

RFP #26153

**Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act
In-School Youth Career Readiness and
Work-Based Learning**

Pre-Proposal Informational Meeting



Introductions

- Lake County Purchasing
- Lake County Workforce Development Board
- Lake County Workforce Development Department

Timeline

Event	Date	Time	Details
Release of RFP	Friday, February 20, 2026	-	Start of the RFP availability for interested parties.
Pre-Proposal Informational Meeting	Monday, March 2, 2026	11:00 AM CST	Overview of the RFP requirements via Zoom, followed by a Q&A session.
Deadline for RFP Inquiries	Monday, March 16, 2026	11:00 AM CST	Last opportunity for proposers to submit questions for clarification.
Deadline for Proposal Submission	Monday, March 23, 2026	11:00 AM CST	Final deadline for electronic submission of proposals.
Finalist Interviews	March 30 - April 10, 2026	-	Scheduled finalist interviews if necessary
Executive Committee Meeting Workforce Board Approval County Board Approval	April 15, 2026 April 16, 2026 May 12, 2026	-	Anticipated approval of the awarded proposer(s).

Proposals received after the deadline will not be accepted or opened. Proposers are strongly advised to submit their proposals early to avoid any technical issues or delays. Ensure confirmation of receipt from the Lake County Purchasing Division.

Lake County Workforce Development Board's In-School Youth Career Readiness and Work Based Learning RFP Seeks:

- Qualified Lake County high schools, alternative schools, career or technical campuses or partners to support graduating high school seniors in making a successful transition from school to employment, postsecondary education, or training.
- Collaboration with partners to enhance job readiness and employment opportunities, emphasizing work-based learning and leadership development.
- Integration of family, school, community, and employer partnerships.
- Real-world experiences, employability skills, career direction, and connection to employers or training.

Total WIOA Available Funding: \$550,000

Award Amount per Agency: Not exceeding \$138,000

Duration: 12 -14 months based on starting date with ending date no later than June 30, 2027

Scope of Work (RFP Page 6)

Program Design

Integrated career readiness, coaching, and work-based learning aligned with graduation timelines.

Eligible Participants

WIOA-eligible graduating seniors enrolled in Lake County schools or eligible career/technical campuses.

Work-Based Learning

Paid or unpaid internships, pre-apprenticeships, job shadowing, or employment experiences.

Performance & Deliverables

Enrollment, work-based learning completion, skill development, and post-graduation placement outcomes aligned with WIOA measures.

Innovative Solutions

Employer partnerships, youth leadership opportunities, and effective transition strategies.

Priority Considerations

School-led programs, paid work experiences, underserved student focus, and strong employer alignment.



Eligibility (Addendum II)

RFP Program Eligibility: Graduating High School Seniors

WIOA Eligibility:

- **Low-income** as defined by: Free or Reduced-Price Lunch; TANF/SNAP/SSI; High-Poverty Census Tract; Family income \leq Poverty Level or LLSIL OR Youth with a disability qualifying independently
- Federal Compliance: **Authorized to work in the United States**, Male (18+) registered with **Selective Service** (if applicable)
- **Barriers to employment** (at least one required to be documented)

Pregnant or Parenting	Homeless	Youth with Disabilities	
Justice-Involved	English Language Learner	Foster Care	Basic Skills Deficient

Basic skills assessment:

- Test of Adult Basic Ed (Version 13/14) / Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems / STAR Assessment accepted with IEP

Supporting Documentation:

- All eligibility must be accompanied by verified documentation as per WIOA Standards and a signed WIOA application including a parent/guardian signature for youth under the age of 18.

Intake & Assessment Process

- **Initial Intake:** A comprehensive assessment process helps identify participant goals, interests, skills, and service needs.
- **Informal Assessments:** Conducted through one-on-one conversations and observational insights by a career coach to build a personalized understanding.
- **Formal Assessments:**
 - Essential for evaluating basic skills levels.
 - Includes reading and math evaluations for training eligibility.
- **Approved Assessment Tools:**
 - TABE/CASAS
 - Illinois WorkNet Interest Profiler assessment
 - Star Assessment (for students with an IEP)
- **Integration of Results:**
 - Results guide the creation of Individual Service Strategies (ISS) to tailor career services.
 - Helps address identified basic skills deficiencies and map out next steps for training and career pathways.



Career Readiness

Career readiness prepares graduating seniors with the skills, knowledge, and behaviors needed to succeed in work, education, and training after high school.

Programs should include:

- Workplace expectations and professional behavior
- Communication and teamwork skills
- Resume development and job applications
- Interview preparation and mock interviews
- Financial literacy and workplace rights
- Career exploration aligned with interests

Proposals must describe:

- Career readiness curriculum or activities
- How readiness is assessed before placement
- How skills are reinforced during work experience
- How progress will be documented

Work-Based Learning

Work-Based Learning is a required program element and must serve as a central component of service delivery. Work-Based Learning experiences are structured, supervised, and focused on skill development rather than general labor.

Programs may offer paid or unpaid experiences.

- **Pre-Apprenticeships:** Structured programs preparing students for formal registered Apprenticeships.
- **Paid Internships:** Short-term paid placements with employers
- **Unpaid Internships:** Structured, supervised learning experiences without wages.
- **Job shadowing:** Short-duration workplace observation experiences.
- **On-the-Job Training:** Paid employment where the employer provides training.
- **School-Linked Work Experiences:** Work placements integrated with school coursework
- **Summer Employment:** Paid work experiences during summer

In accordance with program requirements, at least 30 percent of total program expenditures must support eligible work-based learning activities.

WIOA Youth Program 14 Elements

For further explanation - [US DOL Tegl 21-16](#)

1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies;
2. Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate;
3. Paid and unpaid work experiences;
4. Occupational skill training;
5. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities;
6. Leadership development opportunities;
7. Supportive services;
8. Adult mentoring;
9. Follow-up services;
10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling;
11. Financial literacy education;
12. Entrepreneurial skills training;
13. Services that provide labor market and employment information and
14. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training.

WIOA Youth Performance Measures (RFP Page 11)

MEASURABLE OUTCOME	Outcome Description
Placement in Employment/ Apprenticeship/ Military 2 nd Quarter After Exit	73% of all exited participants who are employed, in an apprenticeship, or in the military during 2nd Quarter after exit.
Placement in Employment/Apprenticeship/ Military 4 th Quarter After Exit	74% of all exited participants who are employed, in an apprenticeship, or in the military during 4th Quarter after exit
Median Earnings 2 nd Quarter after exit	Median wages for exited participants who are employed during the 2 nd quarter after exit (\$5,000)
Credential Attainment (up to 1 year after exit)	71% of participants who obtain a post-secondary credential, license or industry recognized credential during the program or within 1 year of exit
Measurable Skills Gain	68% of participants in an education or training program that leads to a credential or employment and who are achieving “measurable skills gains” Meeting one or more “Measurable skill gains” include: 1.) Attainment of a high school diploma 2.) Achievement of an educational function level 3.) Transcript / Report Card achievement 4.) Achievement of a milestone (completion of OJT, apprenticeship program, any training achievement) 5.) Achievement of a trade-related benchmark /skill progression (knowledge-based exams)
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Youth employed with the same employer in the 2nd and 4th quarters after exit.

Required Program Deliverables (RFP Page 7)

- Timely recruitment and enrollment of WIOA eligible participants.
- Assistance in enrolling participants in the Illinois Workforce Development System.
- Compliance with participant files in the Illinois Workforce Development System.
- Attendance in standard meetings with Workforce Development.
- Monthly communication with participants.
- 12 consecutive months of follow-up after program exit
- Completion of program elements and key benchmarks, including work-based learning experiences.
- Quarterly reports of outcomes, enrollment, progress, and unexpected obstacles.
- Participation in annual onsite fiscal and program monitoring review.



Program Budget (RFP Page 11)

Minimum 30% of total funds must support work-based learning

- Paid internships or wages
- Employer-based training
- Staff time supporting placements

Remaining funds support career readiness, case management and program delivery.

Allowable Cost Categories

- Staff Wages & Fringe Benefits
- Operational and facilities costs
- Student Wages or stipends for work experience
- Student Training or certification costs
- Transportation and supportive services
- Supplies and materials related to work experience
- Indirect Cost Rate
- Budget for roles such as case management.

Evaluation Criteria (RFP page 12-13)

Proposals will be evaluated based on the outlined evaluation criteria, which allocate points for each major component to ensure a thorough and balanced assessment. This scoring breakdown reflects the priorities for effective program implementation, measurable outcomes, organizational capability, strategic partnerships, and justified budgeting.

Evaluation Criteria	Weight
Program Design	30
Work-Based Learning	20
Outreach, Recruitment, and Enrollment	10
Outcomes	15
Administration	10
Budget	15

Proposal Requirements (RFP Page 8)

Submit one (1) complete electronic unprotected copy via the Lake County Purchasing Portal and one (1) redacted copy that can be used to comply with the Illinois Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

1. Cover Page and Executive Summary
2. Program Design
3. Work-Based Learning
4. Outreach and Recruitment
5. Program Outcomes
6. Administration
7. Budget Narrative
8. Proposal Price Sheet
9. Addendum Acknowledgment
10. General Information Sheet
11. Sustainability Statement
12. References
13. Vendor Disclosure Statement
14. Vendor Certification Form
15. Budget Details and Descriptions (Attachment B)
16. Staff Wages & Hours Summary (Attachment C)
17. Participant Recruitment and Enrollment Plan (Attachment D)



Q&A