IEP Team Resource: Making Decisions about Participation in the Alternate Assessment

KANSAS STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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IEP Team Resource: Making Decisions about Participation in the Alternate Assessment

Introduction

The 2015 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, known as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), includes a 1.0% threshold on state-level participation rates in the alternate assessment aligned to alternate academic achievement standards (AA-AAAS). No limit was placed on district or school rates, but districts must provide justifications if they expect their rate to be above the 1.0% threshold. In addition, states are to provide oversight to districts.

These requirements mean that states, districts, schools, and Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams need to think carefully about which students should be included in the AA-AAAS. Because the ultimate decision about an individual student's participation in the alternate assessment is made by the IEP team, it is critical that this team be provided the best information and tools to support its decisions.

Purpose of this IEP Team Resource

This IEP team resource is designed to support IEP team members, including teachers, school psychologists, English language development specialists, speech language therapists, occupational therapists, paraprofessionals, parents, administrators, and others who may participate in the IEP team meeting. It provides supports for the decision about whether a student with a disability should participate in a general assessment or an AA-AAAS. It does not address the development of a complete IEP. There are a number of resources that focus on IEP development in general; these rarely provide support specifically about making the decision about in which state assessment a student should participate. The tool and other resources provided here are designed to encourage rich discussion about the assessment participation decision.

This guide was customized for Kansas educators from one of three developed by states and technical assistance centers working together in NCEO's 2019 1.0% Peer Learning Group 3 (PLG 3). The two other documents that were developed can support the information presented here. They include:

- *Who Should Participate in the Alternate Assessment in Kansas: A slide Presentation Tool for Administrators.* This tool is a set of slides that has been customized for Kansas to provide information to district and school administrators about the purpose of the state's AA-AAAS, implications of the assessment for districts and students, talking with parents about participation, and supporting decisions about which students should participate in the state AA-AAAS. District and school administrators also might use the slides to provide information to their staff. This tool was created based on Tool 6: Who Should Participate in Your State's Alternate Assessment? A Slide Presentation Tool for Administrators created by NCEO's 2019 1% PLG 3.

- *Start with the End in Mind: An Infographic to Guide Decisions about Student Participation in the Alternate Assessment.* This infographic highlights information for parents and guardians about what participation in an AA-AAAS may mean for the future of their child.

Federal Law

Alternate assessments were first developed in response to the 1997 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which required that all states and districts develop, by the year 2000, alternate assessments for those students with disabilities unable to participate in regular assessments even with accommodations. IDEA did not define who the students were who could participate in an alternate assessment, nor did it use the term "significant cognitive disability." In 2003, regulations added to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) allowed states to count as proficient those students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who participated in the alternate assessment and met rigorous alternate achievement standards set by the state.

In 2015 ESSA reaffirmed that an AA-AAAS is the appropriate assessment for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. ESSA placed a 1.0% cap on the state participation rate for each subject, based on the total number of all students in the state assessed in the subject (34 CFR 200.6(c)(2)). ESSA specified that states cannot place a cap on the participation rates of local education agencies (LEAs) in any subject (34 CFR 200.6(c)(3)(i)). This means that LEAs can exceed the 1.0% participation threshold on an AA-AAAS in a given subject, but the state as a whole cannot exceed the 1.0% threshold in any subject.

Federal law reaffirms that the decision about participation in the AA-AAAS is to be made by the IEP team. The team is to adhere to the state's participation guidelines and the state's definition of a "student with the most significant cognitive disabilities." To be able to provide an assurance to the U.S. Department of Education that IEP teams in the state are doing so, states are providing support to districts. This tool is meant to help states provide that support to district IEP teams.

IEP Team Resource Overview

The IEP team decision about whether a student participates in the AA-AAAS is often one of the more difficult decisions that the team makes. It requires the consideration of many factors. To help IEP teams in this decision, several tools have been developed. These are based on a synthesis of the many tools that states may be using as they strive to provide relevant information to IEP teams so that the decisions that are made are best for the individual student.

This resource presents a collection of tools. They were identified and developed by NCEO 2019 PLG 3 and NCEO to help states meet the assurances they must provide to the U.S. Department of Education:

- IEP teams in the state are adhering to the state's AA-AAAS participation guidelines and the state's definition of a "student with the most significant cognitive disabilities."
- IEP teams (and their LEAs) in the state inform parents of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities of the implications of participation in the AA-AAAS.

The tools are organized into four sections that should be addressed by IEP teams as they make decisions about student participation in the alternate assessment:

Section 1: Informing All IEP Team Members about the Kansas AA-AAAS

- Tool A: Assessment Information for IEP Team Members

Section 2: Preparing for the Decision about Whether the Student Should Participate in the Kansas AA-AAAS

- Tool B: Intellectual Functioning Tool
- Tool C: Adaptive Functioning Tool
- Tool D: Instruction and Supports Documentation
- Tool E: Previous Test Participation and Performance Documentation
- Tool F: Communication Skills Documentation

Section 3: Discussing Information Relevant to the Assessment Decision During the IEP Meeting

- Tool G: Expectations for the Student's Future
- Tool H: Implications of Participation in General and Alternate Assessment
- Tool I: Intellectual Functioning, Adaptive Functioning, and Previous Participation and Performance Summary
- Tool J: Alternate Assessment Notification:

Section 4: Reviewing Decisions about Instruction and Assessment

- Tool K: Aggregation of Assessment Decisions by School and District
- Tool L: Review of Aggregate Decisions by School and District

Section 1: Informing All IEP Team Members about the Kansas AA-AAAS

The basis for making appropriate decisions about which assessment is most appropriate for an individual student is having a solid foundation of knowledge about the state's assessment system, including the purpose of the general assessment and the AA-AAAS. This knowledge should be demonstrated by all IEP team members, which may include parents or guardians, teachers, school psychologists, English language development specialists, speech language therapists, occupational therapists, paraprofessionals, administrators, and others who may participate in the IEP team meeting. Below is an overview of the general and alternate state assessments available in Kansas.



The Kansas Assessment Program (KAP), a program of the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE), fulfills a mandate from the Kansas Legislature. KAP provides general education assessments, alternate assessments, career and technical education assessments, and an English language proficiency assessment.

GENERAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENTS

The English language arts (ELA), mathematics, and science assessments are part of the federal elementary and secondary education legislation. The assessment program does the following:

- Measures specific claims related to the Kansas Standards in grades 3-8 and high school.
- Reports individual student scores along with each student's performance level.
- Provides subscale and total scores that can be used with local assessment scores to assist in improving a building's or district's programs in ELA, mathematics, and science.
- Learn more about the Kansas Standards.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY



The Kansas English Language Proficiency Assessment (KELPA) assessment is part of the federal elementary and secondary education legislation for English learners (ELs). KELPA measure English language proficiency in four domains: listening, reading, writing, and speaking. The grade bands assessed include Kindergarten, 1, 2–3, 4–5, 6–8, and 9–12. KELPA assessments are delivered through Kite Student Portal, except for Kindergarten and Grade 1 writing assessments which are paper/pencil forms.

The KELPA assessment:

- measures specific claims related to the Kansas Standards for English Learners in grades K-12,
- reports individual student scores along with each student's performance levels, and
- provides domain scores and an overall proficiency score that can be used with local assessment scores to assist in improving student learning.

Learn more about the Kansas English Learner Standards on the KSDE website

ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

Kansas is using the Instructionally Embedded model of the Dynamic Learning Maps® (DLM®) alternate assessment to test students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Alternate assessments are available for English Language Arts, mathematics, and science. Throughout the school year, teachers choose Essential Elements, which are linked to the Kansas Standards, and then use Kite Student Portal to access testlets to measure student progress.

For detailed information about Dynamic Learning Maps, visit the DLM alternate assessment and also the DLM and Essential Elements page on the KSDE website.

The tool provided here should be used to ensure that all potential IEP team members are informed about the state's AA-AAAS.

The tool provided in this section is:

- Tool A: Assessment Information for IEP Team Members

ALTERNATE ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

WIDA Alternate ACCESS is a test administered to students in grades K-12 who are identified as English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities. WIDA Alternate ACCESS measures students' English language skills in Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing.

Tool A: Assessment Information for IEP Team Members

There is a wealth of information available to assist IEP team members in making decisions about which assessment is most appropriate for a student to take. Unfortunately, local IEP teams may not know about this information unless it is provided to them. This tool includes information specifically designed for Kansas educators, as well as nationally available information from NCEO.

Information for Administrators, Teachers, School Psychologists, and Related Services Specialists

Alternate Assessment Information from KSDE

- *Kansas DLM Participation Guidelines*
- *Kansas Alternate Assessment Flow Chart*
- *Rubric for Determining Student Eligibility for the Kansas Alternate Assessment*
- *Alternate Assessment Roadmap to Determine Eligibility*
- *DLM Fact Sheet*
- *Who Should Participate in the Alternate Assessment: A Slide Presentation Tool for Administrators*
- *Kansas Student Information Sheet* (optional form used with districts receiving 1% TA)
- *Alternate Assessment Participation Monitoring (form used with districts receiving 1% TA)*

General Assessment Information from KSDE

- *The Kansas Accessibility Manual*
- *Accessibility Manual (pdf)- (DLM)*
- *Kite Accessibility Manual – (KAP, KELPA, cPASS, and Grade 2 reading)*
- *Considerations for Accessible Educational Materials*
- *Text-to-Speech for Passages and Graphics Application*
- *PNP Planning Tool for the Kansas Assessment Program (KAP)*
- *TTS Fact Sheet with Flowchart*

Information from NCEO

- *IEP Teams: Student Identification and Standards-based IEPs*
- *Tool 7 – Start with the End in Mind: An Infographic to Guide Decisions about Student Participation in the Alternate Assessment*

Information for English Language Development Specialists

Information from NCEO

- *Learning Modules on English Learners (ELs) with Disabilities*
- *State Assessment Decision-making Processes for ELLs with Disabilities*

Information for Parents

Information from KSDE

- *Kansas Alternate Assessment Notification* (PDF) *Spanish* (PDF)
- *DLM Fact Sheet*
- *Parent Information Brochure about DLM* (PDF) *Spanish* (PDF)
- *Who Should Participate in the Alternate Assessment: A Slide Presentation Tool for Administrators*
- *KAP Parent Guide*

Information from NCEO

- *Tool 7 – Start with the End in Mind: An Infographic to Guide Decisions about Student Participation in the Alternate Assessment*

Section 2: Preparing for the Decision about Whether the Student Should Participate in the Kansas AA-AAAS

The decision about which assessment is most appropriate for an individual student can best be supported by preparing information directly relevant to the assessment participation decision before the meeting. This information should reflect considerations that are included in the state's guidelines for participation in the AA-AAAS. Appendix A includes a sample case study with completed forms for a student who is eligible for the Kansas AA-AAAS. Appendix B includes a sample case study with completed forms for a student who is not eligible for the Kansas AA-AAAS.

According to ESSA regulations, states' guidelines and definition must address "factors related to cognitive functioning and adaptive behavior" (Sec 200.6(d)(1)). The regulations also clarified that a specific disability category or being an English learner does not determine whether a student has a significant cognitive disability (Sec 200.6(d)(1)(i)), nor does a student's "previous low academic achievement, or the student's previous need for accommodations to participate in general State or districtwide assessments" (Sec 200.6(d)(1)(ii)). The regulations state:

> A student is identified as having the most significant cognitive disabilities because the student requires extensive, direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains on the challenging State academic content standards for the grade in which the student is enrolled. (Sec 200.6(d)(1)(iii))

The tools provided in this section are:

- Tool B: Intellectual Functioning Tool
- Tool C: Adaptive Functioning Tool
- Tool D: Instruction and Supports Documentation
- Tool E: Previous Test Participation and Performance Documentation
- Tool F: Communication Skills Documentation

Tool B: Intellectual Functioning Tool

Measuring intelligence and intellectual functioning is a common approach to trying to quantify cognitive functioning. Cognitive functioning is a general term that is broad in scope. It generally includes a number of mental abilities, including "learning, thinking, reasoning, remembering, problem solving, decision making, and attention" (Fisher, Chacon, & Chaffee, 2019). A single measure of intelligence should not be a determinant of cognitive functioning, nor should it determine the potential for grade-level academic performance (McGrew & Evans, 2004). Nevertheless, documentation of information on intellectual functioning is one element of determining that a student may appropriately participate in an AA-AAAS.

Before using the following tools, teams need to be familiar with the DLM Participation Guidelines for Kansas. The Kansas criteria to participate in the DLM are:

1. The student has a most significant cognitive disability (defined as typically functioning 2 ½ or more standard deviations below the mean);
2. The student has significant deficits in adaptive behavior (defined as typically functioning 2 ½ or more standard deviations below the mean);
3. The student is primarily being instructed using the DLM Essential Elements as content standards; and
4. The student requires extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in all grade and age-appropriate instruction.

Rather than trying to reach a yes or no response about intellectual functioning, it may be more helpful for the IEP team to consider a continuum of intellectual functioning as described in the following tool. Remember, though, that no one characteristic (i.e., no single rating) should solely determine whether intellectual functioning is at a level that suggests the AA-AAAS is the appropriate assessment.

Teams need to remember that approximately 1% or less of the assessed students in the state would meet the criteria for the Kansas Alternate Assessment/DLM. Teams also need to remember that neither expected poor performance on the general education assessment nor anticipated student disruptive behavior should be a consideration for determining eligibility for participation in the DLM Alternate Assessment. These ratings are meant to be used with students with a variety of disability labels and should not be confused with eligibility criteria.

Teams should circle the cell in each row that most closely matches the student's measured intellectual information. There may be variance as to which column is marked for each row. This is to be expected because students can vary in their skill levels, or exhibit splinter skills impacting their cognitive functioning.

Generally, teams should see which column reflects the preponderance of the data. For a student to be eligible as a student with a most significant cognitive deficit, most data should appear in the column to the far right. Intellectual or cognitive assessment results, because of their specific numeric link to the Kansas participation criteria, should be weighed most heavily if they are available. The last 3 rows of the intellectual functioning tool are useful when standardized assessment results are not available. However, these ratings should align with available assessment results, unless the team feels that the assessment results are not valid or reliable.

Intellectual Functioning Tool

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Verbal Intelligence/Cognition (related to language skills)

Not limited	Mild Cognitive Limitations	Moderate to Significant Cognitive Limitations	Most Significant Cognitive Limitations
Verbal intelligence in average range or above (85 IQ or above)	Verbal Intelligence 1 to 2 SD below mean (84-71)	Verbal Intelligence 2 to 2.5 SD below mean (70 - 64)	Verbal Intelligence 2.5 SD or more below mean (63 or lower)

Nonverbal Intelligence/Cognition (related to visual-spatial skills)

Not limited	Mild Cognitive Limitations	Moderate to Significant Cognitive Limitations	Most Significant Cognitive Limitations
Non-verbal intelligence in average range or above (85 IQ or above)	Non-verbal Intelligence 1 to 2 SD below mean (84-71)	Non-verbal Intelligence 2 to 2.5 SD below mean (70 – 64)	Non-verbal Intelligence 2.5 SD or more below mean (63 or lower)

Thinking/Reasoning/Problem-Solving

Not limited	Mild Cognitive Limitations	Moderate to Significant Cognitive Limitations	Most Significant Cognitive Limitations
Reasoning and problem-solving skills at age-level or within average range on an assessment.	Minimal assistance (e.g., general education interventions/supports) needed to carry out reasoning and problem-solving tasks	Requires special education services, including modifications and levels of scaffolding to complete reasoning and problem-solving tasks	Dependent on others for completing tasks that require reasoning and problem-solving

Executive Function/Attention/Memory

Not limited	Mild Cognitive Limitations	Moderate to Significant Cognitive Limitations	Most Significant Cognitive Limitations
Cognitive planning and working memory at age-level or within average range on an assessment	Minimal assistance (e.g., general education interventions/supports) needed to support cognitive planning and working memory	Requires special education services, including modifications and levels of scaffolding to support cognitive planning and working memory	Dependent on others for completing tasks that require cognitive planning and working memory

Learning

Not limited	Mild Cognitive Limitations	Moderate to Significant Cognitive Limitations	Most Significant Cognitive Limitations
Learning grade level academic skills	Learning grade level academics with general education supports	Learning general standards or mastering target or successor linkage level EEs with increasing levels of assistance from special education services and supports	Making progress on the Essential Elements (EEs) with moderate/maximal levels of supports

Tool C: Adaptive Functioning Tool

Adaptive functioning, sometimes referred to as adaptive behavior, is defined as "coping with everyday environmental demands and includes daily living skills that people perform to care for themselves and to interact with others" (Mitchell, 2018). It is recommended that information for formal or informal assessments of adaptive behavior be collected from people who regularly interact with the student.

Before using the following tools, teams need to be familiar with the DLM Participation Guidelines for Kansas. The Kansas criteria to participate in the DLM are:

1. The student has a most significant cognitive disability (defined as 2 ½ or more standard deviations below the mean);
2. The student has significant deficits in adaptive behavior (defined as typically functioning 2 1/2 or more standard deviations below the mean);
3. The student is primarily being instructed using the DLM Essential Elements as content standards; and
4. The student requires extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in all grade and age-appropriate instruction.

Rather than trying to reach a yes or no response about adaptive functioning, it may be more helpful for the IEP team to consider a continuum of adaptive functioning. The following factors and rubric frameworks may be used to reflect a continuum. These can form a basis for IEP team discussions about adaptive functioning. Remember, though, that no one characteristic (i.e., no single rating) should solely determine whether adaptive functioning is at a level that suggests the AA-AAAS is the appropriate assessment.

Teams need to remember that approximately 1% or less of the assessed students in the state would meet the criteria for the Kansas Alternate Assessment/DLM. Teams also need to remember that neither expected poor performance on the general education assessment nor anticipated student disruptive behavior should be a consideration for determining eligibility for participation in the DLM Alternate Assessment. These ratings are meant to be used with students with a variety of disability labels and should not be confused with eligibility criteria.

Teams should circle the cell in each row that most closely matches the student's measured adaptive behavior information. There may be variance as to which column is marked for each row. This is to be expected because students can vary in their skill levels, or exhibit splinter skills impacting their adaptive functioning.

Generally, teams should see which column reflects the preponderance of the data. For a student to be eligible as a student with the most significant deficits in adaptive functioning, most data should appear in the column to the far right. Adaptive behavior scale results, because of their specific numeric link to the Kansas participation criteria, should be weighed most heavily. If a team is considering a student for eligibility for the Kansas Alternate Assessment/DLM, an adaptive behavior scale should be administered if one is not currently available. The ratings of the last 4 rows should align with available adaptive behavior assessment results, unless the team feels that the assessment results are not valid or reliable.

Adaptive Functioning Tool

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Adaptive Behavior Scale

Not Limited	Mild to Moderate Deficits	Moderate to Significant Deficits	Most Significant Deficits
Overall adaptive behavior score in average range or above (standard score 85 or above)	Adaptive behavior 1 to 2 SD below mean (ss 84 - ss 71)	Adaptive behavior 2 to 2.5 SD below mean (ss 70 – ss 64)	Adaptive behavior 2.5 SD or more below mean (ss 63 or lower)

Conceptual

Not Limited	Mild to Moderate Deficits	Moderate to Significant Deficits	Most Significant Deficits
Age-level expressive and receptive communication skills	Communicates expressively and receptively with minimal prompting/assistance	Beginning to communicate wants/needs/preferences using assistive technology (augmentative device or symbols)	No formal communication system
Learning grade level academic skills	Learning grade level academics with general education supports	Mastering target or successor linkage level EEs; learning grade level academics with increasing levels of assistance	Making progress on the Essential Elements (EEs) with moderate/maximal levels of supports

Social

Not Limited	Mild to Moderate Deficits	Moderate to Significant Deficits	Most Significant Deficits
No instruction is needed on responsibility, following rules, interpersonal skills	General instruction addressed through MTSS and general education interventions for responsibility, following rules, and interpersonal skills	Systematic, direct instruction in responsibility, following rules, and interpersonal skills	Prescriptive, systematic, direct instruction relating to responsibility, following rules, and interpersonal skills (Prescriptive is specifically designed for one particular student based on his or her needs.)
Assessment and observation of skills related to responsibility, following rules, and interpersonal skills show student has adequate to excellent social skills.	Assessment and observation of skills related to responsibility, following rules, and interpersonal skills show the student would benefit from general classroom social skills instruction.	Assessment and observation of skills related to responsibility, following rules, and interpersonal skills show the student needs systematic instruction to improve social skills.	Assessment and observation of skills related to responsibility, following rules, and interpersonal skills show the student needs individually planned instruction designed to match his/her skills and weaknesses.

No curricular intervention needed	Social skills curriculum appropriate for whole classroom is sufficient.	Structured social skills curriculum designed for small groups, including direct instruction, is needed.	Individualized, step-by-step planned curriculum with extensive modeling and practice is essential.
At mastery prior to instruction	Large group instruction with differentiation is sufficient	Small group instruction with differentiation is needed	Individualized one-on-one instruction is needed

Practical

Not Limited	Mild to Moderate Deficits	Moderate to Significant Deficits	Most Significant Deficits
No instruction needed on daily living skills or community living skills	Minimal assistance/supports for daily living skills and community living skills; student will likely be successful living independently and holding a job	Requires moderate assistance/supports to complete daily living skills and community living skills (e.g., meal prep, phone use, housekeeping); student will likely be successful in supportive living	Dependent on others for daily living skills and community living skills; student will likely need 24 hour supports as an adult

Tool D: Instruction and Supports Documentation

The intensiveness of instruction and supports provided to a student is one aspect of determining whether a student is considered to have a most significant cognitive disability and should participate in the state AA-AAAS. This tool provides a set of questions about the nature of instruction and supports to generate a discussion of whether the student's instruction should be considered as "extensive and substantial."

Reading/language arts:

- Are text materials always simplified for the student (e.g., reduced vocabulary and amount of text)?
- Does the student respond to assignments in a different way from other students (e.g., by pointing to pictures or selecting the correct option from several options)?
- Are different grading criteria used for the student (e.g., based on different requirements)?

Mathematics:

- Are problems always simplified for the student (e.g., word problems with simplified text; 2-digit multiplication problems rather than 4-digit problems)?
- Does the student respond to assignments in a different way from other students (e.g., by using cut-outs to solve fractions; solving computation problems via calculator)?
- Are different grading criteria used for the student (based on different requirements)?

Other academic subject areas (e.g., science, social studies):

- Are text materials always simplified?
- Does the student respond to assignments in a different way from other students?
- Are different grading criteria used for the student (based on different requirements)?

Functional skills:

- Is the student receiving instruction on conceptual skills (e.g., receptive and expressive language, reading and writing, money concepts, self-direction, and assistive technology)?
- Is the student receiving instruction on practical skills (e.g., daily living skills including eating, dressing, mobility, and toileting; community living skills including doing housekeeping activities, preparing meals, taking medication, using the telephone, managing money, using transportation, occupational skills, and maintaining a safe environment)?
- Is the student receiving instruction on social skills (e.g., interpersonal, responsibility, self-esteem, following rules, obeying laws, avoiding victimization)?

Tool E: Previous Test Participation and Performance Documentation

Whether a student participated in the AA-AAAS in the past should not be a definitive indication that a student should again participate in the AA-AAAS. Similarly, participation in the general assessment does not necessarily mean that the student should again take the general assessment. With extreme caution, then, IEP team members should look at data on test participation and performance.

It is recommended that for every year in which the student was in a tested grade, the IEP team document and review which test the student took (by subject area if participation can vary by grade) and how the student performed on the test (proficient or not, or more ideally a score indicating how close to proficiency the student was each year). Students who scored proficient on the AA-AAAS may need to transition to the general assessment in order for the assessment to be ambitiously challenging (Endrew F.). Students who were able to achieve a score on the general assessment are capable of completing the general assessment. Those that are not able to achieve a score may need to be considered for the AA-AAAS.

Student Name: _____Date:_____

Assessment Participation

(Insert a check to indicate the test in which the student participated)

Grade	Reading/Language Arts AA-AAAS	Reading/Language Arts: General	Mathematics AA-AAAS	Mathematics: General	Science AA-AAAS	Science General
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
10						

Assessment Performance

(Enter the student's proficiency level or score, or both, on the assessment the student took)

Grade	Reading/Language Arts AA-AAAS	Reading/Language Arts: General	Mathematics AA-AAAS	Mathematics: General	Science AA-AAAS	Science General
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
10						

Tool F: Communication Skills Documentation

Communication skills can sometimes make it difficult to identify other characteristics of a student with disabilities. The IEP team should consider using this tool to confirm that the student has a communication system. If a communication system does not exist or is not used effectively to communicate with different individuals, the IEP should prioritize developing the student's communication skills.

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Mark the student's mode (or modes) of communication, then describe the student's communication skills using that mode of communication (select a response, then elaborate with specifics):

Mode of Communication

_____ Communicates orally

_____ Communicates via Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)

_____ Communicates via signing

_____ Communicates via gestures and body language

Description of Communication. Indicate when the student communicates and with whom. Describe whether communication is directed at a range of individuals (e.g., teacher, other educators, peers, etc.) and whether it covers a variety of message types (e.g., functional needs, peer interactions, academic engagement, etc.).

Section 3: Discussing Information Relevant to the Assessment Decision During the IEP Meeting

While reviewing the information relevant to the AA-AAA participation decision during the IEP team meeting, it is important to discuss the information in an objective manner. The topic can be emotional for parents and educators alike. Because of this possibility, it may be helpful to use discussion guides. The discussion guide tools provided in this section are:

- Tool G: Expectations for the Student's Future
- Tool H: Implications of Participation in General and Alternate Assessment
- Tool I: Intellectual Functioning, Adaptive Functioning, and Previous Participation and Performance Summary
- Tool J: Alternate Assessment Notification

Tool G: Expectations for the Student's Future

Participation in the AA-AAAS has implications for the future educational and employment prospects of a child. It is critical that everyone agrees on expectations, and that those expectations are as high as possible. This is especially important given research findings that the achievement of a student with intellectual disabilities cannot be predicted by the student's measured intelligence (McGrew & Evans, 2004). Also, it is important to recognize that expectations may change as the student progresses through the grades. In other words, expectations for a child with significant cognitive disabilities in the early grades to be using the same curriculum materials, with needed accommodations, to participate in the regular assessment, and to be on track for a regular diploma may be reasonable. This may change over time as the curriculum becomes more complex.

The following is a discussion guide to facilitate the conversation with parents or guardians about expectations for the student.

1. What are your hopes for [child's name] this year? Do you expect that [child's name] will learn the same things as peers, with or without modifications?

2. What do you expect your child to be learning at the end of [elementary school, middle school, or high school]? What kinds of adjustments do you think are needed to ensure that [child's name] is successful?

3. Think about [child's name] as an adult. Describe what you hope [child's name] will be doing. How is this similar to or different from what you expect that [child's name's] peers without disabilities will be doing?

4. What do these expectations suggest for the decision about AA-AAAS participation?

Tool H: Implications of Participation in General and Alternate Assessment

The short-term and long-term implications of participation in the AA-AAAS or the general assessment should be informed by the discussion of expectations for the child. The importance of this discussion is evident in ESSA, which states that participation in the AA-AAAS:

> does not preclude a student with the most significant cognitive disabilities who takes an alternate assessment based on alternate academic achievement standards from attempting to complete the requirements for a regular high school diploma. (Sec 1111(b)(2)(D)(VII))

ESSA also emphasizes the importance of making implications of participation in the AA-AAAS clear to parents, as stated here:

> (II) ensures that the parents of such students are clearly informed, as part of the process for developing the individualized education program (as defined in section 614(d)(1)(A) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C.1414(d)(1)(A)))— (aa) that their child's academic achievement will be measured based on such alternate standards; and (bb) how participation in such assessments may delay or otherwise affect the student from completing the requirements for a regular high school diploma;

The IEP team may want to consider requirements of the regular high school diploma and how the student can work toward those requirements. This may take careful consideration of grade-by-grade requirements. It may be that a student will be able to stay on the pathway toward the regular high school with careful planning.

The following implications of participation in the AA-AAAS should be discussed during the IEP team meeting:

- It is possible the student will be included in different academic classes from those taken by peers.
- It is possible the student may not learn all the information needed to earn a regular high school diploma.
- If end-of-course tests are required, it is possible the student may not pass the test even with allowed accommodations.
- If a graduation test is required, it is possible the student may not pass the test even with allowed accommodations.

The IEP team should make sure parents or guardians understand these implications.

Tool I: Intellectual Functioning, Adaptive Functioning, and Previous Participation and Performance Summary

It is helpful to develop a summary of discussions that have been held about intellectual functioning, adaptive functioning, and previous participation and performance. This way, the summary is available from year to year for review and for consideration as to whether anything has changed that might indicate the need for a different decision about participation in the general assessment or the alternate assessment.

Student Name: _____

Date: _____

Brief Summary of IEP Team Discussions:

Tool J: Alternate Assessment Notification

ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT EXPLANATION AND INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND IEP TEAMS

Academic Achievement Based on Alternate Academic Achievement Standards

The Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) alternate assessment is designed for those students identified with a most significant cognitive disability who require instruction based on alternate academic achievement standards.

The Essential Elements are descriptions of what students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are expected to know and be able to do at each grade level from kindergarten through 12th grade. They are essential skills that are linked to the Kansas Curricular Standards grade-level specific expectations.

Differences Between Assessments Based on Grade-level Academic Achievement Standards and Those Based on Alternate Academic Achievement Standards

All students with a disability and an IEP have a right to a free appropriate public education. This right includes the opportunity for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities to be involved in and make appropriate progress in the same general education curriculum as other students. Sometimes, students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are not able to access the standards in a meaningful way or to the same degree as other students. Kansas educators worked with educators from 12 other states to create alternate academic achievement standards that align with the Kansas Curricular Standards. These standards are at a reduced depth, breadth, and complexity. These alternate academic achievement standards are called the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) Essential Elements (EE) in English language arts (ELA), mathematics and science.

The Kansas Assessment Program (general state assessment) provides parents, educators, and policymakers with one piece of information about student learning. The DLM is used to test academic achievement for students with a most significant cognitive disability. It is a completely individualized test designed so students can show what they know and can do. The assessment is given in short parts called testlets so your child does not become too tired or stressed. The DLM ELA and mathematics assessment is based on an instructionally embedded model with a fall and spring test window.

Impact of State and Local Policies on a Student Taking an Alternate Assessment Aligned with Alternate Academic Achievement Standards

Testing students on the alternate assessment and working from the alternate academic achievement standards can place a student on a different trajectory. These students are measured using performance standards at a reduced depth, breadth, and complexity which can result in fewer post-secondary opportunities. Teachers of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities use the EEs to plan what is taught and how it is taught so that their students can learn as much as possible. The EE may also be used to help teachers develop ways to measure student progress. The EEs provide teachers, parents and students information about how students learn and grow in the academic areas of ELA, mathematics and science. They answer the question "What should my child be learning?" Here

are a few examples:

EE English Language Arts – Reading Literature -Grade 3:

Determine the beginning, middle and end of a story.

Students use pictures to identify an event that occurred in the beginning, middle or end of the story

EE English Language Arts – Writing-Grade 7:

Can introduce an informational topic while writing and extend by writing about ideas and information related to the topic.

Teachers can ask students to select a topic for writing and then ask them basic questions about the topic.

EE Mathematics-Geometry- High School:

Express numerical answers with a degree of precision appropriate for the problem context.

Students work with money values (e.g., $2.42) and learn how to round up to the nearest dollar ($2.42 rounds to $3.00).

EE Science -Middle School

Use models of food chains to identify producers and consumers.

Students identify what animals eat (plants or meat), then create a food chain using picture cards and arrows.

If a student will participate in the DLM alternate assessment, IEP teams need to consider the EEs when developing the student's IEP. The EEs help the teacher identify the student's needs and plan grade level instruction and assessment for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Information regarding the student's performance is included on the IEP under Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance. More information and copies of the EEs are available online at: https://www.ksde.gov/student-success/assessments/dynamic-learning-maps-and-essential-elements/dlm-essential-elements.

Participation in the Alternate Assessment May Affect Completion of a Regular High School Diploma

Kansas does not issue an alternate diploma for students who graduate based on IEP goals aligned to alternate academic achievement standards. Students working from the EEs will not be exposed to curriculum at the same depth, breadth, and complexity as their grade-level peers. For these reasons, participation in the alternate assessment may delay or otherwise affect the student's completion of the requirements for a regular high school diploma; however, no student who takes an alternate assessment is prevented from attempting to complete the requirements for a regular high school diploma.

For more information, contact:

Cary Rogers
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Special Education
785-296-0916
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www.ksde.gov

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Section 4: Reviewing Decisions about Instruction and Assessment

Decisions of IEP teams should be well documented and reviewed annually if possible. Ideally, this review of all IEP team decisions would be made at the district or possibly school level. If that is not possible, IEP teams can take on the responsibility for summarizing all decisions to determine whether there are unintended patterns of decisions, such as all students with significant cognitive disabilities receiving exactly the same instructional goals or all taking the alternate assessment regardless of grade-level.

The discussion guide tools provided in this section are:

- Tool K: Aggregation of Assessment Decisions by School and District
- Tool L: Review of Aggregate Decisions by School and District

Tool K: Aggregation of Assessment Decisions by School and District

The tables below may be used to compile information about IEP team assessment participation decisions. The purpose of these tables is to look for overall patterns in IEP team decisions. Ideally, information would be summarized by school and by year to provide a better picture of decisions.

Assessment Participation Decisions
District: _____ Year: _____

School	Number of IEPs with an Assessment Decision for Male	Number of IEPs with an Assessment Decision for Female	Number of IEPs with Alternate Assessment Participation Decision for Male	Number of IEPs with Alternate Assessment Participation Decision for Female

School	Summary of Percentages: AA-AAAS for Male	Summary of Percentages: AA-AAAS for Female	Summary of Percentages: General for Male	Summary of Percentages: General for Female

Additional tables may be created to examine other variables than gender (e.g., grade level, race/ethnicity, economic disadvantage status).

Tool L: Review of Aggregate Decisions by School and District

After information on IEP team assessment participation decisions have been summarized, district and school leaders might discuss topics such as the following:

What do AA-AAAS participation rates look like disaggregated by age, grade level, or school level?

- Consider whether participation rates on the AA-AAAS are higher in some grades than others. Do rates jump when students enter middle school or high school? Consider why this may happen.
- Have some students with disabilities previously participated in the general assessment in elementary schools, but then participate in the AA-AAAS when they transition to secondary school? Consider why this may or may not be appropriate.

What do AA-AAAS participation rates look like disaggregated by content areas?

- Consider whether participation rates are different in reading, mathematics, and science.
- Consider whether having science assessments only at one grade in each school level (elementary, middle, high) affects science AA-AAAS participation rates.
- If AA-AAAS participation varies by content area, is this consistent with state guidelines?

What do AA-AAAS participation rates look like disaggregated by student demographics?

- Consider whether participation rates are different for certain subgroups (e.g., black, Hispanic, Asian, White, English learners, economically disadvantaged) compared to the district rate as a whole and compared to other subgroups. Are some subgroups disproportionately participating in the AA-AAAS?
- Do schools with high rates of English learners, minority students, or economically disadvantaged students have access to additional resources and additional enrichment activities? Consider whether students with the most significant cognitive disabilities have access to these resources and activities.

What do AA-AAAS participation rates look like disaggregated by disability category?

- Are students with primary exceptionalities not characterized by intellectual/cognitive disabilities (such as specific learning disabilities, speech language impairment, emotional disturbance, or other health impairments) participating in the AA-AAAS?

What do AA-AAAS participation rates look like disaggregated by placement?

- Consider whether students in restrictive settings are more likely to participate in the AA-AAAS.

Note: These questions are from a larger set of questions in NCEO Tool #4, *District Dialogue Guide: Addressing the Percentage of Students Participating in the Alternate Assessment*

Appendix A: Student Eligible for the DLM in Kansas Example

PLAAFPs for Student with Severe Multiple Disabilities (Jennifer)

Grade: 3

Vision/Hearing Screening:
Vision and hearing acuity testing with Jennifer has produced inconsistent results, and additional evaluation continues to be pursued. Jennifer responds positively to music in the classroom, and it has been used as a reinforcer in training use of assistive technology devices. A functional vision assessment indicated that she has vision in her right eye to the nasal and temporal sides, but only tunnel vision in her left eye. Near vision working distance is 12 – 15 inches. Objects placed in a horizontal plane from her right eye may have a better chance for recognition. She does use her vision to direct grasping, and she is attracted to light. Use of bright colors and high contrast seems to prompt her interest.

Cognitive Skills:
Intelligence testing was not possible with Jennifer due to her limited communication and motor skills. Observations by staff indicate that her cognitive skills appear to be in the significantly limited range. She is dependent on others for tasks that require cognitive planning and reasoning.

Adaptive Behavior Skills:
The Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales were given to both Jennifer's biological mother and her foster mother. Jennifer spends every other weekend with her biological mother. Both ratings were similar, and the average of the results showed an overall adaptive behavior standard score of 40, daily living skills of 35, socialization skills of 48, and communication skills of 35.

Self-Care Skills:
Jennifer is dependent on others for toileting and dressing needs. Jennifer needs continued health monitoring for her multiple health concerns. The main areas of concern are feeding and fluid intake (she does have a gastric button) and therefore weight gain; seizure disorder; visual problems; and need for dental care.

Jennifer is currently using a plastic-coated spoon and a scoop dish at lunch. She needs to have her food cut up into bite size pieces and placed in small amounts on her scoop dish. On some days, Jennifer is able to independently scoop and take the spoon to her mouth. On other occasions, she requires more assistance to scoop her food. She also is using a cup with two handles and a lid with a spout. She generally requires some assistance to hold the cup. The team has decided to try other types of cups/drink containers to see if Jennifer can be more independent with her drinking skills.

Communication Skills:
Jennifer demonstrates non-symbolic and some transitional communication skills. She vocalizes but does not consistently produce words. Jennifer exhibits a limited range of communicative intents. Jennifer demonstrates inconsistent understanding of cause and effect. She uses switches to operate toys and a

tape recorder. She uses voice output devices to interact with others. None of these behaviors are consistently intentional, however, Jennifer has begun to use these more intentionally during the last year. Jennifer would benefit from continued opportunities to use voice output devices and switch-operated devices in a variety of school settings to increase the frequency of her intentional communication and help her learn cause-effect relationships.

Jennifer currently uses a "step by step" device - a voice output device, which can store up to 75 seconds of stored messages. She also uses a BIGmack switch, which can store only one message. She uses a touch screen on the computer to access interactive cause-effect programs. Three touch cues have been established which are used consistently with Jennifer to help provide her a framework from which to build symbolic communication (these cues include “I go", "out", and "up” [into her chair]. Jennifer uses body movements, actions on people, or extending her hand (usually her left hand) as transitional symbolic communicative behaviors. Vocalizations are often paired with gestures. She expresses the communicative intents of protesting and making requests. It appears that she also uses non-symbolic communication to direct or gain attention of others. It was reported by one paraeducator that Jennifer has said "mama." Jennifer's foster mother reported that she has seen improvement in Jennifer's communication skills.

Motor Skills:

Jennifer is able to reach for and pick up objects with a scissor grasp or modified pincer grasp. She manipulates objects with either hand and releases objects when done with them. She is left hand dominant. A great deal of the time Jennifer does not use objects appropriately. She tends to take most objects to her mouth. She requires verbal cues and assistance from another person to take objects away from her mouth. Jennifer is able to hold markers, etc. with a fisted grasp or by using an adapted marker/crayon device. She also has loop scissors mounted on a board and a self-inking name stamp. She generally requires hand over hand assistance to initiate using these devices and to maintain their use for a short time. At times, she does independently make random marks on paper with her adapted writing device, however, may not visually attend to the activity. Jennifer uses her left hand to activate switches to play with toys and access the computer. Again, she requires a great deal of hand over hand assistance to use the switch appropriately as she may hit the switch multiple times or "lay" her hand on the switch.

Jennifer has her own manual wheelchair with tilt back feature, pelvic belt, anterior chest support, lateral trunk supports, and swing-away footrests. Her back wheels are posterior to her shoulders making self-propulsion instruction difficult. She will at times place her hands on the wheels but has not initiated pushing. When motivated by favorite objects she will crawl with stand-by assistance to access them, but she has decreased ability to crawl or to maintain quadruped position for play. She floor sits with stand-by assistance but soon attempts to lie down. She uses her wheelchair for seat work activities; this is most beneficial to Jennifer for both positioning and safety in the event of seizures. Jennifer is able to sit in a classroom chair for some class work but needs close stand-by assistance for safety. She requires moderate or more assistance for all transfers. She can ambulate up to 50 feet using the front-wheeled walker with moderate assistance. Jennifer is inconsistent in performance of all functional mobility tasks due to fatigue, seizure activity, and refusal. It is necessary for an adult to be within distance for hand contact on her at all times to prevent falls, especially in the event of a seizure.

Academic Skills:

Currently, Jennifer follows her grade level schedule with an alternate, individualized curriculum. Because the team's primary concern is her health, Jennifer’s schedule includes two snacks and lunch with tube feeding as needed. The team is currently working with Jennifer on making choices about preferred

snacks. Within the regular education setting, Jennifer is encouraged to make choices when presented with options. She is learning to interact socially with her same-age peers using her communication board, although she prefers to gesture and vocalize. Jennifer has also been working on putting small toys and shapes in a can. Last semester on two occasions she put them all in with purpose, but now she seems disinterested and wants to only put them in her mouth. The greatest interference with performing tasks seems to be her mouthing of objects. Jennifer's instruction has been aligned with the DLM Essential Elements, both at the Initial Precursor Level and the Distal Precursor Level.

For example, Jennifer has mastered the following Grade 3 Initial Precursor Level EE (ELA.C1.1 Determine critical elements of text):

- EE.RI.3.5 Can produce some type of communication (body movement, sound, facial expression, or gaze) indicating he or she desires a specific object in his or her immediate environment, such as food or a toy.

She is working on the following Grade 3 Distal Precursor Level EE (ELA.C2.1 Use writing to communicate):

- EE.W.3.2.A Given a choice of two objects, used eye-gaze, physical movement, gesture or vocalization to indicate choice.

Intellectual Functioning Tool

Student Name: ____Jennifer_____ Date: ___3/10/21_____

Verbal Intelligence/Cognition (related to language skills) Not tested

Not limited	Mild Cognitive Limitations	Moderate to Significant Cognitive Limitations	Most Significant Cognitive Limitations
Verbal intelligence in average range or above (85 IQ or above)	Verbal Intelligence 1 to 2 SD below mean (84-71)	Verbal Intelligence 2 to 2.5 SD below mean (70 - 64)	Verbal Intelligence 2.5 SD or more below mean (63 or lower)

Nonverbal Intelligence/Cognition (related to visual-spatial skills) Not tested

Not limited	Mild Cognitive Limitations	Moderate to Significant Cognitive Limitations	Most Significant Cognitive Limitations
Non-verbal intelligence in average range or above (85 IQ or above)	Non-verbal Intelligence 1 to 2 SD below mean (84-71)	Non-verbal Intelligence 2 SD or more below mean (70 – 64)	Non-verbal Intelligence 2.5 SD or more below mean (63 or lower)

Thinking/Reasoning/Problem-Solving

Not limited	Mild Cognitive Limitations	Moderate to Significant Cognitive Limitations	Most Significant Cognitive Limitations
Reasoning and problem-solving skills at age-level or within average range on an assessment.	Minimal assistance (e.g., general education interventions/supports) needed to carry out reasoning and problem-solving tasks	Requires special education services, including modifications and levels of scaffolding to complete reasoning and problem-solving tasks	Dependent on others for completing tasks that require reasoning and problem-solving

Executive Function/Attention/Memory

Not limited	Mild Cognitive Limitations	Moderate to Significant Cognitive Limitations	Most Significant Cognitive Limitations
Cognitive planning and working memory at age-level or within average range on an assessment	Minimal assistance (e.g., general education interventions/supports) needed to support cognitive planning and working memory	Requires special education services, including modifications and levels of scaffolding to support cognitive planning and working memory	Dependent on others for completing tasks that require cognitive planning and working memory

Learning

Not limited	Mild Cognitive Limitations	Moderate to Significant Cognitive Limitations	Most Significant Cognitive Limitations
Learning grade level academic skills	Learning grade level academics with general education supports	Learning general standards or mastering target or successor linkage level EEs with increasing levels of assistance from special education services and supports	Making progress on the Essential Elements (EEs) with moderate/maximal levels of supports

Adaptive Functioning Tool

Student Name: ___Jennifer_____ Date: ___3/10/21_____

Adaptive Behavior Scale

Not Limited	Mild to Moderate Deficits	Moderate to Significant Deficits	Most Significant Deficits
Overall adaptive behavior score in average range or above (standard score 85 or above)	Adaptive behavior 1 to 2 SD below mean (ss 84 - ss 71)	Adaptive behavior 2 to 2.5 SD below mean (ss 70 – ss 64)	Adaptive behavior 2.5 SD or more below mean (ss 63 or lower)

Conceptual

Not Limited	Mild to Moderate Deficits	Moderate to Significant Deficits	Most Significant Deficits
Age-level expressive and receptive communication skills	Communicates expressively and receptively with minimal prompting/assistance	Beginning to communicate wants/needs/preferences using assistive technology (augmentative device or symbols)	No formal communication system
Learning grade level academic skills	Learning grade level academics with general education supports	Mastering target or successor linkage level EEs; learning grade level academics with increasing levels of assistance	Making progress on the Essential Elements (EEs) with moderate/maximal levels of supports

Social

Not Limited	Mild to Moderate Deficits	Moderate to Significant Deficits	Most Significant Deficits
No instruction is needed on responsibility, following rules, interpersonal skills	General instruction addressed through MTSS and general education interventions for responsibility, following rules, and interpersonal skills	Systematic, direct instruction in responsibility, following rules, and interpersonal skills	Prescriptive, systematic, direct instruction relating to responsibility, following rules, and interpersonal skills (Prescriptive is specifically designed for one particular student based on his or her needs.)
Assessment and observation of skills related to responsibility, following rules, and interpersonal skills show student has adequate to excellent social skills.	Assessment and observation of skills related to responsibility, following rules, and interpersonal skills show the student would benefit from general classroom social skills instruction.	Assessment and observation of skills related to responsibility, following rules, and interpersonal skills show the student needs systematic instruction to improve social skills.	Assessment and observation of skills related to responsibility, following rules, and interpersonal skills show the student needs individually planned instruction designed to match his/her skills and weaknesses.

No curricular intervention needed	Social skills curriculum appropriate for whole classroom is sufficient.	Structured social skills curriculum designed for small groups, including direct instruction, is needed.	Individualized, step-by-step planned curriculum with extensive modeling and practice is essential.
At mastery prior to instruction	Large group instruction with differentiation is sufficient	Small group instruction with differentiation is needed	Individualized one-on-one instruction is needed

Practical

Not Limited	Mild to Moderate Deficits	Moderate to Significant Deficits	Most Significant Deficits
No instruction needed on daily living skills or community living skills	Minimal assistance/supports for daily living skills and community living skills; student will likely be successful living independently and holding a job	Requires moderate assistance/supports to complete daily living skills and community living skills (e.g., meal prep, phone use, housekeeping); student will likely be successful in supportive living	Dependent on others for daily living skills and community living skills; student will likely need 24 hour supports as an adult

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GUIDELINES

Dynamic Learning Maps

PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES FOR KANSAS

The criteria for participation in Kansas' Alternate Assessment/Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) reflect the pervasive nature of a student with a **most significant cognitive disability in the state**. Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams must select the alternate assessment as the only option for **ALL** subject content areas assessed.

The following aren't allowable (or acceptable) considerations for determining participation in the DLM Alternate Assessment.

1. A specific disability category or label.
2. Poor attendance or extended absences.
3. Native language/social/cultural or economic difference.
4. Expected poor performance on the general education assessment.
5. Academic and other services student receives.
6. Educational environment or instructional setting.
7. Percent of time receiving special education.
8. English Language Learner (ELL) status.
9. Low reading level/achievement level.
10. Student's anticipated disruptive behavior.
11. Impact of student scores on accountability system.
12. Administrator decision.
13. Anticipated emotional duress.
14. Need for accommodations (e.g., text to speech, assistive technology/AAC) to participate in assessment process.

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MAR. 17, 2021

Name of Student: Jennifer Date: 03/18/2021

The student is eligible to participate in the DLM if ALL responses below are marked YES.

CRITERIA	YES	NO	SUPPORTING EVIDENCE
1. Cognitive assessment data supports a **most significant cognitive disability** (intellectual disability). PARTICIPATION CRITERION DESCRIPTORS: Review of student records indicate a disability or multiple disabilities that significantly impact intellectual functioning. **Typically functioning 2 ½ or more Standard Deviations (SD) below the mean.**	☒	☐	not testable Working on making choices. Has inconsistent understanding of cause/effect. Learning to use simple communication device. Learning to use switches to operate toys.
2. Adaptive assessment data supports a **most significant deficit** in adaptive behavior. PARTICIPATION CRITERION DESCRIPTORS: Review of student records indicate a disability or multiple disabilities that significantly impact adaptive behavior (those skills and behaviors essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life). **Typically functioning 2 ½ or more SD below the mean.**	☒	☐	Vineland 2/2021 composite SS 40 dailly living skills SS 35 socialization SS 48 communication SS 35
3. The student is primarily being instructed (or taught) using the DLM Essential Elements as content standards. PARTICIPATION CRITERION DESCRIPTORS: Present levels and measurable goals listed in the IEP for this student are linked to the enrolled grade level DLM Essential Elements and address knowledge and skills that are appropriate and challenging for this student.	☒	☐	working from the initial and distal precursor linkage levels of the Essential Elements
4. The student requires extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in **ALL** grade-and age-appropriate curriculum at a reduced depth, breath and complexity. PARTICIPATION CRITERION DESCRIPTORS: The student: **a.** Requires extensive, repeated, individualized instruction and support that is neither temporary nor limited to specific content areas. AND	☒	☐	requires verbal cues and assistance from others, requires hand over hand assistance to use switch appropriately, when siting in a classroom chair needs close stand-by assistance for safety, dependent on others for toileting and dressing, needs assistance at meal times uses body movements, actions on people, or extending her hand as transitional symbolic communication behaviors
b. Uses substantially adapted materials and individualized methods of accessing information in alternative ways to acquire, maintain, generalize, demonstrate and transfer skills across multiple settings.	☒	☐	learning to use switches to operate toys, simple communication device, plastic-coated spoon and scoop dish, adapted marker/crayon device, mounted loop scissors , self-inking name stamp

CRITERIA	YES	NO	SUPPORTING EVIDENCE
5. **Parent/legal education decision-maker notification includes discussion of ALL of the following areas.** • The differences between the alternate achievement standards and academic content standards for the grade in which the student is enrolled, including any effects of State and local policies on the student's education resulting from taking an alternate assessment aligned with alternate academic achievement standards; **AND**	☒	☐	Parents were provided a copy of the Kansas Alternate Assessment Notification. The information was also discussed with the parents
• That the student's achievement will be measured based on alternate achievement standards; **AND**	☒	☐	Parents were provided a copy of the Kansas Alternate Assessment Notification. The information was also discussed with the parents
• How the student's participation in alternate standards and assessment(s) may delay or otherwise affect the student from completing the requirements for a regular high school diploma; **AND**	☒	☐	Parents were provided a copy of the Kansas Alternate Assessment Notification. The information was also discussed with the parents
• That the student will not be prevented from attempting to complete the requirements for a regular high school diploma. **AND**	☒	☐	Parents were provided a copy of the Kansas Alternate Assessment Notification. The information was also discussed with the parents
• The LEA provided the parent(s)/legal education decision-maker with ALL of the above information in an understandable and uniform format and in a written language or oral translation that the parent(s)/legal education decision-maker can understand.	☒	☐	Parents were provided a copy of the Kansas Alternate Assessment Notification. The information was also discussed with the parents

Please sign and date that all criteria have been discussed.

Parent/legal education decision-maker: _____ Date: 03/18/2021

Parent/legal education decision-maker: _____ Date: _____

KANSAS STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Student Information Sheet -DLM

Please complete the following document for each student in your district who is anticipated to participate in the DLM alternate assessment this school year. Review comprehensive evaluations that include IQ/cognitive scores and adaptive behavior. All of the district's Individual Student Information documents should be submitted to KSDE together.

District: School:

Name of person completing form:

Position: Date: 3/20/2021

State student ID number: Student Initials: jennifer

Student's current grade: 8 School Year: 2020-2021

Date the IEP team determined the student met the criteria for participation in the DLM: 3/18/2021

Primary exceptionality listed on IEP: Multiple Disabilities

Primary exceptionality includes intellectual/cognitive impairment as a characteristic. ◉ Yes ○ No

Intellectual (Cognitive) Functioning

Instrument(s) used to determine intellectual functioning:

Not testable due to very limited communication and motor skills

Date of most recent evaluation that included intellectual (cognitive) testing:

Data obtained from the instrument(s):

Include full scale and subdomain scores (e.g. Verbal, Non-Verbal, Working Memory, Processing Speed, Fluid Reasoning...).

not testable

If there is no IQ or cognitive testing available, provide examples of the student's present levels of academic skills (reading, math, writing).

Working on making choices; has inconsistent understanding of cause/effect; learning to use simple communication device; learning to use switches to operate toys; instruction aligned with initial precursor and distal precursor levels

Does the student's IQ meet the criteria of typically 2 ½ or more standard deviations below the mean?

◉ Yes ○ No

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April 20, 2021

Adaptive Behavior (Daily Living/Functional Skills)

Instrument(s) used to determine adaptive behavior deficits:

Vineland

Date of most recent evaluation that included an adaptive behavior rating scale: 1/15/21

Data obtained from the adaptive behavior instrument(s)- include composite and subdomains

Overall SS 40; daily living skills SS 35; socialization SS 48; communication SS 35

If no standardized adaptive behavior assessment testing has been done, provide examples of the student's present levels as they relate to daily living skills, communication, and community living skills.

Does the student's adaptive behavior fall 2 ⅓ or more standard deviations below the mean? ◉ Yes ○ No

Does the student's IEP address adaptive behavior deficits? ◉ Yes ○ No

What adaptive behavior deficits are being addressed on IEP?

Communication, daily living skills, socializations

Is the student likely to develop the skills to live independently and function safely in daily life after high school?
○ Yes ◉ No

Is the student on the waiting list for services with the local CDDO? ◉ Yes ○ No

For more information, contact:

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crogers@ksde.org

Kansans CAN

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Appendix B: Student Not Eligible for the DLM in Kansas Example

PLAAFPs for Student with Autism (David)

Grade: 8

Vision/Hearing Screening: David passed vision and hearing screening.

Cognitive Skills:
Differential Ability Scale (2nd Edition)—Verbal Composite ss 66, 1st percentile; Nonverbal Reasoning Cluster ss 80, 9th percentile.

Adaptive Behavior Skills:
ABAS II (Adaptive Behavior Assessment System)—GAC ss 86, Conceptual ss 75, Social ss 94, Practical ss 88 (completed by both parents).

His parents see David as having many strengths in adaptive behaviors. They report that he is currently more willing to follow their verbal directions and that he tantrums less frequently at home. They are concerned about his frustration and/or sensory over-stimulation leading to tantrums, although they see this as much improved in middle school. They perceive him as understanding more than he is able to express verbally, and see this as one source of frustration for him. They are concerned about his slow academic progress and how this might impact his options for working after high school.

Self-Care Skills:
David is able to toilet by himself, but he sometimes needs a reminder about hand washing. He dresses independently at home, and before and after his adaptive PE class. He participates in the school lunch routine without adult assistance. His friends and classmates verbally prompt him if he occasionally forgets something. He does simple chores at home, like feeding the dog. He uses a visual schedule for chores at home. He can read a digital clock, but not an analog clock.

Social Skills:
David is interested in having same-age male friends. He is able to participate in ball games and indoor free time activities with some peers, but not large groups, for 15 or 20 minutes with adult prompts and supervision. Most adult prompts needed are about following rules and remembering how to stay calm during an exciting game. David shows clear preferences for specific classmates and on rare occasions will put his arm on the shoulder of a friend. His parents report that he enjoys riding his bike and swimming with select friends.

Communication Skills:
David has strong receptive language skills but much weaker expressive language, and he is very motivated to communicate, especially with classmates. He is able to identify (receptive labels) over 200 pictures of objects, and over 100 verbs. When given a verbal prompt including multiple color and size attributes (“pick the big red frog with a blue ribbon”), he can correctly choose from an array of 15

different pictures. He can categorize picture cards when the groups are distinct, but he needs practice to improve more complex categorization skills. David now will make verbal requests without prompts. He answers yes/no questions without hesitation, but he tends to have a longer response time when answering questions that require more complex answers, especially "why" questions. He can become very frustrated when he has difficulty expressing his ideas.

Gross and Fine Motor Skills:

David is able to walk with a typical gait, but when he is upset, he will slap his feet down in protest as he walks. Physical and sensory activities are sometimes effective in calming David when he is upset. He is able to tie his shoes, can independently write his name and some other words, and can ride a bike (after much teaching and practicing at home). David has been participating in swimming during adaptive PE, and he will try to imitate various swimming strokes modeled by an adult. He will let the adaptive PE teacher touch him to correct positioning errors in his swimming when the teacher asks permission first, even though he typically rejects any touching by others. David has not been able to participate in the large regular physical education class, due to the loud environment and over-stimulation leading to emotional meltdowns.

Academic Skills:

Since the beginning of this year, David has exhibited more attention and focus during one-on-one and small group teaching sessions. The teacher of his special education classroom reports that most days he is able to remain on task for at least 30 minutes. David has learned to tolerate the use of headphones with the computer or tape recorder. This is important so that he can use technology in instructional settings without disturbing classmates.

Math is a relative strength for David. He has learned to use a calculator for math computation, and can calculate addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division problems. He cannot do word problems because he cannot read the text. If a word problem is read to him, he can usually complete the calculation correctly if he has previously been taught a strategy for how to approach that type of problem. He does best with visual strategies for math problem-solving and uses visual strategies for skills involving money or geometric figures.

David seems interested in reading, but it is very difficult for him, despite intense, individualized instruction. He needs to have text read aloud to him. He is able to select a reinforcer from cards with printed words. When asked, he is able to point to specific words in simple familiar books. His measured independent reading level is first grade. He has learned many sight words, such as safety words, functional words, etc., but his ability to read connected text is not as strong as his sight word recognition. He has great difficulty with comprehension of text he reads himself, but his understanding of text that is read to him is much better.

David prints his first name and the first initial of his last name and routinely includes it on his classroom papers. He is showing an interest in writing simple words, especially on the computer. When requested he will dictate an on-topic narrative short story to the para, and his stories have a simple plot, follow a time sequence, and have an ending. If given a choice, he usually will make up a story about a superhero. He can also dictate expository writing, but organizing it is much more difficult for David, and he tends to list facts as he thinks of them.

David is mainstreamed for science class and has been since entering middle school. His science teacher and special education teacher have created a parallel curriculum aligned with the grade-level science textbook. This modified curriculum includes same-topic, lower-level texts on tape; same-topic, simpler

language texts which must be read aloud to him; and some videos available on the computer. His classmates are adept at including him in small-group projects and in small group lab experiences. David is also mainstreamed into an art class because he likes to draw. His success in art depends on the classroom environment being organized, without too much movement or noise. His special education teacher is interested in trying to mainstream him in a social studies class as well.

Transition Planning:

An interview with David indicated that he doesn't yet have any ideas about post-secondary education or work. He indicates that he likes computers and science and drawing. A classmate showed him once how to use a computer program to do drawing and painting, and he would like to learn how to do that. He thinks he takes good care of his dog and might like working with animals. He is interested in trying to do some volunteer work at the animal shelter. His teacher thinks that he needs to learn how to independently use text to speech software, perhaps using a visual chart. David's parents would like him to be able to use the computer to access more learning experiences, as long as he is able to do this without becoming too frustrated. They would like David to be able to participate in supported living. They do not want him to work in a sheltered workshop as they think he has the ability to do more than that.

Intellectual Functioning Tool

Student Name: ___David_____ Date: ___2/20/21_____

Verbal Intelligence/Cognition (related to language skills)

Not limited	Mild Cognitive Limitations	Moderate to Significant Cognitive Limitations	Most Significant Cognitive Limitations
Verbal intelligence in average range or above (85 IQ or above)	Verbal Intelligence 1 to 2 SD below mean (84-71)	Verbal Intelligence 2 to 2.5 SD below mean (70 - 64)	Verbal Intelligence 2.5 SD or more below mean (63 or lower)

Nonverbal Intelligence/Cognition (related to visual-spatial skills)

Not limited	Mild Cognitive Limitations	Moderate to Significant Cognitive Limitations	Most Significant Cognitive Limitations
Non-verbal intelligence in average range or above (85 IQ or above)	Non-verbal Intelligence 1 to 2 SD below mean (84-71)	Non-verbal Intelligence 2 SD or more below mean (70 – 64)	Non-verbal Intelligence 2.5 SD or more below mean (63 or lower)

Thinking/Reasoning/Problem-Solving

Not limited	Mild Cognitive Limitations	Moderate to Significant Cognitive Limitations	Most Significant Cognitive Limitations
Reasoning and problem-solving skills at age-level or within average range on an assessment.	Minimal assistance (e.g., general education interventions/supports) needed to carry out reasoning and problem-solving tasks	Requires special education services, including modifications and levels of scaffolding to complete reasoning and problem-solving tasks	Dependent on others for completing tasks that require reasoning and problem-solving

Executive Function/Attention/Memory

Not limited	Mild Cognitive Limitations	Moderate to Significant Cognitive Limitations	Most Significant Cognitive Limitations
Cognitive planning and working memory at age-level or within average range on an assessment	Minimal assistance (e.g., general education interventions/supports) needed to support cognitive planning and working memory	Requires special education services, including modifications and levels of scaffolding to support cognitive planning and working memory	Dependent on others for completing tasks that require cognitive planning and working memory

Learning

Not limited	Mild Cognitive Limitations	Moderate to Significant Cognitive Limitations	Most Significant Cognitive Limitations
Learning grade level academic skills	Learning grade level academics with general education supports	Learning general standards or mastering target or successor linkage level EEs with increasing levels of assistance from special education services and supports **Math & science**	Making progress on the Essential Elements (EEs) with moderate/maximal levels of supports **Reading**

Adaptive Functioning Tool

Student Name: ____David_____ Date: ___2/20/21_____

Adaptive Behavior Scale

Not Limited	Mild to Moderate Deficits	Moderate to Significant Deficits	Most Significant Deficits
Overall adaptive behavior score in average range or above (standard score 85 or above)	Adaptive behavior 1 to 2 SD below mean (ss 84 - ss 71)	Adaptive behavior 2 to 2.5 SD below mean (ss 70 – ss 64)	Adaptive behavior 2.5 SD or more below mean (ss 63 or lower)

Conceptual

Not Limited	Mild to Moderate Deficits	Moderate to Significant Deficits	Most Significant Deficits
Age-level expressive and receptive communication skills	Communicates expressively and receptively with minimal prompting/assistance	Beginning to communicate wants/needs/preferences using assistive technology (augmentative device or symbols)	No formal communication system
Learning grade level academic skills	Learning grade level academics with general education supports	Mastering target or successor linkage level EEs; learning grade level academics with increasing levels of assistance	Making progress on the Essential Elements (EEs) with moderate/maximal levels of supports

Social

Not Limited	Mild to Moderate Deficits	Moderate to Significant Deficits	Most Significant Deficits
No instruction is needed on responsibility, following rules, interpersonal skills	General instruction addressed through MTSS and general education interventions for responsibility, following rules, and interpersonal skills	Systematic, direct instruction in responsibility, following rules, and interpersonal skills	Prescriptive, systematic, direct instruction relating to responsibility, following rules, and interpersonal skills (Prescriptive is specifically designed for one particular student based on his or her needs.)
Assessment and observation of skills related to responsibility, following rules, and interpersonal skills show student has adequate to excellent social skills.	Assessment and observation of skills related to responsibility, following rules, and interpersonal skills show the student would benefit from general classroom social skills instruction.	Assessment and observation of skills related to responsibility, following rules, and interpersonal skills show the student needs systematic instruction to improve social skills.	Assessment and observation of skills related to responsibility, following rules, and interpersonal skills show the student needs individually planned instruction designed to match his/her skills and weaknesses.

No curricular intervention needed	Social skills curriculum appropriate for whole classroom is sufficient.	Structured social skills curriculum designed for small groups, including direct instruction, is needed.	Individualized, step-by-step planned curriculum with extensive modeling and practice is essential.
At mastery prior to instruction	Large group instruction with differentiation is sufficient	Small group instruction with differentiation is needed	Individualized one-on-one instruction is needed

Practical

Not Limited	Mild to Moderate Deficits	Moderate to Significant Deficits	Most Significant Deficits
No instruction needed on daily living skills or community living skills	Minimal assistance/supports for daily living skills and community living skills; student will likely be successful living independently and holding a job	Requires moderate assistance/supports to complete daily living skills and community living skills (e.g., meal prep, phone use, housekeeping); student will likely be successful in supportive living	Dependent on others for daily living skills and community living skills; student will likely need 24 hour supports as an adult

KANSAS STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

GUIDELINES

Dynamic Learning Maps

PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES FOR KANSAS

The criteria for participation in Kansas' Alternate Assessment/Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) reflect the pervasive nature of a student with a **most significant cognitive disability in the state**. Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams must select the alternate assessment as the only option for **ALL** subject content areas assessed.

The following aren't allowable (or acceptable) considerations for determining participation in the DLM Alternate Assessment.

1. A specific disability category or label.
2. Poor attendance or extended absences.
3. Native language/social/cultural or economic difference.
4. Expected poor performance on the general education assessment.
5. Academic and other services student receives.
6. Educational environment or instructional setting.
7. Percent of time receiving special education.
8. English Language Learner (ELL) status.
9. Low reading level/achievement level.
10. Student's anticipated disruptive behavior.
11. Impact of student scores on accountability system.
12. Administrator decision.
13. Anticipated emotional duress.
14. Need for accommodations (e.g., text to speech, assistive technology/AAC) to participate in assessment process.

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MAR. 17, 2021

Name of Student: David Date: 03/18/2021

The student is eligible to participate in the DLM if ALL responses below are marked YES.

CRITERIA	YES	NO	SUPPORTING EVIDENCE
1. Cognitive assessment data supports a **most significant cognitive disability** (intellectual disability). PARTICIPATION CRITERION DESCRIPTORS: Review of student records indicate a disability or multiple disabilities that significantly impact intellectual functioning. **Typically functioning 2 ½ or more Standard Deviations (SD) below the mean.**	☐	☒	Verbal composite SS 66; nonverbal reasoning cluster SS 8-
2. Adaptive assessment data supports a **most significant deficit** in adaptive behavior. PARTICIPATION CRITERION DESCRIPTORS: Review of student records indicate a disability or multiple disabilities that significantly impact adaptive behavior (those skills and behaviors essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life). **Typically functioning 2 ½ or more SD below the mean.**	☐	☒	GAC SS 86; conceptual SS 75; social SS 94; Practical SS 88
3. The student is primarily being instructed (or taught) using the DLM Essential Elements as content standards. PARTICIPATION CRITERION DESCRIPTORS: Present levels and measurable goals listed in the IEP for this student are linked to the enrolled grade level DLM Essential Elements and address knowledge and skills that are appropriate and challenging for this student.	☐	☐	
4. The student requires extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in ALL grade-and age-appropriate curriculum at a reduced depth, breath and complexity. PARTICIPATION CRITERION DESCRIPTORS: The student: a. Requires extensive, repeated, individualized instruction and support that is neither temporary nor limited to specific content areas. AND	☐	☐	
b. Uses substantially adapted materials and individualized methods of accessing information in alternative ways to acquire, maintain, generalize, demonstrate and transfer skills across multiple settings.	☐	☐	

Student Information Sheet -DLM

Please complete the following document for each student in your district who is anticipated to participate in the DLM alternate assessment this school year. Review comprehensive evaluations that include IQ/cognitive scores and adaptive behavior. All of the district's Individual Student Information documents should be submitted to KSDE together.

District: School:

Name of person completing form:

Position: Date: 3/20/2021

State student ID number: Student Initials: David

Student's current grade: 8 School Year: 2020-2021

Date the IEP team determined the student met the criteria for participation in the DLM: 3/18/2021

Primary exceptionality listed on IEP: Autism

Primary exceptionality includes intellectual/cognitive impairment as a characteristic. ○ Yes ◉ No

Intellectual (Cognitive) Functioning

Instrument(s) used to determine intellectual functioning:

Differential Abilities Scales (DAS) 2nd Ed

Date of most recent evaluation that included intellectual (cognitive) testing: 9/10/2020

Data obtained from the instrument(s):

Include full scale and subdomain scores (e.g. Verbal, Non-Verbal, Working Memory, Processing Speed, Fluid Reasoning...).

Verbal composite SS 66 – 1st percentile; nonverbal reasoning cluster SS 80 – 9th percentile

If there is no IQ or cognitive testing available, provide examples of the student's present levels of academic skills (reading, math, writing).

Does the student's IQ meet the criteria of typically 2 ½ or more standard deviations below the mean?

○ Yes ◉ No

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April 20, 2021

Adaptive Behavior (Daily Living/Functional Skills)

Instrument(s) used to determine adaptive behavior deficits:

ABAS II

Date of most recent evaluation that included an adaptive behavior rating scale: 9/14/2020

Data obtained from the adaptive behavior instrument(s)- include composite and subdomains

GAC SS 86; Conceptual SS 75; social SS 94; practical SS 88

If no standardized adaptive behavior assessment testing has been done, provide examples of the student's present levels as they relate to daily living skills, communication, and community living skills.

Does the student's adaptive behavior fall 2 ½ or more standard deviations below the mean? ○ Yes ◉ No

Does the student's IEP address adaptive behavior deficits? ◉ Yes ○ No

What adaptive behavior deficits are being addressed on IEP?

Managing frustration in social situations

Is the student likely to develop the skills to live independently and function safely in daily life after high school?
○ Yes ◉ No

Is the student on the waiting list for services with the local CDDO? ○ Yes ◉ No

For more information, contact:

Cary Rogers
Special Education and Title Services Team
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Kansans CAN

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The Kansas State Department of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies: KSDE General Counsel, Office of General Counsel, KSDE, Landon State Office Building, 900 S.W. Jackson, Suite 102, Topeka, KS 66612, (785) 296-3201.

References

Fisher, G. G., Chacon, M., & Chaffee, D. S. (2019). Theories of cognitive aging and work. In B. B. Baltes, C. W. Rudolph, & H. Zacher (Eds.), *Work across the lifespan* (pp. 17-45). Elsevier

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Mitchell, E. S. Adaptive functioning. In M. H. Bornstein (Ed.), (2018). *The SAGE encyclopedia of lifespan human development* (pp.32-34). Los Angeles: SAGE.

Kansas State Board of Education

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Vision

Kansas leads the world in the success of each student.

SUCCESS DEFINED

A successful Kansas high school graduate has the

- Academic preparation,
- Cognitive preparation,
- Technical skills,
- Employability skills and
- Civic engagement

to be successful in postsecondary education, in the attainment of an industry recognized certification or in the workforce, without the need for remediation.

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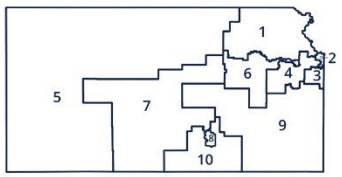


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Kansas divided into the ten State Board of Education districts.

KANSAS STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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May 27, 2026

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