

# WORKKEYS® UPDATE

## Information for 11th grade Students and Families

Beginning in school year 2014-15, 11th grade students in South Carolina began taking two assessments -- a college readiness assessment and WorkKeys®, a career readiness assessment which measures essential workforce skills.

### What are the benefits of taking a workforce skills assessment like WorkKeys®?

There are many benefits.

- Successful completion of WorkKeys® can earn an 11th grader a National Career Readiness Certificate, which will help with finding summer and part-time jobs as well as internships. In South Carolina alone, over 3,000 employers like Westinghouse Electric Company and Palmetto Health recognize the certificate. To find employers, go to <http://workreadycommunities.org/SC>.
- National companies and industries also use WorkKeys® certificates in hiring. South Carolina will document the skill levels of our state's workforce and in turn, recruit more jobs that will be available to all students, including those graduating from a two or four-year college.
- Should a financial or personal crisis occur and delay college plans, having a WorkKeys® certificate can immediately open doors for jobs.

### But, my child has never taken career and technical education courses.

#### Will he or she be prepared for WorkKeys®?

The WorkKeys® assessment measures "real world" skills that employers believe are critical to job success. Test questions are based on situations in the everyday work world. There are three parts of the assessment:

- 1. Applied Mathematics** – Applying mathematical reasoning, critical thinking and problem-solving to work-related problems from making change to plotting a patient's temperature readings
- 2. Reading for Information** – Reading and using written texts like letters, directions, signs, notices, policies and regulations in a job
- 3. Locating Information** – Using graphics like charts, graphs and tables to find information

11th graders should be prepared for the test no matter which courses were taken in high school. Students who need assistance should have the opportunity to utilize Career Ready 101, a preparatory course.

### What does a WorkKeys® score mean?

On each of the three assessments (Applied Mathematics, Reading for Information and Locating Information), a student receives a score of Level 3 through Level 7, with Level 7 being the highest possible score. Depending upon the **minimum** score received on all three assessments, the student may earn one of four National Career Readiness Certificates -- Platinum, Gold, Silver, or Bronze.

Lowest Minimum Score on All Three Assessments:	Qualifies for the Following National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC)	Qualifier Has Skills for the Following % of Jobs in U.S.	% of NCRC Qualifiers by Certificate in U.S. (2006-2011)	% of NCRC Qualifiers by Certificate in SC (2014-15 11th grade administration)
3	Bronze	16%	21%	25%
4	Silver	67%	47%	40%
5	Gold	93%	18%	22%
6	Platinum	99%	1%	0.8%

### Level 5 WorkKeys® Applied Mathematics

#### Sample Item

If your office makes 5 hours 3 minutes worth of calls this month using the company with the lower price, how much will these calls cost?

1. \$39.50
2. \$41.48
3. \$41.87
4. \$54.00
5. \$54.54

### My child is planning on going to college so why should he/she really even try on the career readiness test?

- A student needs to do his or her best on the career readiness assessment because the results may provide more choices for the future. A student may discover that he or she has the skills and knowledge they weren't aware of.
- Once a person starts working, they may decide that they want or need an associate's degree or industry credential to move up in their field. All 11th graders will already have a college readiness score to help when applying for college.

### How will the results of WorkKeys® be used?

The results will help 11th graders plan for the senior year and beyond. Consider the following:

- Are there courses that the student needs to take next year to improve his/her chances of entering a desired career?
- Are there internships or jobs available where the student can use the WorkKeys® certificate to gain job experience?

**All students enter the workforce eventually -- whether they get a job right out of high school, work part-time while continuing their education, or go to college first.**

**By 2018, 56% of the jobs in South Carolina will require a postsecondary degree or industry credentials.**

**More information will be coming to schools and counselors prior to the administration of WorkKeys®**

