



Kansas Education Systems Accreditation (KESA)

KSDE seeks to move from an accreditation model that accredits every school to one that accredits education systems — such as unified school districts. Supporting this model is the rich research base of systems theory, which resoundingly shows that sustained improvement of a system requires viewing the system as a whole—analyzing each part’s impact on the system.

Any change to one part of the system affects (positively or negatively) other parts of the system and, therefore, the system as a whole.

Kansas’ proposed new accreditation model uses the 21st Century themes of **Relationships, Relevance, Responsive Culture, Results and Rigor** (“The Five Rs”) as a framework within which to focus on the quality characteristics of an educational system.

The State Board receives recommendations concerning K-12 accreditation from the [KSDE Accreditation Advisory Council](#), a group of representative stakeholders from all facets and levels of education and from all regions of Kansas. This Council’s recommendations specific to the new accreditation model are included on page 2 of this *KSDE Fact Sheet*.

Five-Year Process

The Accreditation Advisory Council recommends that the new accreditation process last five years to allow more time for each phase. The primary phases are as follows.

- Y1 Needs assessment (schools, followed by district/system)
Goal area identification (district level)
- Y2 Goal establishment
Action plan development
- Y3 Action plan implementation
Midpoint reflection/revision
- Y4 Action plan implementation
Data collection
- Y5 Data/evidence analysis
OVT on-site visit
Accreditation rating granted by State Board

WHO	WHAT	WHEN
<p><u>Required</u> Unified School Districts State Schools Certain Special Purpose Schools</p> <p><u>Voluntary</u> Independent Systems Independent Private Schools</p>	<p>A systems approach to accreditation, in which districts/systems lead and oversee the process and are then awarded an accreditation rating based on the growth achieved in college and career ready data.</p>	<p>Every 5 years. Formal cycles could begin Fall ‘16: Group 1 - first rating May 2017 Group 2 - first rating May 2018 Group 3 - first rating May 2019 Group 4 - first rating May 2020 Group 5 - first rating May 2021</p>
WHY A SYSTEMS APPROACH?	WHY SYSTEM-LEVEL?	WHY THE FIVE Rs?
<p>“...while individual schools are indeed the center of change, the improvement of low-performing schools cannot be implemented at scale <u>or</u> sustained without redesign of the larger system in which they reside – the school district.” (p. ix) <i>Steven J. Adamowski, in the Forward</i></p>	<p>“... focusing turnaround [or improvement] on single schools will have far less impact and sustainability than a district applying a more systemic and strategic approach.” (Savadsky, p. 23)</p>	<p>We believe that the Five Rs are equivalent to each other in their importance to the quality of a system and that they encompass every concept contained in the ideas of quality education and continual improvement. <i>Everything</i> that education professionals and stakeholders do, say, believe, model, teach, expect, and desire about education can be classified in at least one of the Five Rs.</p>

KESA Framework: The Five Rs

RELATIONSHIPS	RELEVANCE	RESPONSIVE CULTURE	RIGOR	RESULTS
Staff	Curriculum	Leadership	Career & Technical Ed	Academic/Cognitive
Students	Instruction	Early Childhood	Professional Learning	Technical/Career-Specific
Families	Student Engagement	District Climate	Resources	Employability
Community	Technology	Nutrition and Wellness	Data	Post-Secondary Evidence

To view the rubrics, visit <http://ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=941>.

ACCREDITATION ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

The State Board receives recommendations concerning accreditation from the [KSDE Accreditation Advisory Council](#), a group of representative stakeholders from all facets and levels of education and from all regions of Kansas. The Council's recommendations regarding a new model for K-12 accreditation in Kansas are as follows.

- District/system-level** accreditation for Kansas K-12 named Kansas Education Systems Accreditation
- Use of "**The Five Rs**" as a framework within which to evaluate school improvement efforts. The Rs: Relationships, Relevance, Responsive Culture, Rigor, Results
- Four components, or categories, under each R, with the results components corresponding to the four elements addressed in the State Board of Education's definition of College and Career Ready: **academic/cognitive, technical/career-specific, employability, and post-secondary results**
- Thorough **rubrics** for use in school and system needs assessments
- Requirement that all outside validation team members be **approved** by KSDE
- Accreditation cycle length of **five (5) years**
- Full public transparency** (process and progress) through KSDE dashboard
- Three accreditation levels: **accredited, accredited-conditional, and not accredited**
- Non-negotiable requirements** such as compliance with licensure, fiscal, IDEA, and ESI statutes/regulations
- Foundational requirements** addressing several key topics, such as equity/diversity, family/community engagement, and social/emotional development
- Minimum interaction with **Outside Validation Team**: Year One meeting, Year Three check-in with Chair, Year Five on-site visit
- Requirement that districts/systems **select two (2) of the Rs** as official district/system goal areas for the accreditation cycle
- Continued accreditation **for 2015-2016** of all Kansas schools involved in state accreditation
- As a condition of district/system accreditation for 2016-2017, a requirement that districts/systems submit evidence indicating their **readiness for the new model**

QUESTIONS ABOUT ACCREDITATION?

Contact Kelly Slaton, 785.368.7356 or kslaton@ksde.org.

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 non-discrimination policies: KSDE General Counsel, Office of General Counsel, KSDE, Landon State Office Building, 900 SW Jackson, Suite 102, Topeka, KS 6612, (785) 296-3201

SOURCES CITED IN THIS FACT SHEET

Adamowski, Steven J. [In the Foreword] Savadsky, Heather. *School Turnarounds*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard Education Press, 2012. Print.

KSDE (2010). *21st Century Learning in Kansas*. Topeka, KS: KSDE.

Patrick M. Jenlink, Charles M. Reigeluth, Alison A. Carr, Laurie M. Nelson. "Facilitating the Systemic Change Process in School Districts." (1996) Academic Paper: 4. Print.

Savadsky, Heather. *School Turnarounds*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard Education Press, 2012. Print.