Re-engage Dubuque connects youth ages 16 to 21 who did not complete high school to alternative education options and post-secondary education. Re-engagement coaches work with these young people to develop personalized plans for completing a high school diploma or High School Equivalency Diploma and exploring options for further study and careers.
How was Re-engage Dubuque developed?
The Community Foundation’s Project HOPE initiative convened the Dubuque Community School District, Northeast Iowa Community College (NICC) and other partners to develop this program based on nationwide best practices.

Re-engage Dubuque incorporates a combination of virtual options, such as allowing students to earn credits through online courses, and a wide-reaching outreach effort. As of September 2016, the initiative’s re-engagement coaches have connected with 434 high school dropouts. As a result, 126 students have earned either a high school diploma or a High School Equivalency Diploma (HSED). The average number of dropouts in the Dubuque Community School District prior to Re-engage Dubuque was 141 students per year. Since this program began in 2012, the dropout rate has decreased by 48% and continues to improve.

Number of Dubuque Community School District Dropouts, 2007-2014

How Re-engage Dubuque Works

Build local alliances
Re-engage Dubuque is a partnership between Project HOPE, the Dubuque Community School District and NICC.

Look for dropouts where they are
The coaches connect with dropouts any way they can, drawing from the school district’s dropout list, surfing Facebook and visiting area fast-food restaurants where many high school dropouts are employed.

Identify participation barriers and devise solutions
Re-engagement coaches help find solutions for students juggling multiple responsibilities, such as childcare and part-time jobs, by using inter-agency referrals to help address barriers and develop personalized study plans.

Create educational and career pathways
Re-engagement coaches help guide students in obtaining their diploma or HSED, along with connecting them to post-secondary education options.