

KESA: Kansas Education Systems Accreditation

KESA is the new accreditation model (approved by KSDE in June 2016) that all schools in Kansas must be evaluated/accredited on. Below is key information about this new KESA system, as well as a brief summary insofar as where USD 320 is in this important accreditation process.

Elements of KESA:

Systems Approach

Supported by the rich research base of systems theory, this new model is designed to accredit systems (such as unified school districts) rather than individual schools. Research clearly shows that the systems approach improves individual schools more effectively than simply targeting an individual school.

Stakeholder Involvement

Stakeholders participate through the building and district leadership teams and site councils. These groups represent the various stakeholder groups, the diversity of the student population, the community and its business/industry. These groups provide input throughout the five-year cycle.

Outside Validation

The outside validation team (OVT) consists of K-12 educators and post-secondary professionals and is assigned to the system for the five-year cycle. The team's mission is to validate the system's process and results, identify areas for improvement, provide guidance, and recommend an accreditation rating to KSDE.

Compliance & Foundations

The **compliance** element of KESA requires education systems to meet governmental requirements. **Foundations** involve integrating research-based best practices, addressing such issues as academic intervention, diversity/equity, mental/physical health, civic engagement, and post-secondary and career preparation.

Familiar Growth Process

Most systems already use a five-part process for improvement. First, assess the current situation to determine needs. Second, establish goals to meet those needs (and measurements to determine goal achievement). Third, create an action plan for each goal. Fourth, implement the plan. Fifth, assess growth, reflect, begin new cycle.

'The Five Rs' Framework

To begin the process, systems use "The Five Rs" framework to assess their performance in educating children. Systems rate themselves using rubrics for relationships, relevance, responsive culture, and rigor, and then they analyze results data related to the State Board's definition of a successful Kansas high school graduate.

The USD 320 administrative team has been studying the new KESA accreditation model and processes since its approval in June of 2016, and has decided to enter Year One of KESA during the 2017-2017 school year. Year One processes include: completing the self-ratings on each of the self-assessments (rubrics) for the Five Rs' Framework (Relationships, Responsive Culture, Rigor & Relevance).

- **Needs Assessments (5 R Framework rubrics)**
 - In 2016-17 all buildings in the district completed self-assessments (rubrics) for **Relationships** and **Responsive Culture**.
 - The administrative team, including all building principals and Dr. Siebert, examined/discussed and completed a District Level rubrics for both Relationships and Responsive Culture during the summer 2017.
 - All buildings will complete **Rigor** and **Relevance** self-assessments (rubrics) by end of the first semester 2017, and the administrative team will complete the District Level rubrics for Rigor and Relevance no later than January 12, 2018.
- **Compliance & Foundations Audit:** Dr. Siebert and Sue Jenkins (SWPSS consultant) worked through the audit in September, 2017.
 - Documentation of evidence for both were noted for reference as the cycle of accreditation progresses.
- **Communication Plan:** Communication with all key stakeholders about the new KESA model and progress is a requirement of Kansas State Department of Education.
 - All districts are required to address ongoing KESA progress with members of each Building Site Council, Building Leadership Team, District Site Council, and District Leadership Team.
 - Communication of KESA processes are posted on the USD 320 website for parents and community members.
 - The district's plan is to hold two Building Leadership Team meetings and two Building Site Council meetings (minimum) with KESA placed on the agenda (agendas and minutes and member lists are placed in a shared folder for sharing with each other on the administrative team).

