

## SUPPLEMENTAL CRITERIA

Individuals aged 18-64 who live and/or work in Ballard County have earned 1,234 industry-recognized credentials from West Kentucky Community & Technical College since the postsecondary institution was formed from Paducah Community College and West Kentucky Technical School in 2005. A complete list of these degrees, by diploma description, is provided in the application appendix.

- 107 WKCTC Associates of Arts Degrees
- 153 WKCTC Associates of Applied Science Degrees
- 3 WKCTC Associate of Applied Technology Degrees
- 63 WKCTC Associate of Science Degrees
- 782 WKCTC Certificates
- 126 WKCTC Diplomas

Ballard County has a strong relationship with both West Kentucky Community & Technical College and Murray State University, as well as other public postsecondary institutions located in Illinois and Missouri. The data provided by West Kentucky Community & Technical College reveals that Ballard County residents have a strong commitment to higher education. In the past, many employers in the county and surrounding area have not required applicants to have a college degree, but have preferred hiring individuals with specific skills credentials. The positive impact of their pursuit of occupational certificates and diplomas allows local employers to benefit from the latest technical skills training.

As the labor market has become flooded with unemployed individuals with college degrees. Before the 2007 recession, someone entering the labor market could find a sustainable position with a certificate or diploma in practical nursing, welder's helper, or receptionist. Since then, employers have had the opportunity to recruit more experienced workers who were laid off, or hire workers with more education.

The school district responded to this change in employer hiring practices by creating more opportunities for high school students to pursue dual-credit enrollment courses and by expanding certificates offered at the Ballard County Career and Technical Center. The center provides a contextual hands-on approach to learning and is a key resource for youth looking to become college and career ready, as the center provides them the opportunity to either join the workforce or successfully transition to postsecondary industrial maintenance education programs.

This change has had a two-fold outcome: it has increased the number of credentials earned, and it has created a positive environment for all students to consider pursuing college degrees after high school graduation rather than simply seeking a credential. During the past three academic years, nearly 200 certificates were earned by high school students.

TABLE 6 BALLARD CAREER & TECHNICAL CENTER OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATES

ACADEMIC YEAR	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	TYPE OF AWARDS
2010-2011	14	Welding Certifications
	18	State Registered Nursing Aid Certifications
2011-2012	26	Welding Certifications
	18	State Registered Nursing Aid Certifications
2012-2013	29	Welding Certifications
	24	State Registered Nursing Aid Certifications
2013-2014	43	Welding Certifications
	25	State Registered Nursing Aid Certifications
	3	ServSafe Certification (new program)

Source: Ballard County Career & Technical Center, August 2014