

Illinois Central College

Drop Out Recovery Program Abstract

Contract # OSY-2024-03

This contract has been entered into for the purpose of providing a drop-out recovery program for the high school drop-outs in need of literacy and/or numeracy remediation. The contract begins July 1, 2024 and will terminate on June 30, 2025, but may be extended for two additional years if mutually agreed to. The funding amount is \$20,000. The enrollment goal is 20 students.

Illinois Central College will provide the intensive education and employment skills program for Tazewell County youth and youth from surrounding counties who may benefit from enrollment in Illinois Central College's program. Consensus from both Illinois Central College and Career Link will be required for students outside of Peoria County. The program will serve students, ages 16-24, that have dropped out of high school, preferably have a deficiency in literacy or numeracy, and will be provide an opportunity to participate in a GED Recovery Program.

The Service Provider will provide all four required program elements – instruction for GED preparation, for literacy and numeracy gains, for employment related skills, and incentives to motivate students to achieve. The Service Provider will also partner with other groups and businesses to provide Work Experience.

1. GED Preparation

The elements of the Drop Out Recovery Program will be provided by the College and Career Readiness Adult Education Department and managed by the Adult Education Transition Coordinator. Participants will be students from a math & science GED class or a language arts and social studies GED class. The content instructors will provide some Career Awareness lessons.

GED Preparation	College & Career Readiness	Technology Skills and Digital Literacy	Transition to Job or College
Reading Language Arts (Writing is covered throughout all areas.)	Self-Assessment & Career Exploration	CANVAS (ICC's Learning Management System)	Job search skills
Science	Developing a Career Plan	Writing a resume, online applications, cover letter	Time Management
Social Studies and Constitution	Critical Thinking	Typing	Transition Steps to post-secondary education
Mathematical Reasoning	Career Clusters	Microsoft Office soft skills	
Critical Thinking	Employability Skills/GPEAK		

The following instructional materials will be used:

- i-Pathways – Illinois Adult Education online learning program to prepare for the GED
- Career Awareness Curriculum
- Constitution Module provided by the state
- Textbooks
- New Readers Press Workbooks
- Preparation for the GED Test (McGraw-Hill Vol.)
- Instructional websites
- Computer support programs, cable, phone and Internet access
- Varied approved materials per instructor content area

The Service Provider is required to assist Career Link in attaining a copy of the youth's GED certificate or transcript from the Regional Office of Education.

2. Literacy and Numeracy Gains/Measureable Skills Gains

The program must provide for specific gains in literacy and/or numeracy, as appropriate, based on the initial assessment with the TABE or CASAS. The standard of achievement is for the youth to increase at least one educational functioning level in at least one area of deficiency. Measurable Skills Gains (MSG) are indicators used to track important achievements of WIOA participants. A student in a GED program can earn a MSG by completing their GED or increasing a reading or math grade level. Attainment of the MSG will be determined by a post-test. The post-test must be the same type (TABE/CASAS) as the pre-test. The Service Provider should work with Career Link to develop an individualized plan for when students should be post-tested.

The purpose of the Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) indicator is to track and measure important progressions and achievements made by WIOA clients (entered in training or education), through pathways and towards various goals of their individual programs. A gain must be recorded for a client each year (July 1 – June 30) they are enrolled in training or education and progress satisfactorily in one or more areas of their employment or training program.

3. Employment-related Skills

The program must provide information in Career Exploration, Job Readiness Skills, and Job Search Techniques in order to enhance the youths' ability to obtain employment or to attend post-secondary educational training. The program provider is responsible for providing adequate training and counseling to assist the youth in achieving one of these outcomes mentioned above, up to the point where the youth has been terminated from the program. Goals for attainment of benchmarks in the area will be jointly established between Career Link staff and Service Provider staff. These Work Readiness goal achievements will flow naturally from the delivery of this element.

Each adult education learner must complete the Career Awareness curriculum. This covers self- assessments, career clusters, career exploration, job search skills, and other soft skills. Students will use the ICC Career Coach to determine their top career cluster(s). Students will be given lists of programs ICC offers in each career cluster.

The other portion of our College and Career Awareness curriculum is the GPEAK (Greater Peoria Essential Abilities & Knowledge) section. Each quarter, students study a different employability skill determined by local employers in the Peoria area. Each week, students do a measurable activity related to the competency assigned.

Competencies studied are:

- Teamwork & Conflict Resolution
- Reliability & Accountability
- Adaptability & Flexibility
- Planning & Organizing
- Cultural Competence
- Problem Solving
- Communication
- Decision Making
- Initiative & Self Drive
- Critical Thinking

During the quarter, each student will speak with the transition coordinator. Students will complete a Career Pathway Plan continually updated through their journey in Adult Education and transition into post-secondary education or a career.

4. Incentives

A financial incentive system will be offered to encourage perseverance and participation in goal-directed activities. Incentives may be modified, with prior approval from Career Link, as the need arises to make them more effective and appropriate in promoting program successes. The subcontractor will issue incentives directly to students. Incentives must be awarded throughout the year and may not be withheld from students until completion of the program. Every award will be fully documented and receipt of each incentive will be signed for by the student and the records saved by the subcontractor.

- Student incentives may not be incurred after 30 days upon attaining a GED.
- Maximum incentive awards per student may not exceed \$500 for the duration of the student's enrollment with Career Link.

ICAPS Training

ICC's Adult Education program is offering a Health Career ICAPS Program Pathway, a Manufacturing ICAPS Program Pathway, and an IT and Entrepreneurship Bridge Program. In the ICAPS program, students complete CNA or Welding certificates while they continue to work on GED preparation. The goal is to pass the GED examination and receive college credit in their chosen pathway. Following the bridge classes, students can continue postsecondary training along the chosen pathway to receive credentials.

Work Experience Component

Students who demonstrate regular and reliable patterns of attendance, work ethic, and academic performance are selected to participate in a related work program. Worksites are arranged by the Service Provider and the Career Link Career Planner. Efforts are made to place students in sites that are compatible with their interests or previous work experiences and are easily accessed, especially when transportation is a challenge for the student. Career Link will establish a contractual agreement with the employer at the request of the Service Provider. Career Link will pay the youth the current Illinois minimum wage or up to \$5.00 above the minimum wage, depending on the prevailing entry-level wage for the work site. Work Experience may continue up to 1,800 hours, or up to eighteen (18) months duration, whichever occurs first. Student workers cannot exceed 29 work hours per week. Career Link should be made aware of issues at worksites and should be contacted before a student is removed from a worksite. The subcontractor will initiate the process of placing students in job, in conjunction with Career Link oversight.

Employers from industry sector leaders as identified in the North Central Economic Development Region 3 LWIA 15 plan will be invited to speak to the students. Employers will share specific industry labor market information and job readiness expectations. ICC will host career fairs and expos around manufacturing and health careers where employers interact directly with students and share information on high need/high wage sectors. Priority is given to employers offering a life-sustaining wage (above minimum wage) and are verified as opportunities for students completing credentials. Adult Education works closely with ICC Career Services on these opportunities.

Transition to Employment or Post-Secondary Training

The subcontractor will provide a comprehensive transition program to support GED graduates in their pursuit of post-secondary education or employment, including but not limited to career assessments, job placement services, and referrals to local education and training providers. The subcontractor will work collaboratively with Career Link to identify and address barriers to successful transition, and shall provide regular updates on its progress towards achieving these goals.

Students completing the Drop-Out Recovery Program who wish to transition directly to work will be referred to the ICC Career Center or to Career Link for work experience, on-the-job training, and/or job search. In addition, the department transition coordinator works with students to discuss seeking employment opportunities.

In addition to the activities in the Drop-Out Recovery Program classes, the transition coordinator will work directly with students wishing to transition to postsecondary training. They will work with the appropriate ICC student service offices – enrollment services, financial assistance, access services, placement testing, and academic advisement. Students will then be enrolled in the appropriate CTE program. These programs give students the chance to earn a college certificate for credentialing in the workplace.