

# **Kenosha Unified School District**

## **High School Competency Diploma Option**

### **Staff Handbook**



**Kenosha  
Unified**  
S C H O O L D I S T R I C T

Dr. Jeffrey Weiss, Superintendent of Schools

Dear Kenosha Unified School District Staff:

The Kenosha Unified School District offers a High School Competency Diploma Option designed to provide another avenue to students who are unable to meet the credit requirements for receiving their high school diploma. The District believes the KUSD High School Competency Diploma Option will serve to decrease the number of dropouts and increase the number of high school graduates.

Students who are unable to meet the credit requirements to graduate with their cohorts are likely candidates to drop out of school and not graduate. With that in mind, KUSD is offering a Competency Diploma that gives students an opportunity to graduate and to further their respective educational and career opportunities.

In order for students to participate in the KUSD High School Competency Diploma Option, the following criteria must be met:

- This diploma option is available to students ages 17-20 that are members of a KUSD cohort group.
- Students who are age 17 may choose to prepare for this option. Parent/Guardian permission is required.
- Credit deficient students who are at least 17 years of age who have been in a high school cohort group for more than three years may choose this option and attempt the fall IOWA assessments.
- Students who choose the KUSD High School Competency Diploma Option may participate in coursework and/or remediation to prepare for the IOWA Assessments.
- Students must earn credits in consumer education or economics, health, and government and politics or civics.
- Students must successfully complete an employability skills component.
- Students are required to perform a minimum of 10 hours of community service.
- Students must successfully complete a writing component on at least one of the following:
  - Score level 3 or higher on the ACT WorkKeys Business Writing/approved alternate writing assessment
  - Score 6 or higher on the ACT w/ Writing: Writing (with maximum score of 12)
  - Score 70% or higher on the Edgenuity Writing Competency Course
- Students must achieve passing scores at the 4<sup>th</sup> stanine on all required IOWA Assessments sub-tests.
- All high school students must successfully complete the U.S. Civics Exam, minimum score of 65/100.

This handbook contains information that you can use to guide students through this process. Please contact the Office of Educational Accountability at 359-6259 if you would like any of the forms sent to you electronically or if you have questions about the KUSD High School Competency Diploma Option.

Thank you.

Dr. Jeffery Weiss  
Superintendent of Schools



## Competency Report

### High School Competency Diploma Application

High School Name

Student Number:	Date of Birth:	Age:
Student Name:	Phone Number:	
Street Address:	City, State, Zip:	
Date Student Entered Ninth Grade:	Cohort Graduation Date:	

#### Verification of Completion:

Competencies:		
Result	Competency Area	Grade/Score
	Consumer Education / Economics	
	Health	
	Government & Politics	
	U.S. Civics Exam (min. score of 65/100)	

#### Employability Skills:

Three checkboxes below required or greater than F score on Work Readiness Portfolio

Result	Item
	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 weeks of check stubs received
	<input type="checkbox"/> Employee Evaluation Received
	<input type="checkbox"/> Student Self-Evaluation Completed

Result	Portfolio	Grade
	Work Readiness Portfolio	

#### Writing Component:

Result	Date	Test	Score
		ACT WorkKeys Business Writing	
		ACT Writing	
		Edgenuity Writing Competency	

#### IOWA Tests:

Result	Date	Subtest	Score
		Reading	
		Written Expression	
		Vocabulary	
		Math Total	
		Social Studies	
		Science	

#### Community Service:

Hours	Date	Comments	Status

## Summary of Requirements

Eligibility Requirement	Requirements
Credit deficient students who are at least 17 years of age who have been in a high school Credit deficient students who are at least 17 years of age who have been in a high school cohort group for more than three years	Required
Students must be current residents of KUSD	Required
Writing (must achieve proficiency in at least one of the listed assessments)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Score level 3 or higher on the ACT WorkKeys Business Writing</li> <li>• Score of 70% or higher in Edgenuity Writing Competency Course</li> <li>• Score 6 or higher on the ACT w/ Writing: Writing (maximum score of 12)</li> </ul>
Employability Skills	Six months of successful employment or District Approved Work Readiness Portfolio
U.S. Civics Exam	Required (min. score of 65/100)
Community Service	Required to perform a minimum of 10 hours
Government & Politics*	Credit Attainment
Consumer Education/Economics*	Credit Attainment
Health*	Credit Attainment
<b>Costs - Students (each time testing)</b>	
IOWA Scoring Fee	\$15.30
WorkKeys Business Writing and Scoring	\$21.00
<b>Academic Proficiency Level Requirement IOWA (ITED)</b>	
Reading	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Stanine</b>
Written Expression	
Vocabulary	
Math Total	
Social Studies	
Science	

\* For information on independent study opportunities, contact your school.

# **Sources for WorkKeys and Employability Requirements**



### **The Business Writing Assessment**

Workplace writing needs to be clear and free of distractions such as poor grammar, misspellings, and extraneous information. After all, careless errors may lead the reader to believe there are also errors in the facts, and the writer loses credibility and trustworthiness.

The Business Writing assessment measures the skill used when writing an original response to a work-related situation. Components of the Business Writing skill include sentence structure, mechanics, grammar, word usage, tone and word choice, organization and focus, and development of ideas.

**Number of items:** 1 prompt

**Method of delivery:** Online

**Test length:** 30 minutes

**Cost:** \$21.00

**Test dates** will be determined and offered at KUSD high schools with a minimum of 30 days required between tests

- See [district assessment calendar](#) for administration dates for assessment

### **What the Business Writing Assessment Measures**

There are five skill levels. Level 1 is the least complex, and Level 5 is the most complex. At each new level, individuals need to demonstrate more competency than they do at the previous levels. For example, Level 3 builds upon the skills used at Levels 1 and 2. With the increased skill required at each level, the writing that individuals produce communicates more clearly and smoothly as they move to Level 5. At the same time, errors become less frequent and less serious. In all cases, examinees read a written prompt and then write their response. Examinees with extremely limited reading skills may be unable to produce a response that is sufficiently on topic to receive a valid Business Writing score.

### **Business Writing Scoring Guide**

Level scores are used in matching job criteria.

#### **Score 5**

A writing at this highest level has well-developed ideas elaborated with relevant supporting examples and specific details. The writing shows insight. The organization is smooth and maintains clear and consistent focus from beginning to end. Transitions are varied and effective, creating a seamless flow of ideas. Sentences are varied in length and complexity. Word choice is precise and varied. The style and tone are appropriate for a business setting. Minor and/or infrequent errors in grammar and/or mechanics, if present, do not interfere with communication.

**Score 4**

A writing at this level has most of the ideas well developed with relevant supporting examples and details. The writing is organized and maintains consistent focus. Transitions are effective, if not especially varied. Sentences are generally varied in length and complexity. Word choice shows some precision and variety. The style and tone are consistent with standard business English. Relatively minor and/or infrequent errors in grammar and/or mechanics do not interfere with communication.

**Score 3**

A writing at this level has adequate development of ideas but is limited in depth and thoroughness. Supporting examples tend to be general and details are relevant, but they may be repetitive. The writing is generally organized but may have minor lapses in focus. Transitions are simple. Sentences are usually correct, with some variety and complexity attempted. Word choice is generally clear and correct but may be repetitive and/or informal. The style and tone are consistent with standard business English but may be overly casual. Some errors in grammar and mechanics are apparent but do not interfere with communication. Basic spelling is correct.

**Score 2**

A writing at this level has thinly developed ideas that are not expanded and may be presented as a list. Although some organization is evident, the focus is unclear and/or inconsistent. Few or no transitions are used. Sentences are often simple or repetitive, with some noticeable errors in construction. Word choice is limited, often repetitive, and sometimes incorrect. The style and tone may be inconsistent with standard business English. Significant errors in grammar and/or mechanics interfere with communication.

**Score 1**

A writing at this level has little or no development or support. Any development is extremely simple and/or repetitive. No organization is evident. Sentences lack variety, and construction errors seriously impede understanding. Word choice is poor and interferes with communication. The style and tone are inconsistent with standard business English. Errors in grammar and mechanics are frequent, severe, and seriously interfere with communication.

**Score 0**

Off-topic, offensive, or strongly inappropriate language (may include profanity and/or threats), or written in a language other than English. May be blank or too brief to evaluate.

**Analytic Scores**

The analytic scores provide additional, supportive information for use by the examinee, educators, and career coaches/trainers. Keep in mind that the analytic scores are separate from the holistic score and are not averaged to determine the holistic score.

1. Development of Content measures the degree to which the response includes examples and details that develop the main idea(s).
2. Organization/Focus measures the degree to which the response is clearly and logically organized and consistently maintains focus.
3. Word Choice/Tone/Style measures the extent to which the word choice is clear, varied, and precise, and tone and style are business-appropriate.
4. Grammar/Usage/Word Order/Word Form measures the extent to which errors in grammar, usage, word order, and word form interfere with communication.
5. Spelling/Punctuation/Capitalization measures the extent to which errors in spelling, punctuation, and capitalization interfere with communication.

## Edgenuity Writing Competency

Edgenuity Writing Competency (Course # 900501) is a non-credit-bearing course that has been granted conditional approval to satisfy the HSDO Writing Proficiency requirement.

The customized course consists of three complete lessons, each containing tutorial videos, activities, parts of the writing process, and an end of lesson essay. The writing portions of the lessons include a plagiarism/artificial intelligence (AI) checker and will be issued a “suggested score” upon submission. Teachers must review both the Suggested Score and the Academic Integrity Report before determining a course grade.

To satisfy the HSDO writing proficiency requirement, students must complete all lessons, be academically honest with their writing, and earn a score of 70% or higher on the assessments as well as a suggested score of 70% or higher on the essays. If a suggested score of 70% is not obtained, the student shall work with the teacher to learn how to improve their writing before submitting a new draft. Students with approved language support/accommodations may have translation assistance but not outright interpretation of the assessment material to misrepresent the student’s ability to provide their own responses and submissions.

Lesson Title	# of activities in the lesson	Objectives	Directions for the writing assignment
Writing Workshop: Narrative Writing	11	Write a narrative essay that relates the significance of an event to the reader through appropriate sequencing of events and vivid details. Use a graphic organizer as a prewriting tool to organize the narrative sequence of a significant event. Use verb tense to effectively narrate a story.	You and nine peers have been selected to apply for an important college scholarship. Only one student will be awarded the scholarship. You have been asked to write a brief essay to the scholarship committee in which you share an important event in your life that significantly changed you, your view about life, your life goals, or your character for the better. Apply narrative techniques, a solid prewriting strategy, and creative sentence patterns to share your story and stand apart from other applicants.
Writing an Argumentative Essay about a Social Topic	9	Brainstorm ideas and supporting examples Revise to address claims and counterclaims Write argumentative essay with a strong concluding statement	Write an argumentative essay for or against always telling the truth, even in situations that may be hurtful to others.
Writing Workshop: Exploring Argument	11	Formulate and write a thesis statement to support a claim. Examine multiple forms of relevant evidence to support claims and counterclaims clearly and logically. Develop and organize an argumentative essay that shows the relationships between the claim, counterclaims, and evidence. Revise and edit argumentative writing for logic, style, grammar, and proper source citation.	Your school is considering adopting a policy that requires all students to complete 100 hours of community service during their high school careers in order to graduate. The district has asked for student input at the next school board meeting as to whether or not they should adopt this policy. Research the topic, decide whether you are in favor of or against the new policy, and write a five-paragraph persuasive speech that you will deliver to the school board members and your principal.



## HSDO Writing Proficiency Process

- **Teachers “Add Course” to the student in Edgenuity:**
  - Writing Competency. Course # 900501.
  - Students complete the lessons, assessments, and writing assignments in the course.
- **Assessment Threshold:**
  - Students must score 70% or higher on each of the assessments and on each of the essays.
- **Essay Threshold:**
  - Each of the three writing assignments in the course will be given a “Suggested Score” by Edgenuity.
  - The suggested score must be 70% or higher AND have a satisfactory “Academic Integrity” report. Teachers must be sure to consult both documents.
    - 0% plagiarism and 0% AI is ideal
    - <15% plagiarism and/or <15% AI requires teacher review and discretion
    - 15% or more plagiarism and/or AI requires the essay to be rewritten
- **Academic Integrity Report\*:**
  - Edgenuity will check the essay for plagiarism and artificial intelligence.
  - Plagiarism will be flagged as IDENTICAL, MINOR CHANGES, or PARAPHRASED.
  - If plagiarism and/or AI is detected, the teacher should view the report.
- Final Course Grade is to be entered as an “Assessment” in Infinite Campus.
  - If you do not have access, please consult your school secretary for assistance. This will then automatically be linked to the Infinite Campus Assessment Tab.

**\*Please consult the sample scenarios below to understand how to interpret the Suggested Score and Academic Integrity Report.**

### Example 1

This essay was given a Suggested Score of 70%. The Academic Integrity report is important, as it shows us important information to consider. This example report indicates that about 26% of the content was plagiarized from 10 different sources. The plagiarized passages are highlighted in the report. Looking at those short passages, it is possible that the student wrote them themselves, as they are common phrases. However, the report also indicates that 100% of the essay was written by AI. Even though the Suggested Score was 70%, the teacher will need to reset the assignment so the student can complete it honestly.

Suggested Score

**70%**

Accept Suggested Score

Manual Score:  Manual Score

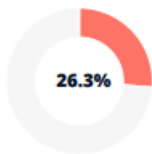
**Prompt** [Rubric](#) | [Checklist](#)

Write a narrative essay about overcoming a challenge, and what you learned as a result.

[Read More >>](#)

When I was a junior in high school, I decided to take an advanced math class. I had always been good at math, so I figured it would be a breeze. But once the class started, I realized that I was in for a challenge. The material was much harder than anything I had ever encountered before, and I quickly fell behind.

### Plagiarism Detection



Types of plagiarism		Words
Identical	26.3%	45
Minor Changes	0%	0
Paraphrased	0%	0
Omitted Words	0%	0

### AI Content Detection



Text coverage		Words
AI text	100%	171
Human text	0%	0

[Learn more](#)

### Plagiarism Results: (10)

Plagiarism match types: ● Identical | ● Minor Changes | ● Paraphrased | ● Omitted Words

[Learn more](#)

### Plagiarism Report Content

When I was a junior in high school, I decided to take an advanced math class. I had always been good at math, so I figured it would be a breeze. But once the class started, I realized that I was in for a challenge. The material was much harder than anything I had ever encountered before, and I quickly fell behind.

At first, I felt like giving up. But I knew that I didn't want to fail, so I decided to put in the extra effort. I started going to tutoring sessions after school, and I spent hours studying every night. It was exhausting, but I refused to give up.

Through this experience, I learned that hard work and perseverance are essential to success. I also learned that it's important to ask for help when you need it and to never give up, even when things get tough. This lesson has stayed with me throughout my life, and I know that it will continue to guide me in the future.

## Example 2

This essay was given a Suggested Score of 70%. The Academic Integrity Report shows that about 5% of the essay was directly plagiarized from 1 source. However, the highlighted sentence is one that is flagged as plagiarized is very generic and likely honestly written by the student. If the teacher speaks with the student and determines the writing to be honestly done, the Suggested Score could be accepted.

Suggested Score

**70%**

Accept Suggested Score

Manual Score:

Manual Score

**Prompt**

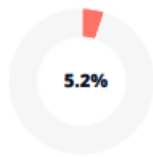
[Rubric](#) | [Checklist](#)

Write a narrative essay about a person you consider to be a hero. Share an experience that shows what you admire about that person a

[Read More >>](#)

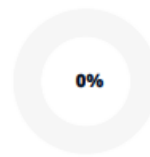
My personal hero would be my brother Sam. While having a difficult upbringing and bad habits in which he has now long outgrown, he has become a very kind and hard working. I find these to be very admirable in a person and he happens to be the one who shows this the most in which I surround myself with. He is very understanding of people's situations, especially with customer

**Plagiarism Detection**



Types of plagiarism		Words
Identical	5.2%	8
Minor Changes	0%	0
Paraphrased	0%	0
Omitted Words	0%	0

**AI Content Detection**



Text coverage		Words
AI text	0%	0
Human text	100%	154

[Learn more](#)

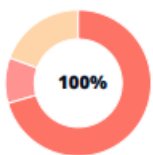
**Plagiarism Results: (1)**

After knowing my brother, his experiences, and how hes worked past them, I have personally found strength from his example. Moving forward I am now more determined and inspired than I was. **This is why my brother is my hero.**

**Example 3**

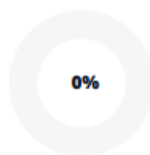
The first time the student completed this assignment, it was plagiarized from 49 sources.

**Plagiarism Detection**



Types of plagiarism		Words
Identical	70.6%	218
Minor Changes	10%	31
Paraphrased	19.4%	60
Omitted Words	0%	0

**AI Content Detection**



Text coverage		Words
AI text	0%	0
Human text	100%	309

[Learn more](#)

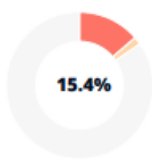
**Plagiarism Results: (49)**

## Plagiarism Report Content

What I think make a great hero is someone who is able to overcome his or her obstacles in life, is highly motivated, and has plenty of bravery. Overcoming obstacles may be one of the hardest parts of being a hero. I think it's the hardest because a lot of people are blocked from doing something and just quit. Heroes have many characteristics such as: bravery, courage, selflessness, passion, and dependability. A person that is a hero can be characterized as "someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself. According to researchers, empathy, and compassion for others are key variables that contribute to heroic behavior. People who rush in to help others in the face of danger and adversity do so because they genuinely care about the safety and well-being of other people. A hero is selfless and cares deeply about others. A person who can give everything up for other people and not worry about how it would affect them is a hero. To be a hero, you do need to be courageous to make differences, but you also need a compassionate heart....Heroes may provide a protecting function beyond that of role models or leaders. A person who can give everything up for other people and not worry about how it would affect them is a hero. To be a hero, you do need to be courageous to make differences, but you also need a compassionate heart. A hero must exhibit traits of self-sacrifice. Heroes are fearless at times when the challenges seem impossible. They are everyday people doing extraordinary things. Despite their flaws, heroes make the world a better place to live in. They have the power to inspire others when all hope is lost. In conclusion a hero is defined by many things that consider him/her as a good person at heart

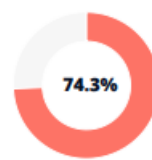
The second time, there was less plagiarism, but the student used AI. The report makes clear what was plagiarized and what was likely AI-produced. The student is required to redo the essay.

### Plagiarism Detection



Types of plagiarism		Words
<span style="color: red;">●</span> Identical	13.7%	24
<span style="color: orange;">●</span> Minor Changes	0%	0
<span style="color: yellow;">●</span> Paraphrased	1.7%	3
<span style="color: grey;">●</span> Omitted Words	0%	0

### AI Content Detection



Text coverage		Words
<span style="color: red;">●</span> AI text	74.3%	130
<span style="color: grey;">●</span> Human text	25.7%	45

[Learn more](#)

## Plagiarism Results: (3)

### Plagiarism Report Content

these qualities are in the everyday heroes like police officers, nurses emergency and medical etc. these individuals may not always be seen as true heroes, but they take many risks each and every day to make sure the health and safety of others are good. Heroes can also be found in fiction, in the characters of books, plays and movies. The characters may be real but their heroic qualities are no less impressive. Both real and fictional heroes teach us valuable lessons about courage. Individuals can panic and make mistakes that put others in dangerous situations. Heroes don't just save people they also can help make people make the right decisions. heroes are people who are liked and respected for their bravery, altruism, and willingness to put others needs of their own. heroes come in all shapes and sizes, and all their qualities can vary depending on the context. The qualities can include courage, service, a willingness to risk their own life to save another, staying calm in dangerous situations, and a strong sense of justice.

## AI content detector report

these qualities are in the everyday heroes like police officers, nurses emergency and medical etc. these individuals may not always be seen as true heroes, but they take many risks each and every day to make sure the health and safety of others are good. Heroes can also be found in fiction, in the characters of books, plays and movies. The characters may be real but their heroic qualities are no less impressive. Both real and fictional heroes teach us valuable lessons about courage. Individuals can panic and make mistakes that put others in dangerous situations. Heroes don't just save people they also can help make people make the right decisions. heroes are people who are liked and respected for their bravery, altruism, and willingness to put others needs of their own. heroes come in all shapes and sizes, and all their qualities can vary depending on the context. The qualities can include courage, service, a willingness to risk their own life to save another, staying calm in dangerous situations, and a strong sense of justice.

### Example 4

This example shows that the student spent 27 minutes on their first attempt. No plagiarism and no AI were detected, so the teacher does not have to open the Academic Integrity report. However, Edgenuity provided a Suggested Score of 0% because the essay was too short and did not have proper organizational elements. In this instance, the teacher should work with the student to teach them the grammar and structure necessary to improve their writing. It appears that the student understood the assignment, but just lacks the tools to properly put their thoughts into writing. After the teacher helps the student, the teacher can reset the activity so the student can redo it.

The teacher can also copy the student's work into a Google Doc and share it with the student. The student can work to improve their writing and the teacher can provide support. Once the student has completed their revision, the student must resubmit the essay in Edgenuity so that a Suggested Score can be given.

The attempt below has a pending score and requires review.

#### Graded Attempts:

Attempt	Score	Start of Attempt	Time Spent	Academic Integrity
▼ <a href="#">Attempt 1</a>		5/16/2023 7:50:46 AM	00:27:36	P - 0% AI Not Detected

Suggested Score

**0%**

- Your essay is too brief to evaluate.
- Your essay could not be scored because some of its organizational elements could not be identified.

Accept Suggested Score

Manual Score:

Manual Score

#### Prompt

[Rubric](#) | [Checklist](#)

Write a narrative essay about overcoming a challenge, and what you learned as a result.

[Read More >>](#)

I wanted to build a tree house by myself and it i got half of the base done an it took me at least 2 hours to put that up so started to think to myself like two heads better than one and i could use an extra set of hands anyways so i had ask my brother to help me and we got the rest of the base done in under a hour and 30 i think and then put the walls before i knew it we was done before the week started so what i learned is that is its always ok to ask for help and never try to do it alone over coming that i learned when

## Employability

- **For students currently employed with at least 6 months of continuous employment:**
  - Student completes self-evaluation
  - Student brings in two weeks of pay check stubs
- **For students not currently employed:**
  - Student must have district-approved work readiness portfolio

For more information, contact your school:

Bradford High School	359-6200
Harborside	359-8400
Hillcrest	359-6118
Indian Trail HS & Academy	359-8700
Kenosha eSchool	359-7715
LakeView Tech Academy	359-8155
Reuther Central High School	359-6160
Tremper High School	359-2200

- **ACT WorkKeys Resources:**
  - **ACT WorkKeys Administration Website**  
<https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/workkeys-for-educators/assessments/administration.html>
  - **ACT WorkKeys Business Writing Website**  
<https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/workkeys-for-educators/assessments/business-writing.html>

## **Student Self-Evaluation**

After your employer evaluation is completed, you may begin your self-evaluation. The employability skills self-evaluation should consist of the following four paragraphs:

1. A description of the place you work and your job duties
2. Your areas of strength on the job
3. The areas in which you could improve
4. Your plans to improve and/or maintain your job performance

Include a topic sentence, several supporting sentences, and a concluding sentence in each paragraph. The self-evaluation must be word-processed but you do not need a cover sheet. Be honest!

## Questions and Answers for Students and Parents

The Kenosha Unified School District (KUSD) is offering a program designed to provide another option to students who are unable to meet the credit requirements for receiving their high school diploma. The District believes the KUSD High School Competency Diploma Option will serve to decrease the number of dropouts and increase the number of high school graduates.

Students who are unable to meet the credit requirements to graduate with their cohorts are likely candidates to drop out of school and not graduate. With that in mind, the KUSD is offering a Competency Diploma that gives students an opportunity to graduate and to further their respective educational and career opportunities. Frequently asked questions and answers follow.

### WHAT IS THE KUSD HIGH SCHOOL COMPETENCY DIPLOMA?

- It is an alternate route to graduation in which a diploma is awarded to a small percentage of students who meet all requirements, including the IOWA Assessments.
- With this diploma, graduates can continue their education at the post-secondary level, join the military, or go directly to work. However, not all colleges, trade schools, businesses, apprenticeship programs, or branches of the military may accept the diploma.

### HOW DO STUDENTS QUALIFY FOR THE KUSD HIGH SCHOOL COMPETENCY DIPLOMA?

- Students must be at 17-20 years old, and who have been in a high school cohort group for more than three years, a member of an existing KUSD cohort group and are credit deficient.
- Students must be current residents of the Kenosha Unified School District.
- Students must meet the requirements for the writing and employability components.
- Students must have completed consumer education/economics, health, and government and politics, or comparable courses.
- Students must successfully complete the U.S. Civics Exam (min. score of 65/100).
- Students are required to perform a minimum of 10 hours of community service.

### HOW DOES THE PROGRAM WORK?

- Interested students **ages 17 and over who are credit deficient** will meet with a counselor to determine credit status and feasibility of graduating through credit acquisition. Eligible students will fill out an application form, sign consent, and receive KUSD High School Competency Diploma Option information.
- Students will be offered an opportunity to attend school to prepare for the IOWA Assessments.
- Students who attend school for test-preparation will be subject to all classroom, school, and District rules and policies.
- Eligible students who complete all course requirements and pass the IOWA Assessments can graduate with the Competency Diploma. Those not satisfying both conditions prior to their twenty-first birthday are ineligible for this Diploma.
- Students receiving the Competency Diploma are invited to participate in the Competency Diploma graduation ceremony.



#### WHAT IS REQUIRED OF STUDENTS WHO WISH TO TAKE THE IOWA ASSESSMENTS?

- Eligible students must have on file a signed KUSD High School Competency Diploma Student Participation Form and transcript showing that course requirements have been met (consumer education/economics, health, and government and politics).
- Students must successfully complete the U.S. Civics Exam (min. score of 65/100).
- Students are required to perform a minimum of 10 hours of community service.
- Students must successfully complete one of the following writing assessments: score Level 3 or higher on the ACT WorkKeys Business Writing/ approved alternate writing assessment, or score 6 or higher on the ACT Writing (maximum of 12).
- Students must satisfy the employability skills requirement prior to testing.
- Eligible students must have paid in full all testing fees required prior to testing.
- Students will take the IOWA Assessments, which measures knowledge in the areas of reading, vocabulary, written expression, mathematics, social studies, and science.
- Students must pass the IOWA Assessments by achieving a minimum stanine score of four in each of the subject areas. Until their twenty-first birthday, students who fail one or more tests may re-test during each testing cycle.
- Iowa Assessments candidates shall present valid photo identification.
- All Iowa Assessments are administered in English.
- Students with documented special education needs may be eligible for testing accommodations.

#### WHAT IS REQUIRED OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS/DESIGNEES?

- Students will be fully informed of each diploma's potential value in terms of getting a job, entering post-secondary education, or joining the military.
- Informational fliers/letters will also include the contact information of the student's guidance counselor or principal's designee, who will provide more detailed information regarding the program.
- Schools will provide opportunities for preparatory work to increase the likelihood of success for students who choose the KUSD High School Competency Diploma Option.
- Principals or their designees will oversee testing accommodations and will monitor student eligibility and identification for this option.
- Principals or their designees will notify students who have not passed the IOWA Assessments.

#### WHAT IS THE PARENT'S/GUARDIAN'S ROLE?

- The school district has developed a parent notification letter and a parent signature letter. The parent/guardian signature is required prior to participation by students who are 17.
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to meet with their student's counselor or teacher to be fully informed about the KUSD High School Competency Diploma Option.

#### WHEN WILL STUDENTS RECEIVE THE KUSD HIGH SCHOOL COMPETENCY DIPLOMA AND WHAT WILL IT LOOK LIKE?

- Students successfully completing the program will be awarded the KUSD High School Competency Diploma at a Competency Diploma graduation ceremony.
- The District, rather than a high school will award the KUSD High School Competency Diploma.

## • **Questions and Answers for Administrators, Teachers, and Counselors**

### WHAT IS THE KUSD HIGH SCHOOL COMPETENCY DIPLOMA AND WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

- The KUSD High School Competency Diploma is an option for high school students who are unable to achieve a diploma through credit acquisition.
- This diploma option is available for students **17-20 years old**, who have been in a high school cohort group for more than three years, **are credit deficient, and members of an existing KUSD cohort group**.
- Students who are 17 may choose to prepare for this option with parent/guardian permission.
- Students who choose the KUSD High School Competency Diploma Option may participate in coursework and/or remediation to prepare for the IOWA Assessments test.

### ARE THERE STUDENTS WHO DO NOT QUALIFY TO CHOOSE THIS OPTION?

- Students who have not been in a high school cohort group for at least 3 years over the age of 18 who are not part of a KUSD cohort group **are not eligible** for this option. They should be advised to seek a GED or Adult High School Diploma through Gateway Technical College.

### HOW DO STUDENTS EARN A KUSD HIGH SCHOOL COMPETENCY DIPLOMA?

- Earn HS credits in consumer education or economics, health, and government and politics.
- Successfully complete the U.S. Civics Exam (min. score of 65/100).
- Complete one of the following: Score level 3 or higher on the WorkKeys Business Writing/approved equivalent, or Score 6 or higher on the ACT Writing (maximum of 12).
- Successfully complete an employability skills component,
- Achieve a passing score at the 4th stanine on all required IOWA Assessments sub-tests.

### DO COLLEGES AND THE MILITARY ACCEPT THE KUSD COMPETENCY DIPLOMA?

Gateway Technical College, Carthage College, and the University of Wisconsin-Parkside currently accept the KUSD High School Competency Diploma. Some branches of the military do not accept competency diplomas. The student is responsible for determining if the KUSD High School Competency Diploma is honored at specific colleges and universities, by the military or other programs/institutions.

### WHAT IS THE PROCEDURE FOR ENTERING A STUDENT INTO THIS COMPETENCY DIPLOMA PROGRAM?

- Meet with counselor prior to making a decision to participate in this program;
- Receive complete information regarding the advantages of each type of diploma;
- Participate in a review and evaluation of his/her credit history to determine the feasibility of graduating through credit acquisition;
- Read and sign the KUSD High School Competency Diploma Student Participation Form;
- Meet with the teacher, counselor or other principal's designee assigned to the program.

### WHAT ARE THE DETERMINING FACTORS FOR COUNSELORS AND ADMINISTRATORS IN HELPING STUDENTS TO CHOOSE THE COMPETENCY DIPLOMA OPTION?

Students who can achieve the required credits to graduate with their cohort group should remain in credit programs. Options for students who are credit deficient include summer school, Accelerated Independent Study (AIS), and after-school credit completion. Students over the age of 17 who are credit deficient are potentially qualified to participate.

**Letter to Parents Concerning the *KUSD High School Competency Diploma*  
(to be printed on school letterhead)**

Date

Dear Parent/Guardian of Eligible Student:

The Kenosha Unified School District (KUSD) has developed requirements for the issuance of a KUSD High School Competency Diploma for eligible students. Your son/daughter is eligible for this option since he/she (1) meets the age requirements, (2) is a resident of the Kenosha Unified School District, and (3) is a member of a District cohort group.

To pursue this diploma option, your child must complete an employability skills requirement and a writing component. Additionally, he/she must have earned credit in the following courses: consumer education/economics, health, and government and politics.

After these requirements have been met, the student is eligible to take the IOWA Assessments. After successful completion of all sections, score at the 4<sup>th</sup> stanine or above, he/she will graduate with a KUSD High School Competency Diploma. At that time, they will be invited to participate in the Competency Diploma Graduation Ceremony.

Please note that the KUSD High School Competency Diploma may not be acceptable for entry into all institutions of higher education or all branches of the military. Currently, all local colleges accept it. You should also understand that some apprenticeship programs might not accept a Competency Diploma. It is the responsibility of the student to determine if his/her future plans will be effected by choosing the Competency Diploma Option.

If you wish to discuss this matter either on the telephone or in person, please contact your child's counselor or me.

Thank you for your continued support in your child's education.

Sincerely,

Principal's Signature

# KUSD High School Competency Diploma

## Student Participation Form

I \_\_\_\_\_ (print student name) have read the requirements regarding the KUSD High School Competency Diploma and choose to participate in this option. I understand that:

- I must be a current resident of the Kenosha Unified School District.
- I must be credit deficient as verified by my counselor.
- I must be 17-20 years old and have been in a high school cohort group for more than three years.
- I must be a member of a KUSD cohort group.
- Students are required to perform a minimum of 10 hours of community service.
- I must pass all sections of the IOWA Assessments at the 4<sup>th</sup> stanine or above and meet all other requirements prior to my twenty-first birthday.
- The KUSD High School Competency Diploma may not be acceptable for entry into all institutions of higher education or all branches of the military or all apprenticeship programs.
- It is my responsibility to determine if the KUSD High School Competency Diploma will be accepted at colleges and universities, by the military, or by other programs/institutions.
- If I pass the IOWA Assessments and meet all other requirements, I will be invited to participate in the KUSD Competency Graduation Ceremony.
- I am subject to all school rules and School Board policies while on school property and that failure to follow rules and procedures may result in my dismissal from the program.

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(student signature and date)

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(phone number)

*The Kenosha Unified School District is an Equal Opportunity Educator/Employer with established policies prohibiting discrimination on the basis of age, race, creed, religion, color, sex, national origin, disability or handicap, sexual orientation, or political affiliation in any educational program, activity, or employment in the District. The Superintendent of Schools/designee (262-359-6320) addresses questions regarding student discrimination, and the Chief Human Resources Officer (262-359-6333) answers questions concerning staff discrimination.*

**Parent/Guardian Consent**  
(required for students under the age of 18)

**KUSD High School Competency Diploma Student Participation Form**

I/We, \_\_\_\_\_, have read the requirements  
(print parent/guardian name)  
for participation in the KUSD High School Competency Diploma and grant my/our permission for  
\_\_\_\_\_ to participate in this option.  
(print name of son/daughter)

I/We understand that our son/daughter

- must be a current resident of the Kenosha Unified School District;
- must be credit deficient as verified by their counselor;
- must be 17-20 years old; and have been in a high school cohort group for more than three years
- must be a member of a KUSD cohort group;
- are required to perform a minimum of 10 hours of community service;
- must pass all sections of the IOWA Assessments at the 4<sup>th</sup> stanine or above and meet all other requirements prior to his/her twenty-first birthday;
- must understand that the KUSD High School Competency Diploma may not be acceptable for entry into all institutions of higher education or all branches of the military or all apprenticeship programs;
- must understand it is his/her responsibility to determine whether or not the KUSD High School Competency Diploma will be accepted at colleges and universities, by the military, or by other programs/institutions;
- must understand if he/she passes the IOWA Assessments and meets all other requirements, he/she will be allowed to participate in the KUSD Competency Graduation Ceremony;
- must understand he/she is subject to all school rules and School Board policies while on school property and that failure to follow rules and procedures may result in his/her dismissal from the program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(parent/guardian signature and date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(phone number)

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