PURPOSE OF THE STUDY
To replicate previous research and investigate the college and career readiness perceptions of high school students related to ACT WorkKeys Reading for Information, Locating Information, and Applied Mathematics assessments.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
1) What are the college readiness perceptions of high school students related to WorkKeys assessments?
2) What are the career readiness perceptions of high school students related to WorkKeys assessments?

RESEARCH DESIGN
Descriptive cross-sectional survey design, using an electronic survey instrument.

SURVEY ITEMS
• Overall perception of WorkKeys results.
• College and career readiness perceptions:
  - WorkKeys results caused rethinking education after HS/career options.
  - WorkKeys results are useful in planning for education after HS/career.
  - Confidence in skills needed to be successful in college/career after seeing WorkKeys results.
  - Connection between WorkKeys results and education after HS/career.
• Perception of math and English skills before and after taking WorkKeys tests.

Survey Respondents
Sample = 128 HS juniors from two high schools in NW Wisconsin
38% response rate
Gender: 60% male
40% female
Ethnicity:
89% White
7% Asian/Pacific Islander
2% Multi-ethnic
1% African Am./Black
1% Amer. Indian
0% Hispanic
GPA:
39% = 3.50-4.00
31% = 3.00-3.49
13% = 2.50-2.99
9% = 2.00-2.49
3% = 1.50-1.99
1% = Below 1.50
4% = No response
(Research conducted in Spring 2015)
FINDINGS

• Student perceptions of college and career readiness were higher than skill levels indicated by Workkeys scores (consistent across multiple studies).
• Students perceived value in the WorkKeys assessments (greater than 50% in multiple studies).
• Perceptions of performance on WorkKeys assessments were lower among students who scored below the college-ready level (Level 5).
• Students with scores below Level 5 were less likely to agree they had the skills to be successful in college or career.
• Students with scores below Level 5 were more likely to agree there was no connection between assessment results and their future education or career.
• Gap between White and non-White students scoring above Level 5 on all three WorkKeys assessments.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

• Capitalize on students’ perceived value of the assessments.
• Review educational policies related to college and career readiness.
  - Incorporate WorkKeys into the Academic and Career Planning process.
  - Clearly communicate the connection between WorkKeys, the workplace, and further education.
  - Target students with scores below Level 5 for more intensive career guidance.
• Provide training for school administrators, faculty, counselors, and staff about WorkKeys assessments, how results can be interpreted with students, and the connection to Academic and Career Planning.

Future Research Possibilities

• Identify factors that contributed to perceptions of value.
• After interventions are implemented through Academic and Career Planning, conduct a longitudinal study of the impact on educational and career decision-making.
• Study the impact of WorkKeys on self-efficacy.
• Study perceptions of administrators, counselors, faculty, and staff regarding their roles in advising students related to WorkKeys and career and college options.