

96% of School District of New Berlin Juniors are Ready for Work *Students demonstrate readiness by earning ACT's National Career Readiness Certificates*

New Berlin, Wis. – The School District of New Berlin (SDNB) is focused on preparing all students to effectively navigate the world of higher education and work. Recent results from the ACT WorkKeys assessment show the vast majority of the Class of 2015 could enter the workforce successfully today.

Beginning next year the State of Wisconsin will issue the WorkKeys assessment to all high school juniors. Eisenhower and West were the only schools in the state to administer the test to their entire junior class as a pilot, one year before the scheduled state-wide rollout.

ACT WorkKeys is a job skills assessment that measures foundational skills in areas that employers believe are critical to success in the workforce: Applied Mathematics, Locating Information and Reading for Information. Successful completion of the ACT WorkKeys earns a student ACT's National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC), a portable credential a student can use when seeking employment. Ninety-six percent of SDNB Juniors were issued the National Career Readiness Certificate after taking the test.

“Students enter the workforce at different times for different reasons – to earn spending money, save for their post-secondary education and/or to take advantage of internships and apprenticeships,” said Superintendent Joe Garza. “We want to ensure students graduate able to secure and sustain employment at the time that is right for them. The WorkKeys assessment helps us measure not only what students know, but how they can apply what they know to real life situations. We are pleased with the results and credit our high-quality teachers, supportive parents and community partners in helping our students obtain the skills they need to be successful. The results also show us where we need to improve.”

Value of WorkKeys for Students

A student's individual results can determine how their progress uniquely tracks to requirements for future success in a given career. Results can also be associated with potential earning capacity after students acquire the specialized knowledge, skills and dispositions needed for their future career. Students are able to identify areas in which they want to improve so that their skills are aligned to what they want to do and what their potential earning level might be within certain careers.

“For some students earning potential is important, for others it's not,” said Garza. “That's just one factor we are encouraging students to think about in their Academic & Career Planning process. A component of planning for their future is also understanding how the choices they make now may impact finances down the road.”

The National Career Readiness Certificate also provides a portable credential to serve as a complement to diploma/resume and aid in finding employment, internships, etc. During a hiring process, an employer can use the certificate to determine how well an applicant will be able to apply his or her knowledge on the job.

SDNB Results by Level	SDNB (2014 data)	National Benchmark* (2006-2011)
Platinum – scored at least a level 6 in each of the three core areas and has the necessary foundational skills for 99% of jobs in the WorkKeys database	1%	0%
Gold – scored at least a level 5 in each of the three core areas and has the necessary foundational skills for 93% of jobs in WorkKeys database	25%	18%
Silver – scored at least a level 4 in each of the three core areas and has the necessary foundational skills for 67 percent of the jobs in the WorkKeys database	57%	47%
Bronze – scored at least a level 3 in each of the three core areas and has the necessary foundational skills for 16 percent of the jobs in the WorkKeys database	13%	22%

**ACT's The Condition of Work Readiness in the United States Report, 2013 – pg. 25*

Next Steps

SDNB will continue to evaluate its curriculum in relation to areas that show a need for improvement and will provide individual support to students. The District will also consider the use of Work Keys research to support Academic and Career Planning so that students can develop the skills needed to reach whatever post-secondary goals they set for themselves. SDNB sees the assessment as a positive step in helping to measure if the District is adequately preparing students to be successful in the workforce. More information on WorkKeys can be found at

<http://www.act.org/path/parent/tests/workkeys.html>