



DeKalb County Community Foundation
475 DeKalb Avenue, Sycamore, IL 60178
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Essential Skills Incentive Grant Guidelines

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 supporting 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 Skills Incentive Grant applications are accepted beginning October 9 and close on December 1. Grant applications are reviewed by members of the Community Foundation Workforce Development Committee subject to final approval of the Community Foundation Board of Directors. All requests must be submitted online at dekalbccf.org. Contact Teri Spartz at t.spartz@dekalbccf.org for more information.

Eligibility

Grants are available to recognized organizations and/or educators (nonprofits and schools) working **primarily** with youth (grades 6 through 12) in DeKalb County, Illinois. Organizations who work with young adults may be considered.

General Requirements

- Grants are to incentivize schools/organizations to utilize the Essential Skills Video Series, Resource Guide, and included surveys in class/programs.
- Approved grant applicants may receive a grant up to \$2,500 to assist in activities/needs related to the completion of the Essential Skills Video Series program, utilization of the resource guide along with student and teacher survey tools. Grantees will be required to submit a grant report upon completion of the program.

Essential Skills Grant Guidelines

- Use of grant funds should focus on or reference specific components of the Community Foundation Essential Skills Video Series and Essential Skills Success wheel (attached).
- After completing the Essential Skills Video Series, recipients are required to submit a grant report to evaluate the effectiveness of the series.

Areas of Emphasis

While approved applicants that complete the Essential Skills for Success Video Series will be eligible for funding, preference will be given to those applications that focus on the following areas of emphasis:

- Schools and/or recognized organizations targeted toward building essential skills for at risk youth, underserved or diverse populations that have been professionally identified through school or counseling settings.

Projects/Uses Generally Not Funded

- Ongoing operational components of organizations or established programs including personnel costs.
- Technology/hardware
- 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

