

Kenosha Unified School District

High School Competency Diploma Option

Student Handbook



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

Dr. Jeffrey 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
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Summary of Requirements

Eligibility Requirement	Requirements
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"> • Score level 3 or higher on the ACT WorkKeys Business Writing • Score of 70% or higher in Edgenuity Writing Competency Course • Score 6 or higher on the ACT w/ Writing: Writing (maximum score of 12)
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
Costs - Students (each time testing)	
IOWA Scoring Fee	\$15.30
WorkKeys Business Writing and Scoring	\$21.00
Academic Proficiency Level Requirement IOWA	
Reading	4th Stanine
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.

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

Use your employer's evaluation of you as a starting point for discussing your strengths and weaknesses. 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.

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 4th 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.

(student signature and date)

(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.
- is required to perform a minimum of 10 hours of community service.
- must pass all sections of the IOWA Assessments at the 4th 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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