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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GRANT FUNDS DROP-OUT PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN DUPAGE COUNTY

Wheaton, IL, June 30, 2020— The DuPage Regional Office of Education (ROE) is proud to announce that it has been awarded a grant to provide dropout prevention programs to the schools and students of DuPage County.

These programs, funded by the "Workforce Innovations and Opportunities Act" grant, will provide opportunities for at-risk students to successfully complete their high school equivalency (HSE) or diploma, participate in life-skills training, work with adult mentors, practice work-readiness skills during paid work experiences, and receive support to successfully transition to employment or post-secondary training.

"We know that these types of prevention programs truly make a difference," said Dr. Darlene Ruscitti, superintendent of DuPage County Schools. "When we invest in at-risk students, the payoff is huge. Students who may have dropped out end up finishing high school with the skills and confidence they need to get good jobs, continue their education, be productive citizens, and have healthy relationships."

Kathy Ekstrand, the program coordinator, agrees. "There is a lot of competition in today's job market. The funds received from this grant enable us to help youth develop skills and gain valuable work experience so they can succeed," Ekstrand said.

The DuPage ROE is actively looking for businesses who would like to participate in this program. "We want to partner with area businesses who are willing to provide work experience opportunities with DuPage students. We aren't looking for handouts—we want to give a 'hand up' to students who otherwise might fall through the cracks," said Ruscitti. "This is a chance for business owners to invest in the workforce, make a difference in the life of a teen, and employ some really great, hard-working kids."

Business owners or individuals who are interested in learning more about the program are encouraged to call Kathy Ekstrand at 630-386-6781.

About the DuPage Regional Office of Education

The DuPage Regional Office of Education is a service organization whose responsibilities are defined by Illinois School Code, Illinois Administrative Code, Illinois State Board of Education mandates, and stakeholder needs. The essential role of the office is to provide high quality service and support to all stakeholders and collectively expend every effort to meet the special responsibility to prepare our children for the world they will face. In addition to the myriad of services provided directly to educators and schools, the office also provides services and support to community members, private schools, parents, children, business leaders, and others.

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