

CHANGES IN 11TH GRADE STATE TESTING

Information for Students and their Parents

This school year marks the beginning of important changes in state testing for all 11th graders in South Carolina. For the first time, students in the 11th grade will take two assessments -- one a college and career readiness assessment (that has not been selected) and another, WorkKeys®, that measures essential workforce skills. Beginning this school year, the HSAP is no longer given in South Carolina.

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

There are many benefits!

- A WorkKeys® score 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 1,400 employers recognize the certificate.
- 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.
- A financial or personal crisis can 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 measuring the area of a room
- 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 take a Career Ready 101 course at their school in the Fall.

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.

Lowest Minimum Score on All Three Assessments:	Qualifies for the Following National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC)	% of NCRC Qualifiers by Certificate in U.S. (2006-2011)	Qualifier Has Skills for the Following % of Jobs in U.S.
3	Bronze	21%	30%
4	Silver	49%	65%
5	Gold	19%	90%
6	Platinum	1%	99%

Source: The Condition of Work Readiness in the United States. 2013.

<<http://www.act.org/research/policymakers/pdf/ConditionWorkReadiness.pdf>>.

**Level 3 WorkKeys® Applied Mathematics
Sample Item**

In your job as a cashier, a customer gives you a \$20 bill to pay for a can of coffee that costs \$3.84. How much change should you give back?

1. \$15.26
2. \$16.16
3. \$16.26
4. \$16.84
5. \$17.16



About taking a college readiness assessment, my child does not plan on going to college so why should he/she really even try on the test?

- A student needs to do his or her best on the college 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 to pursue an associate's or four-year degree. Just having the information will help plan for the future.
- Once a person starts working, they may decide that they want or need an associate's degree or industry credential to move up. All 11th graders will already have a college readiness score to help when applying for college.

How will the results of these assessments be used?

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

- Do the scores show that the student is college and career ready?
- Are there courses that the student needs to take next year to improve his/her chances of going to college or entering a career?
- Are there dual enrollment options that the student could pursue to start earning college credits next year?
- 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® in Spring 2015.

