



IBM SKILLSBUILD ENGAGEMENT GUIDE

IBM **SkillsBuild**

IBM SkillsBuild

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Supported by a grant from IBM, DECA is launching a free initiative to increase student engagement with the SkillsBuild platform fostering skill development, career exploration, and workforce readiness. Through this exciting partnership, advisors have access to impactful curriculum and classroom resources, as well as professional development opportunities.

GRANT IMPACT GOALS

- **Boost Credential Completion:** Inspire more students and advisors to complete SkillsBuild activities, courses and credentials to enrich their DECA experience.
- **Amplify Student Voices:** Build a compelling library of student-led stories and testimonials to showcase and celebrate achievements.
- **Foster Community Engagement:** Strengthen peer-to-peer motivation and advisor involvement by sharing best practices and success stories.

PLATFORM ENGAGEMENT INCENTIVES

To encourage participation and recognize achievement, the following incentives are available:

Student Recognition:

- **Social Media Spotlights:** Students who submit testimonials on the program's impact and learning outcomes will have the opportunity to win a \$100 Shop DECA Gift Card
- **Scholarships:** DECA will award a total of five (5) \$1,000 scholarships to eligible students who earn a SkillsBuild credential and complete the scholarship application.

Educator Support:

- **Classroom Grants:** DECA will award a total of twenty (20) \$1,000 classroom grants to teachers who submit an article highlighting IBM SkillsBuild best practices/success stories, impact, reach, and plans for future curriculum integration. Advisors must be able to demonstrate a reach of at least 50 participating students.

State-Level Recognition:

- **Association Awards:** DECA will award a total of five (5) \$1,000 association awards to the top participating associations. Top-performing state associations will be awarded based on total participation numbers and credential completion.



GET STARTED:
skillsbuild.org

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This guide is designed for DECA advisors looking to integrate IBM SkillsBuild into their curriculum, connect classroom learning with DECA competitive events, and help students develop real-world career skills in AI, marketing, entrepreneurship and business strategy.

WHY USE IBM SKILLSBUILD?

IBM SkillsBuild is a free, online learning platform that helps students gain practical skills in emerging technologies and business applications. It offers flexible learning experiences — from short activities to full credential pathways — and connects directly to real-world business scenarios. SkillsBuild resources can be integrated into classroom instruction to support:

- DECA competition preparation
- Work-based learning experiences
- Career exploration and college readiness
- Opportunity to earn credentials

GETTING STARTED

Getting started with IBM SkillsBuild is quick and straightforward.

Here's how to sign up:

1. Visit the SkillsBuild website:
<https://ibm.biz/BdbGRJ>
2. Click on 'Sign Up' and select 'High School Educator' as your role.
3. Create your free account using your school email address.
4. Once logged in, explore the 'Educator Resources' section to access teacher tools.
5. Register your school or class to enable student tracking and analytics.

PLATFORM FEATURES

Once an account is established, you'll gain access to a variety of classroom-ready tools and content. Some highlights include:

Curriculum-Aligned Courses: Covering topics like entrepreneurship, marketing, project management, and career readiness.

Digital Credentials: Students and advisors can earn industry-recognized badges to showcase on resumes, applications and LinkedIn.

Lesson Plans & Activities: Pre-built lesson ideas and classroom projects ready to use or adapt. You can also upload your own existing content to the platform to build a comprehensive lesson for your students.

Analytics Dashboard: Track student progress and completion rates.

Student Career Tools: Resume builders, job readiness assessments, and career exploration tools.



LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT

You can integrate SkillsBuild into your classroom at different levels depending on time, goals, and student needs. SkillsBuild content can be used to support existing curriculum, as enrichment, as content for sub plans, or to extend learning in a topic area.

Level 1: Classroom Activity (15–45 mins)

Use short modules, discussion prompts, or videos to introduce concepts, reinforce curriculum or as an enrichment activity

Level 2: Learning Channel (1–2 class periods)

Assign a curated playlist or series of short modules for students to explore a topic in depth.

Level 3: Course (1–3 weeks)

Students complete a full course with built-in quizzes and activities, then present their takeaways in class. This level supports deeper understanding and DECA project preparation.

Level 4: Credential Pathway (3–6 weeks)

Students complete a credential-aligned course, earning a digital badge they can include on resumes and LinkedIn profiles. This level is ideal for capstone projects or competition preparation.

RECOMMENDED COURSES

- AI Fundamentals
- AI: Getting Started
- Cyber Security Fundamentals
- Project Management Fundamentals
- Career Management Essentials
- Workplace Skills: Helping You Succeed at Work
- Working in a Digital World: Professional Skills

BEST PRACTICES

Encourage exploration: Have your students explore the platform and engage in a topic of interest.

Start small: Introduce one SkillsBuild activity or course with your students this semester. Once you're comfortable, expand your use to cover other course competencies and deepen your engagement with the platform.

Build connections: Link SkillsBuild content directly to DECA rubrics and project deliverables. Showcase skills: Encourage students to add their digital credentials to resumes, applications, and LinkedIn.

EXTEND LEARNING

Use the SkillsBuild platform content as a foundation and catalyst for DECA Competition preparation or for additional project based learning opportunities in your classroom. Content on the platform supports preparation for Operations Research, Project Management and Entrepreneurship events. Some additional project ideas include:

Responsible AI Project:

Students analyze a real-world business case where AI was used unethically. They propose a new solution following ethical guidelines and present their recommendations.

AI Marketing Strategy Project:

Students work in teams to create a marketing campaign for a new product using AI-driven customer segmentation. They present their campaign strategy, highlighting ethical considerations.

Entrepreneurship Integration Project:

Students design a start-up concept that uses AI responsibly to solve a market need. They develop a business model, marketing plan, then pitch the idea to a panel (teachers, peers, or community partners).



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- IBM SkillsBuild Home: <https://ibm.biz/BdbGRJ>
- Educator Sign-Up: <https://skillsbuild.org/educators>
- Course Catalog: <https://skillsbuild.org/students/course-catalog>
- IBM Teacher Toolkit: <https://bundles.yourlearning.ibm.com/students/teachertoolkit/>
- FAQ & Support: <https://skillsbuild.org/frequently-asked-questions>
- DECA Advisor Resource Center: www.deca.org/advisor

