

Ninety-Five Percent of School District of New Berlin Class of 2017 Earns National Career Readiness Certificate

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 future employment. Recent results from the ACT WorkKeys assessment show the vast majority of the Class of 2017 have the foundational skills needed for employment.

ACT WorkKeys is an assessment that measures foundational skills in areas employers believe are critical to success in the workforce: applied mathematics, locating information and reading for information. Successful completion of the ACT WorkKeys exam earns a student a National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC), a portable credential a student can use on college applications and when seeking employment. Ninety-five percent of SDNB juniors earned the National Career Readiness Certificate in 2016.

“Students enter the workforce at all different times for all different reasons – to earn spending money, save for their post-secondary education, take advantage of internships or apprenticeships and more,” Superintendent Joe Garza said. “The SDNB wants to make sure that it has done what it can to ensure students graduate able to secure and sustain employment at the time that is right for them. This is one of many aspects of our programming designed to support truly college and career ready graduates.”

Value of WorkKeys for Students

ACT WorkKeys was initially designed for adults. The results, however, can help create relevance between what students are learning in school and what will be required of them in future employment across a wide variety of professions and industry sectors.

For example, students can see how their progress uniquely tracks to requirements for future success in a given career. After receiving their assessment results, students can identify areas in which they want to improve so their skills are aligned to what they want to do and what their potential earning level might be within certain careers. This helps to inform their post-secondary plans for education and/or training.

The NCRC also provides a portable credential to serve as a complement to a diploma/resume and aid in finding employment or internships. During the 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.

Each level of certificate correlates to the percent of occupations the student could be eligible for in the future based on their foundational workplace skills. For example, scoring at least a 4 on all three ACT WorkKeys assessments qualifies them for a Silver NCRC which indicates the student demonstrates the foundational skills for 67 percent of all jobs in the WorkKeys occupational profile database. This

correlates with a median earning potential of nearly \$40,000 per year. Earning a Gold NCRC, however, increases those projections to 93 percent and \$63,000 per year, respectfully. Actual earnings, of course, depend on the industry and career a student specifically prepares for as part of their post-secondary education and/or training.

As students improve their skills, they have the potential to qualify for a larger range of occupations which correspond with higher earning potential. Students who would like to qualify for a higher level of NCRC have the option to retake the exam at a future date at a local testing center.

“We are committed to providing information, mentorship, programming and supports to develop each student’s unique talents in a way that unlocks their potential in college, career and all future opportunities,” Garza added.

SDNB ACT WorkKeys Results Exceed National and State Benchmarks

NCRC Earned	SDNB 2016	SDNB 2015	SDNB 2014	Wisconsin Benchmark	National Benchmark*
Platinum	2%	2%	1%	0%	1%
Gold	48%	46%	25%	29%	20%
Silver	39%	46%	57%	49%	47%
Bronze	6%	4%	13%	14%	21%
None	5%	2%	4%	8%	11%

** Source: ACT's Career Readiness in the United States Report, 2015 - pg. 8*

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