

Spoon River College Contract Abstract

This contract has been entered into for the purpose of providing a drop-out recovery program for the youth. The contract began on July 1, 2021 and will terminate on June 30, 2022. This contract is renewable for two additional years at the discretion of Career Link. The funding amount is \$63,480. The enrollment goal is 15 students. To participate students must meet the eligibility criteria for out-of-school youth as defined in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

Spoon River College will provide the intensive education and employment skills program for Fulton County youth. The program will serve students, ages 16-24, that have dropped out of high school, have a deficiency in literacy or numeracy, and are economically disadvantaged, will be provided an opportunity to participate in a GED Recovery Program.

Spoon River College will provide all four required elements of the program – instruction for GED preparation, for literacy and numeracy gains, for employment related skills and incentives to motivate students to achieve. The College will also partner with other groups and businesses to provide workforce experiences.

The Drop Out Recovery Program will be operated by the college's Adult Education program. Program participants will be allowed to begin all elements at the beginning of each of the 4 eight-week sessions and continue until they complete the Illinois High School Equivalency (GED) preparation and make sufficient literacy/numeracy gains.

Spoon River College currently provides Illinois High School Equivalency (GED) preparation courses in the morning and evening in both Canton and Havana. Classes run for eight weeks, twice in both the fall and spring semesters. Drop-Out Recovery Program participants will be enrolled in at least one Illinois High School Equivalency (GED) preparation class. This course is designed to provide information in career exploration, job readiness, job search techniques, and/or post-secondary education. Participation is designed to enhance the participant's ability to obtain employment and/or to attend post-secondary education training.

Participants will receive training in Career and College Readiness. The program will not only prepare participants to seek or obtain employment but also cover skills essential to keeping their job once they are hired.

In addition, participants will receive training/instruction about a variety of Life Skills subjects that are not directly related to looking for a job. Some of the Life Skills subjects indirectly support an individual who is looking for work and others help strengthen families by improving their organizational, decision making and other skills.

The fundamental purpose of the program is to empower students to make informed decisions about their career and educational plans and to prepare students for success in the workforce and/or postsecondary education and training. Staff will help students define career aspirations and recognize community college and other postsecondary programs, including apprenticeships, and workforce training that can enhance their capacity to achieve educational and financial goals. The program is first and foremost student-centered, and the coaching activities are measured on whether or not they serve the students in their quest to find meaningful careers and appropriate postsecondary education options.

The transition element will primarily be the functions of the Adult Education Advisor. Staff will help students define career aspirations and recognize community college and other post-secondary programs, including apprenticeships and workforce training that can enhance their capacity to achieve educational and financial goals. Participants will be eligible for concurrent enrollment upon successful completion of a minimum of two GED examinations.

If the participant's goals indicate the desire to move directly into the workforce, program staff will assist in designing a training program that will provide the participants with knowledge and skills related to: job research, resume writing, interview skills, positive work habits, and business etiquette.

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.