



DeKalb County Community Foundation  
475 DeKalb Ave., Sycamore, IL 60178  
(815) 748-5383 [www.dekalbcountyfoundation.org](http://www.dekalbcountyfoundation.org)

## Essential Skills Enhancement Grant Guidelines & Application

### Grant Program Purpose

Soft skills or essential skills are the social, personal, employment, and cultural skills needed to successfully communicate and relate with others. Essential skills are important tools for building solid academic and technical skills as well as strong communities and families. The DeKalb County Community Foundation is committed to support the enhancement of soft skills/essential skills among DeKalb County's youth through a grant program based on the following premises:

- Essential skill development is a community-wide enterprise involving schools, parents, employers, human service organizations, peers and other partners.
- Enhancing essential skills complements the Illinois State Board of Education requirement for local schools to incorporate social and emotional development standards as part of the Illinois Learning Standards.
- It is important to build on what is already working in schools and the broader community to foster essential skills in our community's youth.
- The initiative promotes and supports collaboration between schools, service providers and the local work force to engage youth in developing essential skills.

### Guidelines & Eligibility

#### Applications

Essential Skill Enhancement Grant (ESEG) applications are accepted on an ongoing basis or as published through the Community Foundation. Grant applications are reviewed by members of the Community Foundation Workforce Development Committee subject to final approval of the Community Foundation Board of Directors on a quarterly basis. All requests must be submitted using the ESEG Application attached to this document and available on the Community Foundation website at [www.dekalbccf.org](http://www.dekalbccf.org). Contact Teri Spartz at [t.spartz@dekalbccf.org](mailto:t.spartz@dekalbccf.org) for more information.

#### Eligibility

ESEG are available to recognized programs and/or educators (nonprofits and schools) working primarily with youth (grades Pre-K through 12) in DeKalb County, Illinois.

#### General Requirements

- Grants are to be utilized within one year of receipt and a grant report must be submitted at the end of the program.
- Grants up to \$5,000 will be considered.
- Grant requests may be for existing programs or curriculum or for original innovative ideas or programs that directly enhance essential skills.

### Essential Skills Grant Guidelines

- Projects or programs should focus on or reference specific components of the Community Foundation Essential Skills for Success wheel (attached) and/or pertinent recognized social and emotional development standards which are part of the Illinois Learning Standards.
- Funded programs are encouraged to include a recognized measurement tool and/or an assessment and evaluation component which are encouraged to be included in reporting.
- If the project proposes to work with a school or educators, the application should include letters of support and evidence of need from pertinent personnel.

### Areas of Emphasis

While all programs and projects that incorporate the Skills for Success wheel will be considered for funding, preference will be given to those applications that focus on the following areas of emphasis:

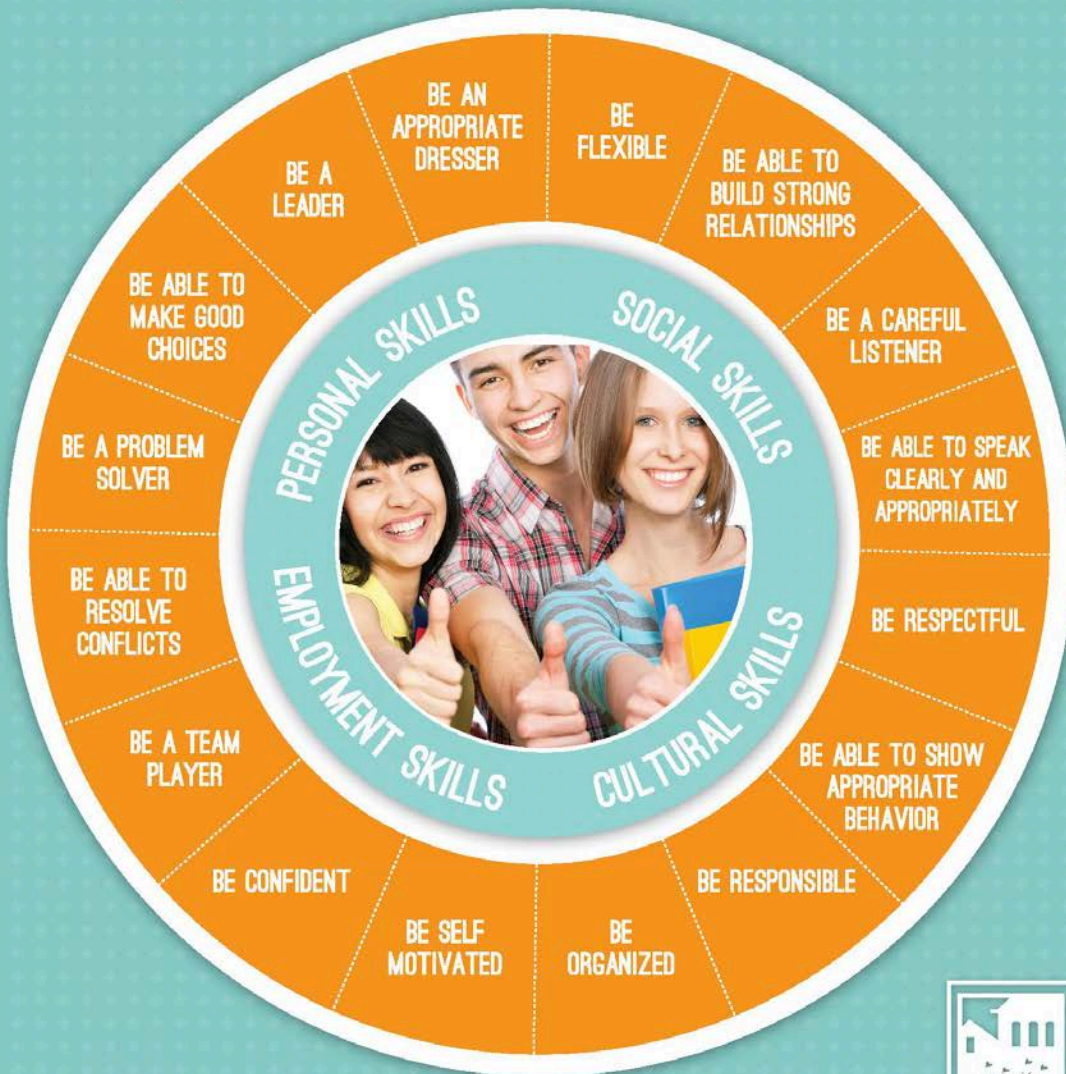
- Professional development and trainings to build the individual capacity of professionals who deliver educational and human service programming supporting essential skills that engage with youth on an ongoing basis.
- Recognized programs targeted toward building essential skills in at risk youth, underserved or diverse populations that have been professionally identified through school or counseling settings.
- Applied settings and programs providing youth with essential skill training through direct immersion into workplace settings, such as internships, youth-business incubator trainings, etc.

### Projects/Uses Generally Not Funded

- Ongoing operational components of organizations or established programs including personnel costs.
- Religious purposes (however grants can be given to religious organizations for non-religious purposes)
- Funds directed to specific individuals

# Are You Ready?

## ESSENTIAL SKILLS FOR SUCCESS



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