme: Collaborative discussions; Speaking and listening; Research</p>
Social Studies	<p><u>Interest Rates: Not Just for Consumers</u></p> <p>Why do changes in the interest rate set by the government impact you as a consumer? Students learn how decisions made by the Federal Reserve can impact them as consumers. Using the idiom, “tip of the iceberg,” students learn that interest rates are more complex than they appear. In pairs, students investigate the role of the Federal Reserve and its influence over time. The class then compiles a timeline of rates and makes observations. Finally, students are asked to consider whether they would prefer a lower or higher federal funds rate and defend their responses.</p> <p>Social studies themes: Government; Economics</p>

Unit 5: Making Major Financial Decisions

Videos	
For Educators	<p>3 minutes 24 seconds Buyer Beware</p> <p>With the digital nature of everything, there are now more opportunities for advertisers to get in front of students than ever. Learn how to help students make sound spending decisions.</p>
For Students	<p>3 minutes 5 seconds “To Buy or Not to Buy” That is the Question</p> <p>Use this video to introduce students to ways that advertisers try to draw them in and how to determine whether they really want or need that purchase.</p>
Classroom Activities	
Family and Consumer Sciences and Business	<p>Can’t Trick Me</p> <p><i>What influences you to purchase things? How can you avoid spending money unnecessarily?</i></p> <p>Students play a game in which they consider factors that may have influenced their decision to buy items. As a class, students fill in a T-chart listing factors that influence people’s spending decisions. They watch a video and learn about strategies they can take to be better consumers. In small groups, students consider how they can apply these strategies in their own lives.</p> <p>Personal finance theme: Buying goods and services</p>
Math	<p>Not All Cell Phone Plans Are Created Equal</p> <p><i>How do you know which cell phone plan is best?</i> Students learn that many factors influence how much people pay for cell phone plans. Students brainstorm features a person might consider when selecting a cell phone plan. They then collect and analyze cell phone plan data from adults. The activity concludes with students revisiting their initial list of features and adding to their list.</p> <p>Math theme: Data collection; Measures of center and spread; Data analysis</p>
Language Arts	<p>What’s in It for Them: Understanding a Source’s Incentives</p> <p><i>Can you trust this salesperson?</i> Students begin by discussing how they decide whether to purchase an item they desire. They perform Reader’s Theatre-style skits, discuss examples of customers’ interactions with salespeople, and work with a partner to “fact check” the salesperson’s claims. Students then write their own claim statements to determine whether the salesperson’s methods are effective in convincing a customer to buy a product.</p> <p>ELA theme: Collaborative discussions; Speaking and listening; Research</p>
Social Studies	<p>Who Has Your Back: Understanding Product Information Sources</p> <p><i>Where can you find reliable information about the products you want to purchase?</i> Students learn to evaluate sources while gathering information about a product from manufacturers’ websites, retail websites, and consumer review websites. Students explain what information is helpful when making their decision to purchase the product.</p> <p>Social studies themes: Evaluating Sources & Using Evidence</p>

Unit 6: Growing & Protecting Your Finances

Videos	
For Educators	<p>3 minutes 40 seconds Growing and Protecting Your Finances</p> <p>Examine the risks versus potential benefits of investments and explore different investment options.</p>
For Students	<p>2 minutes 51 seconds The Risks and Rewards of Investing</p> <p>Use this video to help students understand the differences between investing and a traditional savings account.</p>
Classroom Activities	
Family and Consumer Sciences and Business	<p>Invest in It</p> <p><i>What are stocks and how do you pick them?</i> Students participate in a group brainstorming activity in which they identify brands or companies in a variety of different categories. Students work in groups to research companies from the lists they created. After learning about mutual funds, students work independently to create their own fictional mutual funds. The activity concludes with students comparing funds and determining which are more or less risky.</p> <p>Personal finance theme: Investing</p>
Math	<p>Dividends: What Are They, and Do They Matter?</p> <p><i>How can you make money in the stock market?</i> Students learn about dividends and how yield is a numeric indicator of a company's dividends. As a class, students investigate if companies pay a dividend. Students select companies to create their own hypothetical portfolio. They use dice to determine the number of shares in each company and calculate their dividend payments. The activity concludes with students considering whether they would invest in dividend-paying stocks and a reminder that all investments come with the potential for loss.</p> <p>Math theme: Ratios; Rates; Percentages</p>
Language Arts	<p>The Making of a Stock Market Price</p> <p><i>What influences stock prices?</i> Students begin by brainstorming companies that interest them. They work in groups to research and summarize recent news articles that feature the company of their choice. Finally, students analyze how the news in each of the articles may have affected the company's stock prices.</p> <p>ELA theme: Research; Central idea; Summarizing</p>
Social Studies	<p>Who Owns Instagram?</p> <p><i>Who owns Instagram?</i> Students learn about publicly versus privately owned companies as they research the history of Instagram. Students create a time line of events answering the question, "Who owns Instagram?" Then, students consider the ownership and whether that impacts or should impact their use of the platform.</p> <p>Social studies themes: Economics</p>

Standards Correlation

The Pathway to Financial Success in Schools program has been correlated to the [National Standards for Personal Financial Education](#) from the Council for Economic Education and Jump\$tart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy and the [National Standards for Business Education](#) from the National Business Education Association. The charts below provide a high-level view of the connections between the content in each unit and these standards. For more information on specific correlations, please reference the appropriate Unit Educator Guide.

National Standards for Personal Financial Education

Unit	I. Earning Income	II. Spending	III. Saving	IV. Investing	V. Managing Credit	VI. Managing Risk*
1: Being Financially Responsible		X	X			
2: Getting Paid	X					
3: Paying Yourself First			X		X	
4: Using Credit Wisely		X	X		X	
5: Making Major Financial Decisions		X				
6: Growing and Protecting Your Finances				X		

Curriculum note: Pathway to Financial Success in Schools currently aligns with middle school standards I-V of the National Standards for Personal Finance Education. We are always building on the Pathway to Financial Success in Schools program and will update this guide when new resources and alignments are available. To sign up for updates, please [click here](#).

National Standards for Business Education

Unit	I. Personal Decision Making	II. Earning and Reporting Income	III. Managing Finances and Budgeting	IV. Saving and Investing	V. Buying Goods and Services	VI. Banking and Financial	VII. Using Credit	VIII. Protecting Against Risk	IX. Financing Postsecondary Education and Training
1: <u>Being Financially Responsible</u>	X		X		X	X			
2: <u>Getting Paid</u>		X							
3: <u>Paying Yourself First</u>				X		X	X		
4: <u>Using Credit Wisely</u>						X	X		
5: <u>Making Major Financial Decisions</u>	X				X				
6: <u>Growing and Protecting Your Finances</u>				X					

Curriculum note: Pathway to Financial Success in Schools currently aligns with middle school standards I-VII of the National Standards for Business Education. We are always building on the Pathway to Financial Success in Schools program and will update this guide when new resources and alignments are available. To sign up for updates, please [click here](#).