



WORK READY KENTUCKY SCHOLARSHIP

ANNUAL REPORT 2021–2022



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Introduction and Program History

The Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship (WRKS) was established by KRS 164.787 in June 2019 as an extension of a similar program began years before through Executive Order 2016-912. The purpose of WRKS, as expressed in the first section of the statute is *“to ensure that all Kentuckians who have not yet earned a postsecondary degree have affordable access to an industry-recognized certificate, diploma, or associate of applied science degree”*. The goal is to increase workforce participation rates by expanding the number of skilled, competitive workers in sectors of the Kentucky economy deemed to be in the highest need and fastest labor force growth areas. These high-demand workforce sectors have remained the same each year since program inception:

- Advanced Manufacturing,
- Business and Information Technology,
- Construction,
- Healthcare, and
- Transportation and Logistics

WRKS provides financial aid resources for Kentuckians who have not yet earned an associate or higher degree in order to make the cost to individuals pursuing credentials in high-demand areas more affordable and thereby opening access to industry-recognized credentials to more people.

The WRKS scholarship amount is designed to pay for the difference in cost between an eligible student’s tuition and fees and their federal and state student aid, with the tuition amount being capped at the in-state tuition and fees rate at the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS). The Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA) administers the program in collaboration with the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet and the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education.

During the 2017-2018 year, the first academic year of program administration, funding was limited to students pursuing a certificate or diploma program in one of the top five high-demand workforce sectors. Starting with the 2018-2019 year, several changes were made to the WRKS program in an effort to provide more flexibility for students and better address workforce needs. These changes included an expansion of the eligible programs of study to include Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degrees, elimination of the grade point average requirement, the addition of renewal eligibility based on each recipient’s achievement of satisfactory academic progress as determined by their postsecondary institution, and the expansion of eligibility to high school students who are enrolled in dual credit coursework as part of an approved Career and Technical Education pathway.

The portion of the WRKS program dedicated to high school students, herein referred to as the Work Ready Dual Credit program (WKDC) operates under a different award structure, with award amounts limited to a per credit hour maximum that cannot exceed one-third of the Kentucky Community and Technical College System in-state tuition rate. However, the fiscal year 2022 state budget language temporarily amended the dual credit rate to two-fifths of the KCTCS in-state tuition rate, or \$72 per credit hour for the 2021-2022 year, and directed the WKDC portion to be funded through the Dual Credit Scholarship program. WKDC provides up to two free career and technical education dual credit courses per year to high school students in grades 9 through 12.

Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship – Overview

Table 1 summarizes WRKS and WKDC program funds disbursed, the number of individuals receiving those funds and the number of postsecondary credit hours earned for the 2021-2022 academic year. The table lists the postsecondary Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship and the secondary Work Ready Dual Credit program separately. Per state budget instructions, 2021-2022 WKDC disbursements were funded through the Dual Credit Scholarship program. The figures listed below for postsecondary WRKS account for 100% of the Work Ready funds expended in 2021-2022 where 3,720 individuals earned an average of 18.8 college credit hours. Typically, an associate degree requires 60 credit hours, but industry recognized diplomas and certificates generally require fewer credit hours. For instance, some certificates can be completed with as few as 6 credit hours. High school students participating in the Work Ready Dual Credit program are eligible for two career and technical education dual credit courses per academic year. The 15,358 high school students that participated in the WKDC program in 2021-2022 earned an average of 4.2 credit hours per person.

Table 1
Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship
Annual Summary
2021-2022

	Total Disbursed	Unduplicated Recipients	Credit Hours Earned
Dual Credit (WKDC)	\$ 4,718,430	15,358	65,547
Postsecondary (WRKS)	\$ 10,468,864	3,720	70,069
TOTAL	\$ 15,187,294	19,078	135,616

Table 2 compares the first five years of WRKS program activity as it relates to the postsecondary portion of the program. Overall, the number of recipients has tripled since the program began in 2017. The program saw significant growth during the first three years of administration. Much of this growth can be attributed to marketing efforts to make the program more widely known, and the inclusion of AAS degrees as eligible programs of study beginning with the 2018-2019 year. The COVID-19 pandemic began in March 2020, leading to statewide postsecondary enrollment declines during the 2020-2021 year. The slower, but continued growth during the 2021-2022 year suggests enrollment levels are recovering. However, slower growth rates are also expected as the program matures operationally and becomes more consistent with requirements remaining the same from one year to the next.

Table 2
Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship
By Year of Administration
Postsecondary Program Only

Academic Year	Total Amount Disbursed	Average Amount Disbursed	Total Recipients (Unduplicated)	% Recipient Increase from Prior Year	Credit Hours Earned	% Hours Earned Increase from Prior Year
2017-2018	\$ 2,880,881	\$ 2,413	1,194	N/A	25,702	N/A
2018-2019	\$ 5,662,645	\$ 2,528	2,240	87%	40,352	57%
2019-2020	\$ 8,600,549	\$ 2,525	3,406	52%	59,219	47%
2020-2021	\$ 9,257,247	\$ 2,686	3,447	1%	62,622	6%
2021-2022	\$ 10,468,864	\$ 2,814	3,720	8%	70,069	12%

When the 2021-2022 year WRKS postsecondary utilization is compared between academic terms (Table 3), the majority of activity across all categories occurred in the fall 2021 semester. This fall to spring semester pattern is commonly observed in many postsecondary student financial aid programs and is a characteristic of reaching operational maturity.

Table 3
Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship
Summary by Academic Term
2021-2022

Academic Term	WRKS Disbursed	Percent Disbursed	Total Recipients	Percent Recipients	Credit Hours Earned	Percent Credit Hours
Fall 2021	\$ 5,562,311	53.0%	2,968	79.8%	36,809	52.5%
Spring 2022	\$ 4,906,553	47.0%	2,707	72.7%	33,260	47.4%

WRKS Cross-Sectional Analyses

Approximately \$8.9 million in WRKS disbursements (84.9% of the total) were made on behalf of 3,333 students (89.5% of all recipients) to Kentucky's 16 public two-year community and technical institutions during the 2021-2022 academic year - i.e., Kentucky Community and Technical College System institutions (Table 4). Proprietary (2-year and 4-year) institutions received \$935,600 (9%) of the total funding. Approximately \$632,000 in program disbursements (6%) were made to Kentucky private, not-for-profit colleges and universities on behalf of 6.2% of program recipients. Kentucky's public four-year universities, of which only one had students eligible to receive funds, account for less than 1% of the remaining disbursement activity. Table 7 details these statistics for each specific institution.

Table 4
Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship
Postsecondary Summary by Institutional Sector
2021-2022

Institution	Total Applicants	Unduplicated Recipients	Year Total Disbursed	Year Total Credit Hours	Fall 2021 Disbursed	Fall 2021 Credit Hours	Spring 2022 Disbursed	Spring 2022 Credit Hours
TOTAL All Institutions	9,355	3,724	\$ 10,468,864	70,069	\$ 5,562,311	36,809	\$ 4,906,553	33,260
Public 4-year	286	4	\$ 12,819	71	\$ 8,373	47	\$ 4,446	24
Public 2-year	7,941	3,333	\$ 8,887,959	61,199	\$ 4,704,857	32,039	\$ 4,183,102	29,160
Private 4-year	464	234	\$ 632,472	3,060	\$ 331,920	1,614	\$ 300,552	1,446
Proprietary 4-year	328	27	\$ 67,421	429	\$ 29,788	191	\$ 37,633	238
Proprietary 2-year	336	126	\$ 868,193	5,310	\$ 487,373	2,918	\$ 380,820	2,392

Students' dependency status¹, as determined by the U.S. Department of Education on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), is strongly associated with the number of students receiving disbursements, the aggregate amount of disbursed funds, and the number of work ready credits earned. The WRKS scholarship is open to both dependent and independent students. Physical and temporal proximity to postsecondary education institutions likely provided dependent students relatively greater access to information about the WRKS program at least initially, resulting in a 41% greater dependent student utilization rate for the academic year (Table 5: 2,178 dependent students versus 1,532 independent students). In other words, there were 1.41 dependent students receiving WRKS benefits for each independent student. Not only were dependent students enrolling in greater absolute numbers, but their enrollment intensity for the year - as measured by the average number of credit hours earned - was nearly double (86.6%) that of independent students (Table 5: 45,623 dependent student hours earned versus 24,446 independent student hours earned). The ratio was 1.86 credit hours earned for dependent students for each credit hour earned by independent students. There were similar relationships between the number of dependent and independent students and the number of credit hours each group earned during each semester, although a greater amount of activity occurred in the fall semester over the spring semester.

Table 5
Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship
Summary by Academic Term and Dependency Status
Academic Year 2021-2022

	Disbursed	Recipients	Credit Hours Earned
Fall Term	\$ 5,562,311	2,968	36,809
Dependent	\$ 3,434,477	1,836	24,324
Percent	61.7%	61.9%	66.1%
Independent	\$ 2,127,834	1,132	12,485
Percent	38.3%	38.1%	33.9%
Spring Term	\$ 4,906,553	2,707	33,260
Dependent	\$ 2,948,492	1,649	21,299
Percent	58.4%	59.4%	62.7%
Independent	\$ 1,958,061	1,058	11,961
Percent	41.6%	40.6%	37.3%
Academic Year Total	\$ 10,468,864	3,720	70,069
Dependent	\$ 6,382,969	2,178	45,623
Percent	61.0%	58.5%	65.1%
Independent	\$ 4,085,895	1,542	24,446
Percent	39.0%	41.5%	34.9%

Dependent students, owing largely to better and more current information about WRKS in high school, will likely always skew the utilization statistics toward this group. Similarly, independent students who are likely already in the workforce and taking advantage of the WRKS program to increase the value of their human capital can be expected to post more consistent numbers from one semester to the next.

¹ "Dependent" students are those less than 25 years of age and commonly perceived as "traditional" college students pursuing postsecondary education immediately or within a short time, after high school graduation. "Independent" students are 25 years of age or older and are often characterized as "returning adult students."

The primary goal of the Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship program is to increase the number of individuals with industry-recognized credentials who are trained and ready to enter the workforce in five high-demand work sectors identified by the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (see page 3).

Analysis of 2021-2022 WRKS utilization by workforce sector (Table 6) shows the greatest number of recipients were in the Healthcare sector ($n= 1,575$, 41.0%), followed by Business & IT ($n= 927$, 24.1%) and Advanced Manufacturing ($n=675$, 1%).

Table 6
Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship
Credentials Sought by Workforce Sector
2021-2022

Workforce Sector	Credential Sought	Total Applications	WRKS Recipients Per Sector	Fall 2021 Disbursed	Fall 2021 Credit Hours	Spring 2022 Disbursed	Spring 2022 Credit Hours
Advanced Manufacturing		1,353	675	\$ 1,052,014	7,274	\$ 867,938	6,074
	AAS Degree	770	473	\$ 756,861	5,284	\$ 663,590	4,694
	Certificate	305	100	\$ 133,508	942	\$ 99,369	675
	Diploma	278	102	\$ 161,145	1048	\$ 104,979	705
Business and IT		2,295	927	\$ 1,317,997	8,596	\$ 1,156,201	7,940
	AAS Degree	1,605	856	\$ 1,240,407	8,132	\$ 1,15,657	7,650
	Certificate	625	62	\$ 64,757	386	\$ 35,232	259
	Diploma	65	9	\$ 12,833	78	\$ 5,312	31
Construction		827	440	\$ 635,398	4,527	\$ 637,889	4,522
	AAS Degree	355	234	\$ 335,894	2,339	\$ 359,063	2,496
	Certificate	178	34	\$ 39,691	295	\$ 26,595	212
	Diploma	294	172	\$ 259,813	1,893	\$ 252,231	1,814
Healthcare		4,808	1,575	\$ 2,257,050	14,391	\$ 1,978,394	12,865
	AAS Degree	2,794	961	\$ 1,249,317	8,624	\$ 1,150,207	7,988
	Certificate	1,452	441	\$ 512,294	2,688	\$ 441,791	2,367
	Diploma	562	173	\$ 495,439	3,079	\$ 386,396	2,510
Transportation and Logistics		523	222	\$ 299,852	2,021	\$ 266,131	1,859
	AAS Degree	228	127	\$ 190,287	1,325	\$ 182,985	1,316
	Certificate	186	55	\$ 38,303	228	\$ 29,017	172
	Diploma	109	40	\$ 71,262	468	\$ 54,129	371

The WRKS program assists students pursuing an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree, a diploma, or a certificate in one of the five high demand workforce sectors. Greater than one half of the students pursuing Advanced Manufacturing, Business & IT and Healthcare programs of study declared their intention to seek an AAS degree; while approximately 43% of Construction and Transportation & Logistics students declared a similar intention. The second most frequent declared credentials were certificates over diplomas in four of the five workforce sectors. Construction took the opposite approach with diplomas being favored over credentials. In general, the trend for students to increasingly prefer to pursue AAS degrees over other credentials has continued in 2021-2022 where the proportion of students pursuing AAS degrees across all sectors represents 58.6% of the total credentials being sought.

WRKS Activity by Institution

The final level of analysis for the 2021-2022 Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship program is by postsecondary institution. The tuition amount considered in the WRKS award calculation is statutorily based on the in-state resident rate at the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS). WRKS-eligible postsecondary credentials must also be sought at or below the Associate of Applied Sciences degree. Therefore, it reasonably may be anticipated that the vast preponderance of enrolled students (85.0% of applications [$n=7,941$] and 89.5% of enrollments [$n=3,333$]), course credit hours earned ($n=61,199$, 87.3%), and WRKS disbursed funds (84.9%, \$8,887,959) were at KCTCS institutions (Table 7).

Campbellsville University, the University of the Cumberlands, Indiana Institute of Technology, the only participating private not-for-profit four-year institutions, accounted for 4.9% of applications [$n=464$] and 6.2% of enrollments [$n=234$], 4.3% of course credit hours earned ($n=3,060$), and 6.0% of WRKS funds disbursed (\$632,472).

The five proprietary institutions participating in the WRKS program, Galen College of Nursing, Sullivan University, College of Technical Education, MedQuest College, and Medical Career & Technical College, accounted for 7.0% of applicants [$n=664$] and 4.1% of enrollments [$n=153$], 8.2% of course credit hours earned [$n=5,739$], and 8.9% of WRKS funds disbursed (\$935,614).

Applicants from four public four-year institutions accounted for 3.1% of the total applicants [$n=286$]. However, only one public four-year institution (Eastern Kentucky University) had students receive funding.

Table 7
Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship
Summary by Institution and Academic Term
2021-2022

Institution	Total Applicants	Unduplicated Recipients	Fall 2021 Disbursed	Fall 2021 Credit Hours	Spring 2022 Disbursed	Spring 2022 Credit Hours
Public 4-year						
Eastern Kentucky University	76	4	\$ 8,373	47	\$ 4,446	24
Northern Kentucky University	22	0	\$ 0	0	\$ 0	0
University of Kentucky	51	0	\$ 0	0	\$ 0	0
University of Louisville	45	0	\$ 0	0	\$ 0	0
Western Kentucky University	92	0	\$ 0	0	\$ 0	0
Public 2-year						
KCTCS - Ashland	333	180	\$ 314,826	2,171	\$ 256,289	1,796
KCTCS - Big Sandy	291	135	\$ 214,771	1,586	\$ 189,874	1,442
KCTCS - Bluegrass	1,117	402	\$ 642,106	4,127	\$ 532,542	3,589
KCTCS - Elizabethtown	922	454	\$ 671,871	4,511	\$ 516,151	3,733
KCTCS - Gateway	909	438	\$ 516,115	3,230	\$ 564,723	3,603
KCTCS - Hazard	309	108	\$ 141,155	1,029	\$ 110,193	765
KCTCS - Henderson	100	24	\$ 31,562	250	\$ 29,833	207
KCTCS - Hopkinsville	136	33	\$ 53,218	358	\$ 45,135	321
KCTCS - Jefferson	748	228	\$ 317,630	2,039	\$ 287,956	1,938
KCTCS - Madisonville	407	204	\$ 275,139	1,888	\$ 233,220	1,686
KCTCS - Maysville	346	149	\$ 225,488	1,568	\$ 206,651	1,453
KCTCS - Owensboro	569	264	\$ 382,622	2,597	\$ 376,488	2,610
KCTCS - Somerset	638	290	\$ 393,185	2,900	\$ 309,733	2,310
KCTCS - Southcentral	483	199	\$ 258,776	1,798	\$ 291,351	1,913
KCTCS - Southeast	242	77	\$ 66,495	565	\$ 67,408	540
KCTCS - West KY	391	148	\$ 199,448	1,422	\$ 165,595	1,257
Private 4-year						
Campbellsville University	405	231	\$ 329,387	1,589	\$ 295,791	1,408
Indiana Institute of Technology	5	0	\$ 0	0	\$ 0	0
University of the Cumberlands	54	3	\$ 2,533	25	\$ 4,761	38
Proprietary 4-year						
Galen College of Nursing	155	6	\$ 4,218	28	\$ 15,103	91
Sullivan University	173	21	\$ 25,570	163	\$ 22,530	147
Proprietary 2-year						
College of Technical Education	11	0	\$ 0	0	\$ 0	0
MedQuest College	214	111	\$ 454,367	2,722	\$ 335,835	2,105
Medical Career & Technical College	111	15	\$ 33,006	196	\$ 44,985	287

Work Ready Dual Credit Scholarship - Overview

The Work Ready Dual Credit Scholarship (WKDC) marked its fourth year of administration with the 2021-2022 year. Although WKDC functioned separately from the Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship (WRKS), the WKDC target population could be considered a conceptual feeder to the WRKS program. WKDC provides financial assistance for up to two dual credit courses per academic year taken by high school students as part of Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathway approved by the Kentucky Department of Education. Table 8 compares WKDC activity for the first four years of program administration.

Table 8
Work Ready Dual Credit Scholarship
By Year of Administration

Academic Year	Total Recipients (Unduplicated)	Credit Hours Earned	Total Amount Disbursed
2018-2019	4,821	18,313	\$ 1,023,732
2019-2020	10,994	44,532	\$ 2,580,717
2020-2021	10,629	43,393	\$ 3,110,038
2021-2022	15,358	65,547	\$ 4,718,430

Table 9 displays summary information on the number of students, courses, earned credit hours, and total funds disbursed through the WKDC program in academic year 2021-2022. It is characteristic of dual credit programs to have greater enrollment levels in the fall semester. This is because courses are offered to high school students in traditional semesters as well as in yearlong formats where the curriculum is spread across the length of the year, although payment for yearlong coursework general occurs in the fall.

Table 9
Work Ready Dual Credit Scholarship
Summary by Academic Term
2021-2022

Academic Term	Unduplicated Recipients	Courses & Labs Paid	Credit Hours Earned	Total Amount Disbursed
Fall	10,700	13,513	39,561	\$ 2,848,008
Spring	7,524	8,738	25,986	\$ 1,870,422
TOTAL	10,629	22,251	65,547	\$ 4,718,430

On the surface, fall to spring WKDC utilization exhibits approximately one third decline across all four measures. The number of students declined 29.7%; the number of courses and labs declined by 35.4%; the number of credit hours earned declined by 34.4%; and, total program funds disbursed declined by 34.4% from the fall semester to the spring semester. However, these utilization figures accurately reflect how courses are being offered to students, with the majority in the fall term, including yearlong courses that are attached to the fall term due to postsecondary billing processes.

Work Ready Dual Credit Scholarship – Cross-Sectional Analyses

Students receiving awards under the Work Ready Dual Credit Scholarship program attended Kentucky's public 4-year and 2-year institutions and private, not-for-profit 4-year colleges and universities. Kentucky Community and Technical College System institutions accounted for 83.8% of all WKDC student enrollments and 85.3% of WKDC earned credit hours. This was primarily due to the career and technical dual credit course offerings that were in existence through KCTCS when the WKDC program began. Public 4-year universities accounted for 13.1% of student recipients and 11.9% of earned credit hours. Private 4-year institutions, accounted for 469 WKDC students (3.1% of the total) and 1,746 of earned credit hours (2.6%). These ratios between postsecondary sectors are consistent for number of courses and WKDC disbursed funds and relatively consistent for breakdowns by academic term. On average, each WKDC student enrolled in 1.42 courses and earned 4.0 credit hours in 2021-2022.

Table 10
Work Ready Dual Credit Scholarship
Summary by Postsecondary Sector
2021-2022

	Recipients	Number Courses & Labs	Year Total Disbursed	Year Total Credit Hours	Fall 2021 Disbursed	Fall 2021 Credit Hours	Spring 2022 Disbursed	Spring 2022 Credit Hours
TOTAL All Institutions	15,568	22,251	\$ 4,718,430	65,547	\$2,848,4008	39,651	\$ 1,870,422	25,986
Public 4-year	2,049	2,626	\$ 563,943	7,841	\$ 287,967	4,002	\$ 275,976	3,839
Public 2-year	13,050	19,051	\$ 4,029,120	55,960	\$ 2,483,640	34,495	\$ 1,545,480	21,465
Private 4-year	469	574	\$ 125,367	1,746	\$ 76,401	1,064	\$ 48,966	682

Examining the distribution of WKDC students, courses and disbursed funds within each sector (Table 11) shows a significant amount of variation among the individual colleges and universities. Murray State University enrolled over one-third (32.3%) of all WKDC students at public 4-year institutions during 2021-2022. The University of Louisville, Northern Kentucky University, Western Kentucky University and Kentucky State University each had between 8.4% and 17.2% of enrolled students. Eastern Kentucky University and Morehead State University each had just over 4% of the students enrolled in the WKDC program. Murray State University, the University of Louisville, and Northern Kentucky University hold the top three positions for public 4-year institutions when comparing the percentages for number of courses, credit hours earned, and disbursed dollars.

KCTCS institutions enrolled nearly six times the number of students (83.8% of the statewide WKDC enrollment) that were enrolled in WKDC at the public 4-year institutions. Here, the distribution of enrollments among KCTCS campuses closely followed the size of each campus.

Campbellsville University, Spalding University and Midway University led the 2021-2022 WKDC enrollment for the private 4-year universities, with the private sector having a total of 469 WKDC students (3.0% of the statewide total) during the academic year.

Table 11
Work Ready Dual Credit
By Sector and Postsecondary Institution
2021-2022

Institution	Academic Year 2021-2022 Total				Fall 2021			Spring 2022		
	Student Count	Courses & Labs	Credit Hours	Disbursed	Courses & Labs	Credit Hours	Disbursed	Courses & Labs	Credit Hours	Disbursed
Eastern Kentucky Univ.	94	141	423	\$ 30,456	69	207	\$ 14,904	72	216	\$ 15,552
Kentucky State Univ.	174	228	725	\$ 52,203	118	375	\$ 27,003	110	350	\$ 25,200
Morehead State Univ.	95	102	306	\$ 22,032	79	237	\$ 17,064	23	69	\$ 4,968
Murray State Univ.	662	957	2,863	\$ 206,136	444	1,332	\$ 95,904	513	1,531	\$ 110,232
Northern Kentucky	350	425	1,237	\$ 89,064	182	517	\$ 37,224	243	720	\$ 51,840
University of Louisville	353	420	1,206	\$ 90,180	259	777	\$ 55,836	161	483	\$ 34,344
Western Kentucky Univ.	321	353	1,027	\$ 73,872	189	557	\$ 40,032	164	470	\$ 33,840
Public 4-Year	2,049	2,626	7,841	\$ 563,943	1,340	4,002	\$ 287,967	1,119	3,296	\$ 275,976
KCTCS - Ashland	321	432	1,253	\$ 90,216	285	808	\$ 58,176	147	445	\$ 32,040
KCTCS - Big Sandy	21	27	88	\$ 6,336	22	68	\$ 4,896	5	20	\$ 1,440
KCTCS - Bluegrass	998	1,387	4,078	\$ 293,616	865	2,447	\$ 176,184	552	1,631	\$ 117,432
KCTCS - Elizabethtown	1,617	2,112	6,447	\$ 464,184	1,176	3,582	\$ 257,904	936	2,865	\$ 206,280
KCTCS - Gateway	373	709	1,968	\$ 141,696	442	1,213	\$ 87,336	267	775	\$ 54,360
KCTCS - Hazard	764	1,135	3,409	\$ 245,448	801	2,303	\$ 165,816	334	1,106	\$ 79,632
KCTCS - Henderson	551	748	2,015	\$ 145,080	616	1,608	\$ 115,776	13	407	\$ 29,304
KCTCS - Hopkinsville	110	144	482	\$ 34,704	84	276	\$ 19,872	60	206	\$ 14,832
KCTCS - Jefferson	3,116	4,323	12,860	\$ 925,920	2,174	6,595	\$ 474,840	2,149	6,265	\$ 451,080
KCTCS - Madisonville	647	1,043	3,009	\$ 216,648	655	1,922	\$ 138,384	388	1,087	\$ 78,264
KCTCS - Maysville	1,193	1,884	5,315	\$ 382,680	1,567	4,500	\$ 324,000	317	815	\$ 58,680
KCTCS - Owensboro	928	1,362	4,465	\$ 321,480	649	2,247	\$ 161,784	713	2,218	\$ 159,696
KCTCS - Somerset	884	1,657	4,527	\$ 325,944	1,210	3,270	\$ 235,440	447	1,257	\$ 90,504
KCTCS - Southcentral	1,143	1,593	4,677	\$ 336,744	991	2,883	\$ 207,576	602	1,794	\$ 129,168
KCTCS - Southeast	164	250	649	\$ 46,728	190	470	\$ 33,840	60	174	\$ 12,888
KCTCS - West KY	200	245	718	\$ 51,696	101	303	\$ 21,816	144	415	\$ 29,880
Public 2-Year	8,616	11,863	35,551	\$ 2,557,800	7,003	21,070	\$ 1,515,744	4,860	14,481	\$ 1,042,056
Campbellsville University	178	245	778	\$ 56,016	170	547	\$ 39,684	75	231	\$ 16,632
KY Christian University	25	46	134	\$ 9,648	25	75	\$ 5,400	21	59	\$ 4,248
Midway University	189	104	297	\$ 21,384	73	211	\$ 15,192	31	86	\$ 6,192
Spalding University	156	156	468	\$ 33,696	59	177	\$ 12,744	97	291	\$ 20,952
Thomas More University	17	18	54	\$ 3,888	15	45	\$ 3,240	3	9	\$ 648
Univ. of the Cumberlands	4	5	15	\$ 735	3	9	\$ 441	2	6	\$ 294
Private 4-Year	469	574	1,746	\$ 88,214	251	754	\$ 53,416	165	496	\$ 34,798
Grand Total	15,568	22,251	65,547	\$ 4,718,430	13,513	39,561	\$ 2,848,008	8,738	25,986	\$ 1,870,422

The distribution of WKDC students, courses, earned credit hours, and disbursed dollars for the KCTCS institutions allows them to be roughly grouped into three categories based on the proportion of KCTCS WKDC enrollment. The upper category, composed of the Jefferson, Elizabethtown, Maysville and Southcentral campuses, accounts for 54.1% of all WKDC students attending public 2-year colleges. The middle category, includes the Madisonville, Owensboro, Bluegrass, Somerset, and Hazard campuses, each of which accounts for between 5.0% and 7.0% of the KCTCS students enrolled in

WKDC coursework, and 32.3% of the public 2-year sector as a grouping. The remaining campuses account for just over 20% of all WKDC students attending public 2-year colleges as a grouping. Ashland, Big Sandy, Gateway, Henderson, Hopkinsville, Southeast and West KY campuses, each of which accounts for less than 4% of all WKDC students attending public 2-year colleges. These relative rankings are highly variable from year-to-year and are largely dependent upon the high schools' ability to offer career and technical education coursework to students due to facility, equipment and instructor availability in their local areas. The percentage of courses taken, credit hours earned and WKDC funds disbursed closely approximates the percentage of students enrolled.

Work Ready Dual Credit Scholarship – Course Enrollment Analyses

The WKDC program does not have a component similar to the Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship program requiring students to enroll in a program of study related to a specific workforce sector. Instead, the scholarship program simply pays for up to two dual credit courses that are part of a Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathway that has been approved by the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE). There are numerous CTE pathways in existence, some of which are unique to a school district or location, affording students an opportunity to explore multiple career options while in high school. For ease of reference, KHEAA independently developed a broad course categorization system based upon 2021-2022 WKDC course enrollments. Table 12 lists these course categories by greatest to least number of courses taken by WKDC students. The total credit hours earned and funds disbursed are also listed for each category.

Table 12
Work Ready Dual Credit
Course Enrollment by Category
2021-2022

Work Ready Dual Credit Category	Academic Year 2021-2022			
	Students	Courses & Labs	Credit Hours	Disbursed
Healthcare	6,968	6,976	20,939	\$ 1,507,467
Information Technology	2,770	2,780	8,521	\$ 613,512
Business	2,540	2,540	7,620	\$ 548,367
Advanced Manufacturing	2,282	3,429	9,131	\$ 657,432
Construction	1,293	2,028	5,664	\$ 407,808
Education	926	927	2,749	\$ 197,388
Agriculture	922	926	2,769	\$ 199,368
Transportation	851	853	2,257	\$ 162,504
Criminal Justice	574	574	1,722	\$ 123,984
Engineering	545	545	2,173	\$ 156,456
Culinary	372	372	957	\$ 8,904
Media Arts	96	96	288	\$ 20,736
Early Childhood Education	67	68	204	\$ 14,688
Firefighting	63	64	279	\$ 20,088
Cinematography	36	36	108	\$ 7,776
Cosmetology	18	18	109	\$ 7,848
Equine	12	13	39	\$ 2,808
Unmanned Systems Tech	4	4	12	\$ 864
Fashion & Interior Design	1	1	3	\$ 216
Social Services	1	1	3	\$ 216
Grand Total	20,341	22,251	65,547	\$ 4,718,430

It should be recognized that alignment between postsecondary and secondary CTE curricula is considered in the WKDC course approval process. Since many of the WKDC courses are also required for industry-recognized postsecondary credentials, the WKDC program provides high school students an opportunity to make substantial progress toward earning, and sometimes completing an Associate degree or other postsecondary credential before graduating from high school.

The course categories listed in Table 12 may be subdivided into three general groups based upon popularity with students as defined by the frequency with which students enrolled.

The largest group, nearly representing nearly 80% of the total WKDC enrollment for the 2021-2022 year, is composed five categories - Healthcare (31.3% of all WKDC students), Information Technology (12.5%), Business (11.4%), Advanced Manufacturing (10.1% plus 5.1% labs), and Construction (5.8% plus 3.3% labs). Although eligibility for the WKDC program is tied to the larger array of secondary CTE pathways, these top five enrollment categories broadly align with the high-demand occupational areas that are defined for the postsecondary Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship program.

The second group of WKDC course categories consists of six areas and accounts for 18.9% of all WKDC enrollments. The proportion of all WKDC students enrolled in these areas is included parenthetically: Education (4.2%), Agriculture (4.2%), Transportation (3.8%), Criminal Justice (2.6%), Engineering (2.4%) and Culinary (1.7%).

The final group of WKDC course categories is comprised of the remaining nine academic areas, collectively accounting for less than 2.0% of WKDC enrollment. These courses were in the areas of Media Arts, Early Childhood Education, Firefighting, Cinematography, Cosmetology, Equine, Unmanned Systems Technology, Fashion and Interior Design and Social Services.

The WKDC program, by encouraging students to make the most of their high school educational opportunities and complete dual credit courses, is an important step laying the foundational groundwork for subsequently earning postsecondary education credentials, i.e., additional diplomas, certifications, Associate of Applied Sciences degrees, and more.

Table 13 presents a more granular perspective to identify the specific courses WKDC students took within the top 10 course enrollment categories that appear in Table 12. Within the most popular course category, Healthcare, the course most frequently taken, by a factor of nearly 3 to 1 was Medical Terminology. The second and third most popular Healthcare courses were Nursing Assistant Skills I and Introduction to Health Occupations.

In the Information Technology course category, which was the second most popular for WKDC enrollment, the top course was Introduction to Computers by an overwhelming margin. Rounding out the other top courses in Information Technology are Digital Literacy, Intro to Information Systems, and Computer Hardware and Software.

In the Business category, which is third across all WKDC course categories, the majority of students took Personal Finance followed by Introduction to Business.

Advanced Manufacturing and Construction round out the top five course categories for the 2021-2022 year. Varying types of welding courses were the most popular choice in Advanced Manufacturing while more foundational courses such as Circuits and Intro to Construction were top picks in the Construction category. It should also be noted that both of these fields require hands-on laboratory experience; the labs are included as separate courses in the course/lab counts in Tables 12 and 13.

The enrollment categories rounding out the top 10 range from Education to Engineering. The most popular courses taken in these categories were Intro to Education, The Teaching Profession, Animal Science, Intro to Veterinary Science, Brake Systems and Engine Repair, Intro to Criminal Justice and Intro to Engineering Design.

Table 13
Work Ready Dual Credit
Top Courses Taken by Course Category
2021-2022

Category	Course Name	Students	Number Courses/Labs	Credit Hours	Disbursed
Healthcare	Medical Terminology	3,049	3,050	9,053	\$ 651,675
Healthcare	Nursing Assistant Skills I	1,181	1,182	3,546	\$ 255,312
Healthcare	Intro to Health Occupations	666	666	1,998	\$ 143,856
Healthcare	Healthcare Delivery and Management	316	316	948	\$ 68,256
Healthcare	First Aid & Emergency Care	307	307	614	\$ 44,208
Information Technology	Intro to Computers	1,680	1,686	5,058	\$ 364,176
Information Technology	Digital Literacy	169	169	507	\$ 36,504
Information Technology	Intro to Information Systems	166	166	498	\$ 35,856
Information Technology	Computer Hardware and Software	144	144	576	\$ 41,472
Business	Personal Finance	907	907	2,721	\$ 195,912
Business	Intro to Business	724	724	2,172	\$ 156,246
Business	Pathways to Financial Success	126	126	378	\$ 27,216
Business	Principles of Management	124	124	372	\$ 26,784
Advanced Manufacturing	Shielded Metal Arc Welding & Lab	304	507	1,216	\$ 87,552
Advanced Manufacturing	Gas Metal Arc Welding & Lab	222	420	1,038	\$ 74,736
Advanced Manufacturing	Industrial Maintenance Electric & Lab	202	404	1,010	\$ 72,720
Advanced Manufacturing	Cutting Processes & Lab	159	318	795	\$ 57,240
Construction	Circuits I	196	196	980	\$ 70,560
Construction	Intro to Construction & Lab	170	340	680	\$ 48,960
Construction	Intro to Computer Aided Design	148	148	444	\$ 31,968
Construction	Light Frame Construction I & Lab	128	256	640	\$ 46,080
Education	Intro to Education	264	264	764	\$ 55,008
Education	The Teaching Profession	194	194	582	\$ 41,688
Education	Foundations of Instruction	124	125	375	\$ 26,676
Agriculture	Animal Science	337	337	1,011	\$ 72,792
Agriculture	Intro to Veterinary Science	239	242	726	\$ 52,272
Agriculture	Contemporary Issues in Agriculture	103	104	312	\$ 22,464
Transportation	Brake Systems & Lab	101	202	505	\$ 36,360
Transportation	Engine Repair & Lab	86	172	430	\$ 30,960
Criminal Justice	Intro to Criminal Justice	291	291	873	\$ 62,856
Criminal Justice	Criminal Investigations	130	130	390	\$ 28,080
Engineering	Intro to Engineering Design	262	262	1,048	\$ 75,456
Engineering	Principles of Engineering	107	107	428	\$ 30,816

Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship – Conclusion and Recommendation

The purpose of the Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship program, as expressed in KRS 164.787, is *“to ensure that all Kentuckians who have not yet earned a postsecondary degree have affordable access to an industry-recognized certificate, diploma, or associate of applied science degree”*. The goal of this workforce development initiative is to expand the number of Kentucky’s skilled workers in the areas that are the fastest growing and/or have the greatest needs to fuel Kentucky’s economy. Both the secondary and postsecondary pieces of the Work Ready KY Scholarship (WRKS) program complement one another to this end.

Work Ready Dual Credit (WKDC) allows Kentucky’s high school students to explore workforce interest areas through Career and Technical Education (CTE) coursework. Although WKDC is not tied to the same high-demand workforce sectors that are defined for WRKS eligibility, the CTE areas experiencing the greatest dual credit enrollment intensity were the same – Healthcare, Information Technology, Business, Advanced Manufacturing and Construction. Furthermore, the top two – Healthcare and Information Technology – have held the top two positions since the WKDC program began in 2018.

Likewise, similarity across time exists within the postsecondary WRKS program as the greatest number of students pursuing Associate of Applied Science degrees and credentials in Healthcare, and Business and Information Technology have remained consistent since WRKS began in 2017.

The award structure of both programs succeeds in providing affordable access to students. The WKDC award provides two free CTE dual credit courses per year for high school students in grades 9 through 12. Since most of the coursework offered is worth at least 3 credit hours, CTE students have the opportunity to earn 24 or more credit hours prior to high school graduation. Students also have the ability to take additional dual credit coursework and pay out-of-pocket at a significantly reduced tuition rate.

Postsecondary WRKS is awarded as a last-dollar-in program that provides benefits for up to 60 credit hours of scholarship receipt. The maximum amount is based on the in-state per credit hour community college tuition rate, with WRKS filling in the difference after the student’s other federal and state grant and scholarship aid is considered. The result is that most WRKS recipients are middle-to-upper income students who do not qualify for aid that is typically awarded to low-income populations like the Federal Pell grant and the state’s College Access Program (CAP) grant.

Through administration of the Work Ready programs, KHEAA collects the data necessary to ensure compliance with the statutory and regulatory requirements. This data is primarily focused on verification of eligibility as students access program benefits. KHEAA data is insufficient for analysis of postsecondary completion rates amongst WRKS recipients, degree and credential attainment rates, and ascertaining whether or not the WRKS program is meeting the intended goal of expanding the number of skilled workers needed in Kentucky’s high-demand workforce sectors. As the WRKS program continues to grow in popularity, so does the need to increase funding levels to sustain the program. Therefore, KHEAA recommends an in-depth longitudinal analysis be conducted to measure the program’s effectiveness and ensure the Commonwealth experiences dividends on its financial investment in this workforce development initiative.

