



HBI Schools to Skills Grant

2026-2028

Grant Leadership and Oversight

- This grant opportunity was identified and submitted by Chatney Mercer, Site Coordinator for College Driven GEAR UP, in support of DeSoto High School students.
- Because the grant was developed through her work and program area, she is presenting the opportunity and proposed impact directly.
- If accepted, Chatney Mercer will serve as grant manager for implementation and progress monitoring.
- Oversight and support will be provided through the Grants and Special Revenue Department and CTE leadership of Mrs. Pugh.



Background

- This is a two-year grant opportunity for DeSoto High School in the amount of \$13,000.
- The grant supports implementation of HBI's PACT curriculum for new construction trades pathway.
- The application projects service to 75–100 students in year one and 150 students over the two-year grant period.
- Board action requested: acceptance of the grant so district implementation steps may move forward.



Board Goal Alignment

- Expands college, career, and military readiness through an industry-aligned CTE pathway.
- Increases student access to hands-on learning connected to high-demand workforce opportunities.
- Supports measurable student outcomes tied to certifications, skill development, and postsecondary planning.
- Leverages external funding to strengthen district programming without creating a full local startup cost.



Program Design and Measures

- Planned program design includes grades 9–12, an average class size of 30, and two instructors.
- Implementation is expected to begin in Fall 2026 following required instructor training and certification in summer 2026.
- Measurable targets in the application include serving 150 students over two years and expanding student exposure to construction careers.
- If this grant is approved, Coach Rene Sears will serve as the instructor, with implementation projected for the 2026–2027 school year.



Industry Connections and Outcomes

- The application commits to building local industry partnerships that support authentic career-connected learning.
- Planned student experiences include lunch-and-learns, job shadowing, industry tours, internships, and career panels.
- A stated goal is to formalize at least three industry partnerships by the end of year one.
- Success will be monitored through participation, skill mastery, certifications, and postsecondary or workforce connections.



Funding and Monitoring

- Grant funds are designated for implementation of HBI's PACT curriculum and associated curriculum costs.
- Required instructor training and certification must be completed between June and September 2026
- Program progress will be monitored through district grant check-ins, quarterly reporting, and implementation documentation.
- Board approval allows the district to proceed with review, setup, and launch planning.



Responsibility and Oversight

- Chatney Mercer will serve as the grant manager for this grant.
- Implementation will occur with guidance from the Grants and Special Revenue Department and CTE leadership under Melinda Pugh.
- District processes will include board acceptance, agreement review if applicable, program setup, and ongoing monitoring.
- This structure supports clear ownership, cross-department coordination, and accountability for measurable implementation.





Thank you!

