



**KANSAS SCHOOLS FOR THE DEAF AND THE BLIND**  
STATEWIDE RESOURCES ON DEAFNESS AND BLINDNESS

**KANSAS STATE SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF**  
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September 15, 2025

Adam Proffitt, Chief Budget Officer  
Landon State Office Bldg.  
900 SW Jackson Street, Room 504  
Topeka, KS 66612

Dear Mr. Proffitt:

On behalf of the Kansas State School for the Deaf (KSSD), we extend our deepest gratitude for your steadfast support and guidance. Thanks to your partnership, Deaf and Hard of Hearing students across Kansas are able to thrive in a language rich environment where they gain the academic skills, confidence, and language/communication abilities necessary to reach their full potential. Your support directly contributes to their success in mastering new concepts in the classroom, participating fully in their communities, and preparing for post-secondary opportunities, and it ensures that every student has the tools to achieve their dreams.

As we prepare for the upcoming budget cycle, I would like to bring forward several priorities that are essential to sustaining and advancing our services for DHH children and their families:

**FY 2026 AND FY 2027 SUPPLEMENTAL & ENHANCEMENT**

**Restoration of 1.5% Cut to the Language Assessment Program (LAP) – \$94,880**

We are requesting the restoration of the 1.5% reduction to the Language Assessment Program (LAP), totaling \$94,880. LAP plays a critical role in monitoring and supporting the language development of children who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing from birth through age eight. These assessments ensure that children gain equitable access to both American Sign Language (ASL) and English, helping families and educators identify strengths, address delays, and provide targeted interventions at the most crucial stage of development. Restoring this funding will allow us to continue providing statewide assessments, training, and resources that directly impact children's academic readiness and long-term success.



EQUAL EMPLOYMENT/EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY SCHOOLS



**FY 2027 Enhancement: Three New Classroom Resource Teacher Positions in the Base Budget - \$300,000**

A bill recently included a new \$300,000 SGF appropriation for FY 2026 designated for “Classroom Resource Teachers.” This funding was considered one-time and is not incorporated into our base budget for FY 2027. This presents a significant challenge, as we have advertised three positions without assurance of continued funding beyond the current fiscal year.

At present, we have filled one classroom teacher position internally, reassigning the Academic Support Coach role, and have adjusted current staff assignments to cover the two remaining vacancies. However, we do not have sufficient resources to absorb these positions into our base budget if additional funding is not secured for FY 2027.

To meet the growing needs of our student population and maintain low student-to-teacher ratios that support individualized instruction, we are requesting the addition of three new teaching positions to the base budget. These positions are essential to sustaining specialized instruction that addresses both academic and language development needs.

**FY 2026 and FY 2027 Supplemental & Enhancement: Supplement for Teacher Pay Alignment with Olathe Public Schools - \$228,350**

We are seeking supplemental funding to align KSSD’s teacher pay schedule with that of the Olathe School District within the same fiscal year. Olathe remains our closest comparison district, and parity in compensation is critical for recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers who are proficient in bilingual instruction.

**FY 2027 Enhancement: ASL Proficiency Incentives and Supplemental Contacts - \$143,350**

Finally, we request additional funds to support stipends for American Sign Language (ASL) Proficiency Pay as well as supplemental pay for staff who take on added responsibilities beyond the classroom. These stipends recognize the additional expertise and effort required of our staff, and they are important for retaining skilled educators committed to serving our students.

These requests are closely aligned with our mission and strategic initiatives to ensure that Deaf and Hard of Hearing students throughout Kansas have equitable, accessible, and rigorous educational opportunities. With your support, we can continue to invest in our staff and programs, providing every student the resources they need to reach their full potential. Thank you again for your continued partnership and leadership. We deeply value your dedication to the Kansas State School for the Deaf and the students and families we serve.

## **FY 2027 Enhancement: Capital Improvements and Construction Projects - \$3,129,571**

The additional FY 2027 funding requested from the State Institutions Building Fund (SIBF) will be used for the construction, reconstruction, and repairs of KSSD's campus. The amount of \$129,571 is to account for 10% inflation and will be added to the current base of \$1,295,712. The Emery elementary/dormitory building roof and atrium will be 30 years old, and is suffering chronic leaks and related damage. The amount of \$1,200,000 is needed to address both areas of failure. The last request is for the amount of \$1,800,000 to demolish and relocate utilities for the Powerhouse/Laundry building. Sustained efficiency and safety efforts over the last two decades to upgrade and modernize campus electrical and HVAC services is allowing for the demolition of this structure. Removal will allow for more parking, realignment of Sante Fe entrance with Kansas City Road, and the elimination of ongoing caretaker/maintenance expenses for an abandoned industrial building.

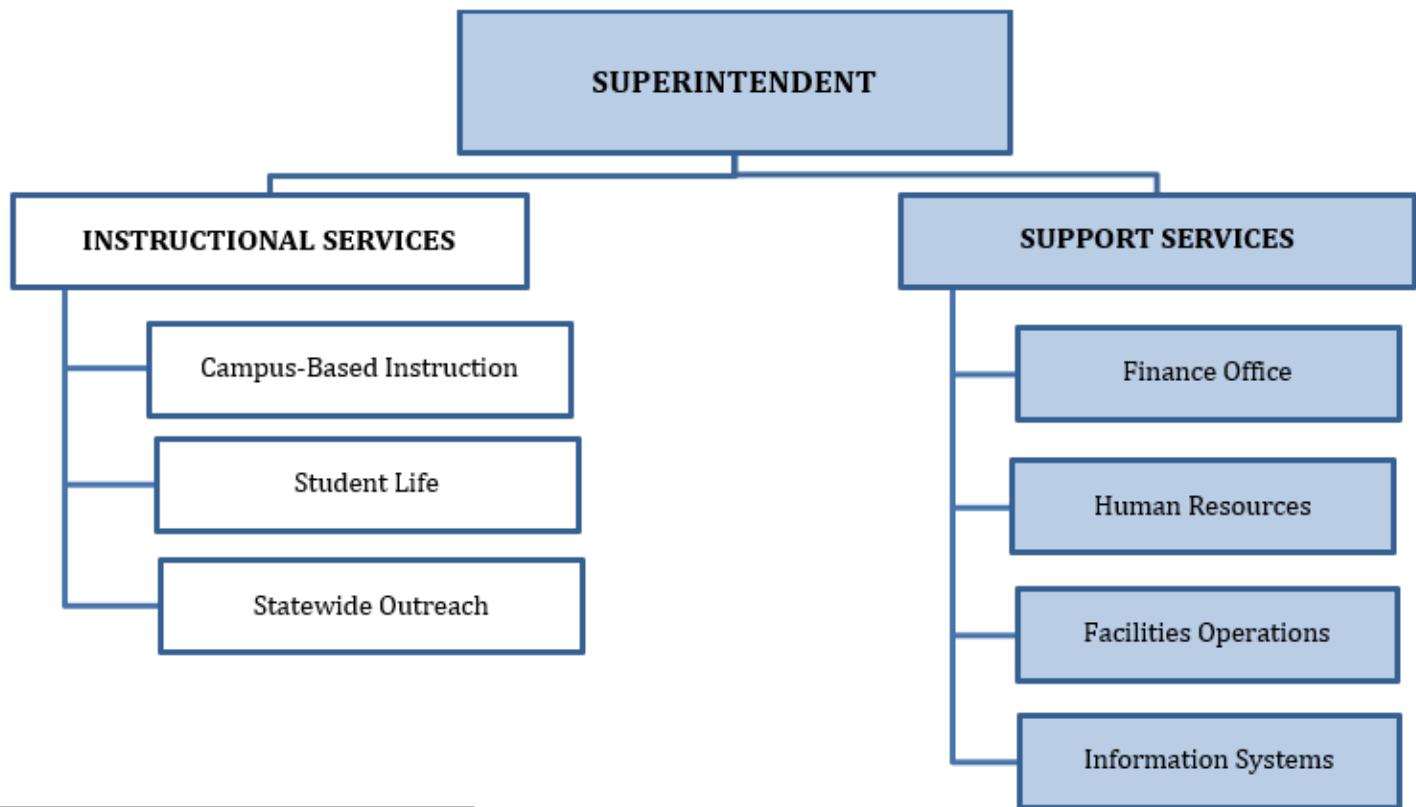
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Sincerely,



Luanne Barron, Superintendent  
Kansas State School for the Deaf

## KSSD ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

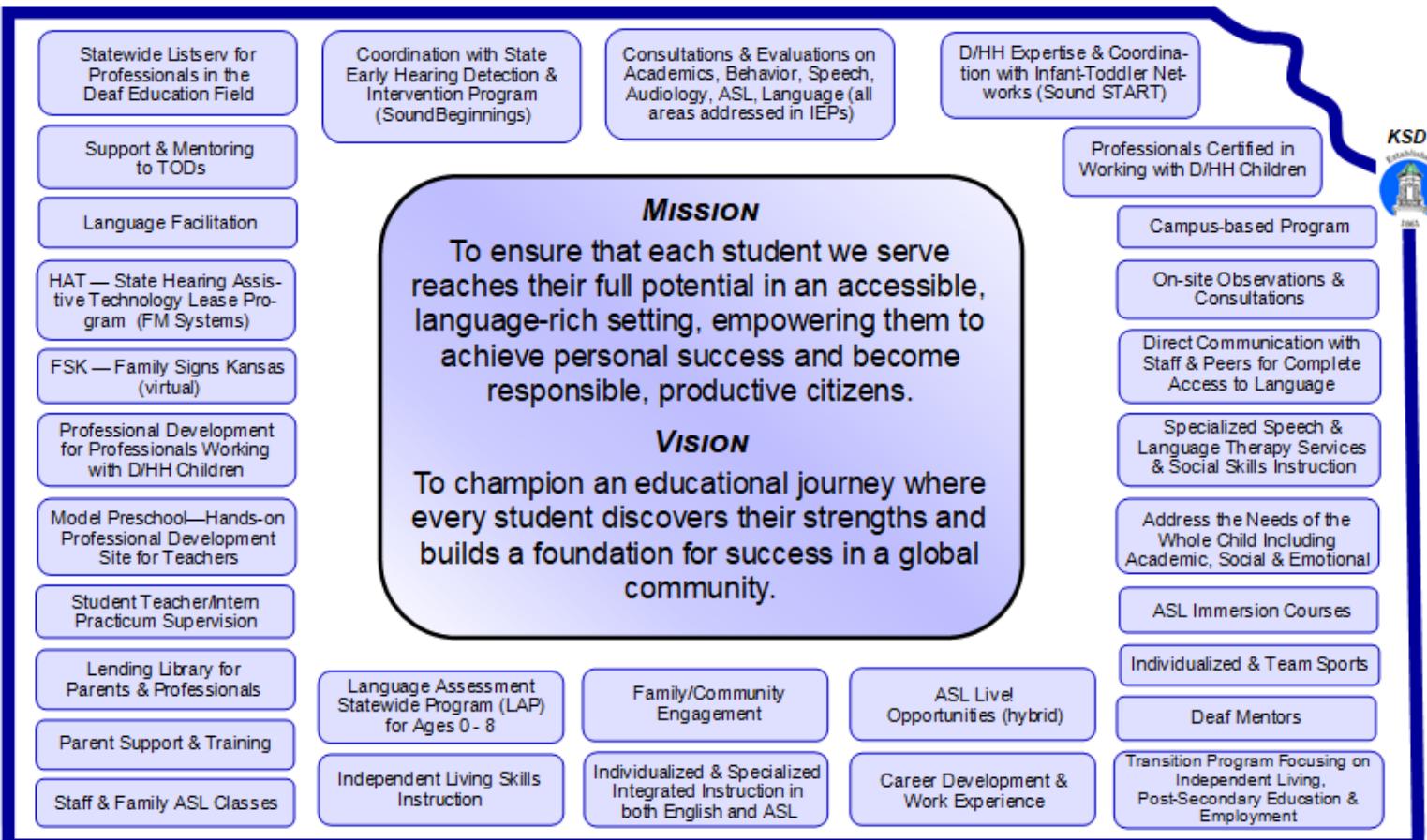


*Shading represents areas in which some of the staff are shared with KSSB*



# Kansas State School for the Deaf

450 E. Park  
Olathe, Kansas 66061  
Superintendent: Luanne Barron  
Phone: 913-210-8111  
Website: [www.kansasdeaf.gov](http://www.kansasdeaf.gov)



ASL - American Sign Language

D/HH - Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing

IEP - Individualized Education Program

TOD - Teacher of the Deaf

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## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### AGENCY HISTORY

The Kansas State School for the Deaf (KSSD) was founded in 1861 in Baldwin City, Kansas, and relocated to Olathe in 1866, where it continues to operate today. As a state agency, KSSD is primarily funded through the State General Fund and operates under the supervision of the Kansas State Board of Education.

#### EST. 1861

The Kansas School for the Deaf is the oldest state educational institution in the State of Kansas. The School was founded by Philip A. Emery, a deaf man who had been a student and teacher at the Indiana School for the Deaf until 1860. Emery had come to the valley of the Wakarusa River to start a new life. He became acquainted with a neighbor, Jonathan R. Kennedy, who had three deaf children. Kennedy was pleased to discover a deaf educator nearby, as there was no institution for the education of the deaf in Kansas. Kennedy tried and became successful in persuading Emery to begin a private school for the deaf. So, with \$250 borrowed from a relative of Kennedy's, he set out with Emery to find a good location for the school. Emery located a small house with two rooms and an attic in Baldwin City that could be rented for five dollars per month. Although the school officially opened in October of 1861, it wasn't until December 9<sup>th</sup> that the school welcomed its first student. Elizabeth Studebaker from Clinton arrived with her father, along with some ham, butter and eggs. These items, along with the following week's arrival of a wagon load of corn, served as the barter for the school costs of roughly \$2.50 per week.

On March 5, 1862, the first Kansas legislation was passed to assist the school by appropriating a sum of \$500 for the "purpose of assisting Professor P.A. Emery" and twenty-five cents per day per student. For this, Emery was required to report to the auditor of Kansas the number of pupils he taught and the number of days each attended.

August 21, 1863, nearly saw the early demise of the school. William Clarke Quantrill and his free-state opposed Raiders had sacked and burned the nearby town of Lawrence and were headed to Baldwin City, probably intending to destroy the town and everyone in it. However, Major Preston B. Plumb, with 200 Union Cavalry soldiers, along with Jim Lane and assorted farmers, intercepted Quantrill before they reached Baldwin City, thus saving the little schoolhouse that was the beginning of the Kansas School for the Deaf.

The school was scheduled to move to Olathe, but the legislators of this time were debating over the location of many of the State's newly formed institutions. A School for the Deaf located in a legislator's hometown would represent prestige and a source of employment for his constituents. Some legislators believed that all State agencies should be located in Topeka, and so in the Fall of

1864, the Kansas School for the Deaf was moved to Topeka where it was located for one year before moving back to Baldwin City in 1865. Problems increased about the location of the school and there was a three-way political dispute between Olathe, Baldwin City, and Topeka as to which city would get the School for the Deaf. W.H. Fishback, a senator from Olathe, was able to get a bill passed and signed into law by Governor Carney on February 12, 1864, that the School for the Deaf would be located in Olathe, Kansas.

On November 15, 1866, the Kansas School for the Deaf, with its 18 students, moved into a newly constructed stone building in Olathe. The building was torn down in 1886 to make way for a new administration dormitory building. By the year 1893 the enrollment of the school had soared to more than two hundred students. In 1934 the present Roth Administration and Dormitory Building was built to accommodate the increasing enrollment.

The school was first known as the Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb and in 1885 the name was changed to the Kansas Institution for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb. In 1896, the school was named the School for the Deaf. In 1905, the legislature enacted a law that made attendance of all deaf persons between the ages of six and twenty-one compulsory unless they attended another special school.

The Kansas School for the Deaf continues as a large center school for deaf children in Kansas. The school is known for its academic excellence in pre-college preparation and its career and transition program leading to job placement upon graduation. The Kansas School for the Deaf is also noted for its winning athletic teams (National Deaf Champions in football, basketball, and volleyball) and still boasts of beating the University of Kansas in baseball in 1897 and 1900.

The Kansas School for the Deaf is a source of pride for all Kansans. Our history tells of their commitment to the mission of quality education for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (D/HH) children of Kansas.

### Historic Milestones

2023 - The legislature approved to include Birth-3 Language Assessment Program (LAP) funding in the base budget for FY 2024.

2022 - The legislature approved to fund the KSD Birth-3 Language Assessment Program (LAP) from American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) for FY 2023 and include it in the base budget for FY 2024. Furthermore, KSSD is authorized to assess and collect a fee from unified school districts, special education cooperatives and interlocals to fund the operations of the language assessment program authorized pursuant to KSA 75-5397e. The language in the proviso clearly explains the

expenditures from the language assessment program fee fund shall be only for the operations of the language assessment program.

2018 - KSSD was designated as the lead agency for implementation of the Language Assessment Program for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (LAP-D/HH) in a partnership with the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE), Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) and Kansas Commission of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (KCDHH). Children will continue to be enrolled in the program as staffing and funding allow.

2018 - Because of the unique needs in the fields of deaf education and blind/low vision, the Kansas State Board of Education (KSBE) has appointed a superintendent at each school, one at the Kansas State School for the Deaf and one at the Kansas State School for the Blind. In compliance with the Kansas Association of School Boards (KASB) and the Kansas Board of Education's recommendations, both superintendents are charged to ensure resources/services are provided to school districts, cooperatives and interlocals that serve students who are D/HH and/or Blind/Low Vision.

The State Board of Education expects that the superintendents of KSSD and KSSB will continue to seek efficiencies among current shared administrators: Director of Facilities Operations, Director of Finance and Director of Human Resources.

In 2017, the Kansas State Board of Education commissioned the Kansas Association of School Boards (KASB) to conduct a personnel study focusing on the staffing and services at the Kansas State School for the Deaf (KSSD) and the Kansas State School for the Blind (KSSB).

The study reviewed the following areas:

- Evaluation of the current administrative framework to ensure alignment with the desired outcomes for both KSSD and KSSB.
- Examination of similar-sized and similarly-structured districts and schools nationwide to identify effective service delivery models that enhance student success.
- Collection of feedback from stakeholders to identify perceived strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, which will inform future strategic planning for KSSD and KSSB leadership.

Based on the findings, the study recommended the following actions:

- Redesign the current leadership model to enhance communication and service delivery both statewide and within the campus-based program.
- Expand additional outreach programs to better meet the needs of students, parents, and staff in local school districts.
- Enhance statewide communication and visibility regarding available services and supports.
- Increase more opportunities for staff professional development.

- Offer additional resources and support to assist students with their transition to life after KSSD.

These recommendations are aimed at improving the overall effectiveness and impact of KSSD and KSSB in serving their students and communities.

## **FEDERAL AND STATE STATUTES**

KSSD operates under a framework of federal and state statutes that guide its supervision, student eligibility requirements, and compliance with special education standards. These statutes are detailed in K.S.A. Chapters 72 and 76, as well as in the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) regulations.

## **AGENCY OVERVIEW**

### **KSSD VISION STATEMENT**

To champion an educational journey where every student discovers their strengths and builds a foundation for success in a global community.

### **KSSD MISSION STATEMENT**

To ensure that each student we serve reaches their full potential in an accessible, language-rich setting, empowering them to achieve personal success and become responsible, productive citizens.

### **CORE BELIEFS**

- Every student deserves a safe and supportive educational environment.
- Every student has the right to access both ASL and English.
- Every student and their family should have the opportunity to engage with and experience Deaf culture while also respecting and appreciating other cultures and language(s).
- Every student will understand, appreciate, and learn from individuals with cultures, perspectives, and experiences different from their own, fostering an inclusive and enriching community. Every student deserves quality outreach services that engage with families, educators, and communities to provide clear, unbiased information about the unique needs of deaf/hard of hearing students.
- Every student and their family have the right to education/knowledge about the student's needs, access to available resources, and the opportunity to make the most of programs that support their educational journey and future goals.
- Every student will develop independence and self-advocacy skills, empowering them to confidently express their needs and make informed choices about their education and future.

- Every student is empowered to achieve their aspirations as a bilingual or multilingual individual through partnerships with parents and communities.

The Kansas State School for the Deaf (KSSD) provides a center-based educational option, offering a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment to Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) students across Kansas. KSSD's Outreach Department further extends its support as a statewide resource center, assisting students, families, agencies, programs, and local school districts serving DHH students.

As an accredited institution, KSSD is dedicated to upholding high standards of education for DHH students, adhering to all state and federal regulations, assessments, and performance standards, similar to any other public school in Kansas.

The school is led by a superintendent, supported by the KSSD Leadership Team, which includes key administrators and managers responsible for strategic planning and policy direction. Several of these managers also engage with the Kansas State School for the Blind in Kansas City, Kansas, contributing to its mission and administration.

KSSD's commitment to DHH education extends beyond its campus-based program to encompass students throughout the state, with a growing emphasis on enhancing services through the Outreach program. This dedication has established KSSD as one of the leading ASL/English bilingual schools for the deaf nationally, with many staff members recognized as regional and national experts. KSSD is widely regarded by communities, organizations, and government agencies as a premier center of expertise in Deaf education.

Olathe, the location of KSSD, along with its surrounding cities, is home to one of the largest Deaf communities in the United States. KSSD plays a pivotal role within this community and has a longstanding history of collaboration with state, city, and county representatives.

### **Legislature Approved Enhancements for FY 2026**

A number of appropriations were granted last year to address several areas of critical need. Funding in the amounts of: \$90,000 for hazardous materials abatement; \$70,000 for gas service to Taylor building; \$200,000 for utility tunnel repairs and stabilization; and \$350,000 for roof replacement of Taylor complex. These appropriations ensure other past investments are maintained and allows for the continued safe operation of our school.

## **Agency Departments**

### *Administration*

Administration is responsible for the safe, efficient, and effective operation of the Kansas School for the Deaf (KSD). The superintendent, as chief executive officer, oversees and guides KSD in the execution of its mission and is committed to statewide advocacy and efforts for students who are D/HH, their parents, and the schools that serve them, anywhere in the state.

### *Instruction*

KSD is the hub of expertise for the education of students who are D/HH, from birth to age 21, across the state of Kansas. Instructional services are the key foundation to these specialized services. Our 164 -year history of educational services has ensured that thousands of students and youth who are D/HH have become active, productive, and independent citizens of the state. Over the years, our services have continuously improved to meet the changing needs of education and society. Instructional services are responsible to provide specially designed instruction (SDI) and extracurricular programs. Our Student Life program is an extended day program that offers room and board for students who do not live close enough to be transported to and from home and school daily; however, they go home every weekend. This program also includes an intensive focus on ASL and English acquisition and daily living skills to help our students successfully function in a postsecondary environment. Both our instructional and student life programs are actively involved in our transition and career education program.

In addition, KSD offers statewide outreach services that provide the highest quality of services, resources, and support to children, aged birth to 21, who are D/HH by collaborating with their families, their communities, and the professionals that serve them. Details regarding outreach programs are included later in this document.

### *Support Services*

The Business Office, Human Resources Department, Information Systems Department, and Facility Operations Department, which includes maintenance, security, housekeeping, and dietary, are dedicated to ensuring that the Kansas State School for the Deaf (KSSD) remains a safe, comfortable, and healthy environment for student learning.

To optimize resources and reduce redundancies, many management-level positions within Support Services are shared with the Kansas State School for the Blind (KSSB). Housekeeping and dietary services are provided whenever students are on campus, while security, maintenance, information technology, and other administrative support functions operate year-round. These services are essential in supporting the instructional departments and maintaining KSSD as a secure, efficient, and effective facility.

KSSD is in the process of reorganizing existing resources to form an Information Systems Department within Support Services that answers directly to the appointed agency head. This shift better aligns the management of technology resources with the needs across all agency operations, ensuring a primary focus on supporting direct instructional activities while balancing the needs of indirect support services activities. Over the next two to three budget cycles, KSSD will fully identify the technology expenditures of each program and department and transfer those existing resources into the Information Systems Department to ensure clear and streamlined management of technology resources across the agency. In some instances, program funding may require that technology funds remain in a separate department, and in such cases procedures will be put in place to ensure that those technology expenditures have appropriate involvement and oversight from KSSD's technology experts.

## **AGENCY GOALS IN ALIGNMENT WITH THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OUTCOMES AND KANSAS ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS (KASB) RECOMMENDATIONS**

At KSSD all aspects of the work of the agency are driven by our three goals listed below.

***Goal 1*** – Advance the agency's mission, vision and core values by assuring quality services are provided to internal and external community members.

- Provide ongoing communication with legislators, KSBE and stakeholders
- Provide leadership and technical assistance
- Strengthen campus-based and outreach programs
- Maintain a safe and secure environment, both physical and virtually. The recent FY 2024 appropriation addresses the enhancement of police and security presence, while the FY 2025 appropriation will address the securing of virtual data and network hardening.
- Assure internal and external communications are fully accessible in at least American Sign Language (ASL) and English, as well as other languages as needed through high quality interpreting and translation services as well as ASL classes for staff and families.

***Goal 2*** – Provide leadership and technical assistance to campus-based and statewide outreach programs, ensure high quality early intervention, early childhood and K-12 education, Kansas Students Transition and Academic Readiness (KSTAR) programs and success for all students who are DHH in the state of Kansas.

- Meet individual needs of students, parents, and professionals within their local communities and schools
- Expand more online opportunities for students, families and professionals
- Maximize full array of high-quality resources and expertise to provide efficient and effective service delivery

- Shared resources via partnerships
- Ensure each DHH student's educational needs are addressed through collaboration with the Kansas State Department of Education, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, other state agencies, unified school districts (USD), and parents
- Provide effective and relevant professional development to school districts, parents, and community
- Create a system to empower active engagement preparing students for their postsecondary plans

***Goal 3*** – Ensure facilities, equipment, and services efficiently and effectively provide a comprehensive research-based 21<sup>st</sup> century educational experience for students and staff in a clean, safe, accessible, and secure environment.

## **WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CHILDREN WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING**

Extensive research confirms that Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) children are fully capable of acquiring two languages, American Sign Language (ASL) and English, simultaneously when exposed early in life. There is no evidence that bilingual exposure causes delay or confusion; in fact, the opposite is true. Children who have equitable access to both languages demonstrate stronger communication skills, cognitive development, literacy, and social-emotional well-being. Conversely, without consistent opportunities for both explicit and incidental language learning, DHH children are at significant risk of falling behind their hearing peers in kindergarten readiness, academic achievement, and lifelong success. These gaps can contribute to increased rates of mental health challenges, underemployment, and long-term reliance on public services.

Investing now in bilingual access and language-rich educational environments for DHH children not only prevents costly remediation later, but also ensures that DHH students enter school ready to learn, graduate prepared for college or careers, and become productive, contributing members of society.

### **EARLY LANGUAGE ACCESS**

An estimated 95% of Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) babies are born to hearing parents who often have little prior knowledge or experience with their child's unique developmental needs, particularly in the area of language. Decades of research confirm this statistic and highlight why early intervention, family education, and accessible bilingual language environments (ASL and English) are essential. Because most parents are initially unfamiliar with visual language acquisition and Deaf culture, the first months and years can be both challenging and overwhelming as families adjust to an unexpected situation. To ensure the best outcomes, it is critical that parents

receive accurate, evidence-based, and comprehensive information, along with the support they need to foster their child's healthy language and cognitive development.

Early intervention and appropriate services are vital for fostering the development of both American Sign Language (ASL) and English. With effective early support, the expectation for a successful educational experience for a DHH child should be comparable to that of any other child.

ASL is universally recognized by linguistic experts as a complete and distinct language with its own syntax and semantics. It is a fully accessible visual language that aligns with the strengths of a DHH child. Introducing ASL from birth, or as soon as a child's DHH status is confirmed, is essential for ensuring that the child has full access to language in a visual modality, as auditory access may be limited even with hearing aids or cochlear implants.

Research funded by a National Science Foundation grant, specifically the five-year “Visual Language and Visual Learning” project at Gallaudet University, has demonstrated that early exposure to two languages, ASL and English, prevents developmental language delays and enhances language skills over time. Studies also highlight that there are optimal periods and conditions for achieving bilingual language mastery.

Language is fundamental to all learning and directly impacts literacy development, including for DHH students. Early and consistent access to a visual language like ASL supports the effective and efficient development of linguistic and literacy skills.

Early diagnosis of hearing loss and subsequent intervention are crucial for normal language development and improved reading outcomes. A strong foundation in language, whether spoken or signed, is essential for reading success. For children using hearing aids or cochlear implants, early exposure to sign language does not hinder spoken language development; rather, it supports and enhances it. Acquiring a complete first language, whether signed or spoken, during early childhood is critical for later reading comprehension (Visual Language and Visual Learning Science of Learning Center, June 2012).

## **WHY KSSD SUPPORTS BILINGUALISM FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE D/HH**

For almost three decades, KSSD has been at the forefront of national research on effective educational strategies for Deaf and Hard of Hearing (D/HH) students. Our participation in these research projects has positioned KSSD as a leader in Deaf Education and as a model program for schools across the United States.

As an ASL/English bilingual institution, KSSD is committed to enhancing our ASL/English Bilingual Program to promote proficiency in both American Sign Language (ASL) and English (including literacy and spoken language). Our goal is to equip D/HH students with the linguistic

skills necessary to gain social, cognitive, and academic advantages. The pace of each child's language development varies, influenced by the age at which they acquired the languages and their frequency of use in social and academic contexts.

KSSD is dedicated to addressing the linguistic needs of students efficiently and effectively, regardless of their age or location within the state. We provide educational opportunities both at our school-based program in Olathe, Kansas, and through Outreach services across the state. This dual approach ensures that students meet developmental and linguistic milestones, preparing them for kindergarten, supporting their social and emotional growth, broadening their world knowledge, and enhancing their chances of successful high school graduation and postsecondary achievement.

Many of our students enter with limited formal instruction in ASL and English. KSSD addresses this challenge by immersing students in a language-rich environment that fosters both explicit instruction and incidental learning. This approach is particularly crucial for students who are significantly language delayed.

Students at KSSD are encouraged to use assistive hearing devices such as hearing aids and cochlear implants when appropriate. Currently, 62% of our students use some form of personal amplification, with over 43% having or having had cochlear implants. While some students benefit from spoken language through these devices, others may only detect environmental sounds. Parents understand the importance of providing their child with full access to both a visual language and listening/spoken language to maximize their educational experience.

Our dedicated Instructional, Student Life, and Support staff are committed to fostering the complete development of both ASL and English, ensuring that every student has the resources and support they need to thrive.

## **SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES AND STUDENTS WHO ARE DHH**

KSSD offers a wide range of services for professionals, families, and students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH). Two key services are highlighted below to address the specific needs of this community.

**Early Intervention:** According to the Joint Commission on Infant Hearing (JCIH) supplement published in Pediatrics, "recent research suggests that outcomes for young children and their families are better when providers have specialized training specific to working with infants and toddlers who are deaf/hard of hearing and their families". Sound START is a statewide early intervention (birth-3) program established by KSSD that works collaboratively with Kansas Early Childhood Developmental Services (KECDS) to provide specialized support to providers and families.

The mission of Sound START is to ensure that families of infants and toddlers who are DHH receive comprehensive, unbiased information and support. The focus of this program is to provide supports and services that promote language access so that children who are DHH can meet language outcomes similar to their same-age hearing peers. Sound START specialists support providers and families in helping children learn appropriate language skills in American Sign Language (ASL), English, and/or the family's native language. Included in the early intervention supports provided is the KSD Language Assessment Program (LAP-DHH). Sound START providers are trained specialists who administer, interpret, and report on these assessments. The results of the individual assessments as well as the data submitted for analytical research from the LAP-DHH program is applied directly to improving both individual outcomes for children who are deaf/hard of hearing ages birth to three as well as programmatic improvements to better support children who are deaf/hard of hearing and their families. Currently, the Sound START program is staffed by five full-time and one part-time staff members who have specific training and experience in working with children who are deaf/hard of hearing.

**Hearing Assistive Technology:** KSSD continues to manage the statewide Hearing Assistive Technology (HAT) leasing program (formerly known as the Assistive Technology Unit program), which supports local school districts by providing digital remote microphone systems for students who are DHH. These specialized systems mitigate the negative impact of noise and distance by transmitting the teacher's voice directly to the student's hearing aid or cochlear implant via a receiver. The HAT program is usually staffed by one audiologist who travels across the state providing expert support and training for teachers and students, as well as coordinating repair services. This position also provides direct audiological services and hearing assistive technology support for our on-campus KSSD students. The HAT program plays a critical role in supporting students who are DHH in both local districts and at KSSD.

Most of the technology in the HAT program consists of specialized autonomous devices that do not function in the same manner as mainstream technology systems. As a result, the technology within the HAT program will not be affected by the reorganization of technology resources to form an Information Systems Department within Support Services.

Because DHH is a low-incidence disability, there is often a lack of awareness nationwide about the unique educational needs and specialized evidence-based practices required for these students. This lack of awareness extends to special education professionals, general education teachers, administrators, and parents, who may not realize when local services are insufficient to provide an accessible educational program for DHH students.

Research consistently demonstrates that positive language outcomes for children who are DHH depend on early access to language (both ASL and English) and high-quality interventions. The earlier that accessible communication and language are introduced to a child who is DHH, the

greater the chance of academic success. Language should never be an “either/or” decision that limits a student’s potential for educational success. Instead, it should be a “both/and” approach, providing students with full access to language to support their whole development—academically and socially. Research-based evidence has repeatedly proven the effectiveness of this approach.

In light of this abundant evidence, KSSD will continue to implement and promote bilingual pedagogy utilizing ASL and English for students in the state of Kansas who are DHH.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY AND ACCREDITATION**

KSSD maintains accreditation through two separate bodies: Kansas Education Systems Accreditation (KESA) and the Conference of Educational Administrators of Schools and Programs for the Deaf (CEASD). This dual accreditation ensures that KSD meets both state-mandated requirements for academic excellence and national standards for deaf education.

KESA recently underwent a substantial restructuring, changing from a five-year to an annual accreditation cycle. The 2024-2025 school year marks the first year of this new structure, and KSD has been granted full KESA accreditation under this updated process. Prior to the restructuring, KSD had petitioned the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) to use the CEASD process in conjunction with KESA. The request was approved after KSDE cross-referenced the two processes' requirements. This annual process now allows KSD to continually demonstrate its educational effectiveness and compliance with state standards.

CEASD provides a rigorous and specialized accreditation process tailored for schools and programs for the deaf. This process offers national expertise in deaf education, including both school and residential services. KSD has just completed the necessary work for its five-year CEASD accreditation cycle and is preparing for a rigorous review by a visitation team in November 2025. The team will evaluate the extensive self-study submitted by KSD, interview staff, and check records to ensure everything is accurate and aligned with the school's stated goals. This pivotal review is the culmination of KSD's efforts to achieve its established goals over the past five years and refine its systems to ensure continuous improvement. Concurrently, KSD has completed a new strategic plan that will guide its course for the next three years, ensuring the organization continues to evolve and excel in meeting the needs of its stakeholders.

Many students who come to KSSD are significantly behind academically, making it extremely challenging to overcome these learning deficits. Our first priority is to address the students' communication and language skills, which are essential for attaining literacy. This focus has been, and always will be, central to our mission for both KSSD campus students and DHH students statewide.

KSSD aims to strengthen educational quality and accountability through the KSDE Special Education Kansas Integrated Accountability System (KIAS) and Kansas Education Systems Accreditation (KESA).

## **COLLEGE AND CAREER PREPARATION**

College and career-ready students graduate from high school prepared to enter college, the workforce, and life. These students are equipped to pursue their chosen career paths and make successful job decisions.

At KSSD, students begin Career Exploration and Employability Skills classes in middle school. These activity-based courses help students develop self-awareness, explore career clusters, examine various career options, and plan their high school years with their career interests in mind. In high school, students take additional courses, including Career and Life Planning, Community Connections, and Career Connections. These courses cover resume writing, job interview skills, and proper work ethics. These courses ensure that students have built a portfolio that they can take with them after they graduate. Senior portfolios include vital documents, such as audiograms, resumes, cover letters, transcripts, and more. Students have opportunities to work on and off campus to explore future job choices and are encouraged to complete job shadows and internships in their fields of interest. KSSD provides job coaches and employment support to enhance successful internship and job placements.

Following the recommendations of the State of Kansas, each KSSD student, beginning in 6th grade, will develop an Individual Plan of Study (IPS), which will be reviewed and/or revised semi-annually. The State of Kansas recommends IPSs for the following reasons:

- They are considered a "best practice" for districts, helping students obtain a clear vision of their path toward college and career readiness.
- They address the gap between the percentage of students who enroll and those who complete their courses and earn credit during their first year at 2- and 4-year postsecondary institutions.

Individual plans of study are also part of the "Career Awareness and Guidance" criteria in the current draft of Kansas' new accreditation model.

The Kansas State Department of Education supports educators and vendors of student information systems to ensure that IPS implementation is cost-effective and not unduly burdensome. KSSD students have additional opportunities to prepare for their future careers, including:

- Developing and participating in the IPS and Individual Education Plan (IEP) processes

- Becoming Dual Placement students, taking classes through both the Olathe School District or their local districts and KSSD
- Participating in the annual KSSD Career Fair and additional Career Fairs in the Johnson County area
- Participating in the biannual KSSD College and Trade School Fair
- Enrolling in dual college credit courses offered in partnership with the National Technical Institute for the Deaf
- Taking the Transition into Postsecondary class offered at Johnson County Community College
- Enrolling in college credit courses through Johnson County Community College

## **TRANSITION SERVICES**

Transition services are offered in order to assist students and families in establishing a vision for the future as well as a plan for achieving future goals. The focus of the transition program is students' participation in their community, particularly concerning their residency and employment opportunities.

Transition planning focuses on:

- Assessments specific to transition preferences, needs, strengths and interests
- Instruction
- Related services
- Community experiences
- Employment
- Vocational skills
- Independent living skills
- Connecting with community agencies
- Person-centered planning

Students and their parents are key members of the transition planning team as they contribute the most important voices as the team works together to help identify key elements of the student's transition plan. Those key elements include:

- a vision for the future
- course needed and available course options
- employment options and experiences
- extracurricular activities
- assortment of community experiences
- connection to a variety of community agencies

Transition planning must begin with the first IEP that is in effect when a student turns 16 years old; most often, KSSD's transition planning begins for students between the ages of 12-14. The student and parents/guardians meet with the transition coordinator to discuss goals, needs, resources, and

high school planning options. The student and their IEP team create a vision for the future, then each year specific goals and services are identified to help the student work toward that vision. Transition is a process that builds on itself each year, and goals evolve and change as the student grows older and gains new insights.

#### Transition planning

- Varies among students, because each student has unique needs, strengths, interests and preferences
- Consists of curriculum, services, and support for students to help them move successfully from school to adult life
- Involves the student, family, school, and community agencies working as a team to listen and help create experiences that will aid the student in achieving their goals

KSSD offers the Kansas Student Transition and Academic Readiness (KSTAR) program for students to attend with the agreement of the IEP team. KSTAR offers specialized programming for DHH adults ages 18-21 who have completed the requirements necessary for obtaining their high school diploma yet require continued services to meet transition goals. The program curriculum is transition-focused and emphasizes instruction and practice in the following areas: independent living, career employment, and post-secondary education or training. Daily lessons focus on person-centered planning, educational planning, employment skills, self-care and health, personal finance, transportation, daily living, housing, safety, relationships, communication, legal information, community resources, and self-advocacy. Students reside in apartments on campus designed to build independent living and budgeting skills. Students learn hard and soft skills that are essential to being successful in the workplace. Students partake in on and off campus volunteer experiences, paid and non-paid internships, and part-time employment opportunities. Students may also enroll in online college courses or in-person courses at the local community college.

#### ACCESSIBLE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

KSSD is dedicated to creating an accessible educational and work environment that encompasses academic, residential, and extracurricular programs. Our interdisciplinary teams craft individualized plans to support each student's cognitive, physical, and social-emotional growth, ensuring that every student remains healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged.

Deaf students often navigate two languages and cultures. At KSSD, American Sign Language (ASL) and English are integral to our educational framework. A core component of our mission is to foster fluency in both languages. We employ diverse methods for developing first and second language skills, including reading, writing, speaking, listening, receptive ASL, and expressive ASL. Both ASL and English are utilized as primary languages of instruction, providing students with equal access to educational opportunities as their peers in other Kansas public schools.

Incidental learning plays a pivotal role in education and language development. ASL, being a visually accessible language, is used in all face-to-face interactions. Instructional staff are required to have academic-level ASL skills, while non-instructional staff are encouraged to communicate in ASL with Deaf staff and students. Non-instructional staff receive ASL training until they achieve conversational proficiency.

ASL is recognized globally as a language, and KSSD operates as a bilingual institution, teaching both ASL and English. We also engage with parents, school districts, general and special education teachers, related services personnel, elected officials, and the public to emphasize the importance of early social language acquisition as a foundation for formal academic instruction. Without early acquisition of social language skills (ASL or spoken English), students may face significant academic delays requiring intensive remediation. Our Language Assessment Program aims to address and reduce these delays.

Kansas deserves recognition for acknowledging ASL as a language, with the State Board of Education granting ASL world language credit. We are committed to collaborating with the State Board, the Governor, and the Legislature to expand ASL class opportunities for D/HH students and hearing students across the state, in line with K.S.A. 72-1120 and 72-1121. The ASL Live! initiative, launched in 2019, supports this effort by providing ASL instruction for non-KSSD students. The Teacher of the Deaf (TOD) role includes offering ASL story signing, ASL classes, and content classes in both ASL and English across Kansas. This position also involves visiting schools for in-person interactions, especially in rural areas with limited ASL resources.

DHH students range from those with profound hearing loss to those with significant residual hearing. Each student's educational approach must be customized to enhance their social and academic language skills. This requires an interdisciplinary team trained both in their specialized fields and in working with DHH students. KSSD provides this supportive environment through its campus program and Related Services staff.

KSSD promotes “incidental learning” by providing students opportunities to observe and interact with adults and peers throughout the day and year. These learning experiences are enriched by before-and-after school programs, summer sessions, and daily interactions with KSSD staff and peers. To further support DHH students, we continue to expand our programming to include distance learning, deaf mentoring for parents, Deaf Studies courses, self-advocacy training, employment preparation, and transition planning.

Students who join KSSD at a later age often have academic and social-emotional development significantly below their peers. Many have had limited formal ASL and English instruction, resulting in English skills that may be below grade level. Our goal at KSSD is to immerse these students in ASL as early as possible to facilitate academic instruction while also addressing

English needs. Students with additional disabilities, such as autism, behavioral disorders, or developmental delays, may require intensive small-group or one-on-one instruction to achieve adequate academic, linguistic, and social outcomes.

## **EXTERNAL & INTERNAL FACTORS AFFECTING AGENCY PERFORMANCE**

The Kansas State School for the Deaf (KSSD) continuously evaluates its practices to ensure alignment with state special education systems and the needs of local school districts. Our evolving delivery model aims to offer a broad spectrum of educational services through various modalities to support students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH). These positive changes present numerous opportunities to enhance our service delivery for DHH children and youth. Below are the trends and issues significantly impacting KSSD's mission.

### **EXTERNAL FACTORS**

Following the personnel study conducted by KASB in 2017, KSSD undertook a reorganization of its management positions. As recommended by the State Board of Education, KSSD now operates under the leadership of a superintendent. The superintendent is responsible for overseeing the center-based school, instructional services, outreach and related services, student life, and support services.

Since the study, KSSD has reallocated resources to enhance services across several areas, including expansion of birth-to-three services, the Early Childhood program, family and community engagement, distance learning, and the ASL/English bilingual program. In partnership with SoundBeginnings, KSSD secured a federal grant to boost family engagement for families with DHH children. This grant supports part of the salary for a part-time Parent to Parent Support Coordinator and funds the Deaf Mentor program, which offers ASL instruction to families. Additionally, the grant covers materials and supplies for parent events and attendance at educational conferences to keep up with current practices.

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment has issued an Issue Paper for FY 2026 aimed at increasing support and services for children ages birth to three who are DHH. A study of KECDS's capacity to support DHH children, coupled with data from the Language Assessment Program (LAP-DHH), identified a significant gap in current service providers' ability to support this age group effectively. Furthermore, the staffing levels for the Sound START and Deaf Mentor programs are insufficient to meet the intensity of services required for optimal outcomes. It is recommended that funding be allocated to the Kansas School for the Deaf to fully support both the Sound START and Deaf Mentor programs, ensuring that families receive the necessary supports to improve language outcomes for their DHH children.

## Kansas Economy

The connection between the well-educated workforce and the Kansas economy lies in the fact that a strong, educated workforce drives economic growth and stability. Here's how KSSD's mission ties into this:

1. Investing in early education for Deaf and Hard of Hearing (D/HH) children supports long-term educational success. When children receive quality early education and language acquisition, they are more likely to succeed academically and professionally. This, in turn, contributes to a more skilled and productive workforce, which benefits the Kansas economy.
2. KSSD's focus on preparing students for kindergarten, career, and college readiness is crucial for ensuring that these young individuals can enter the workforce as competent and capable adults. This preparation helps fill workforce gaps and meets the economic needs of the state.
3. By addressing the educational needs of D/HH students from an early age, KSSD helps prevent future educational and economic disparities. This proactive approach reduces the need for remedial interventions later, which can be costly both for individuals and the state.

In summary, KSSD's work is directly related to fostering a well-educated, skilled workforce, which is essential for driving and sustaining the economic health of Kansas.

## Convergence of KSSD and City of Olathe

Olathe, home to the Kansas School for the Deaf (KSSD), along with neighboring cities, boasts one of the largest Deaf communities in the United States. KSSD serves as a central hub for this community and has a longstanding tradition of collaboration with city and county officials. This partnership highlights Olathe's commitment to embracing Deaf and Hard of Hearing residents and providing comprehensive services and programs. Olathe consistently excels in various categories, including cultural inclusion, medical care access, and community programs.

Here are some examples of the services Olathe provides:

- The University of Kansas Health System offers a free 24-hour interpreter service for DHH patients and their families. A network of interpreters is available around the clock to ensure uninterrupted medical care. Olathe Medical Center also provides language interpretation through on-site interpreters and Virtual Remote Interpreting (VRI) services. These services extend to Miami County Medical Center, staff physician offices, wellness programs, childbirth preparation classes, and support groups.

- All five high schools in the Olathe Public School District offer ASL as a world language, providing students with valuable language skills and fostering greater community inclusion.
- The City of Olathe is dedicated to including Deaf individuals in civic life. City Council meetings are interpreted, and the Mayor appoints Deaf representatives to various city committees, such as the Police Advisory Board and the Persons with Disabilities Advisory Board. Additionally, the KSSD Superintendent has participated in the Class of 2021 Leadership Olathe, and several KSSD employees are actively involved in local civic boards and committees.

### **Olathe Public Schools (USD 233)**

#### *Dual Placement*

KSSD students have the option to attend classes at both KSSD and Olathe Public Schools (OPS), or their local school district, if determined by the IEP team to be the least restrictive environment. KSSD and OPS collaborate through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), managed by the Transition Coordinator at KSSD and the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Consultant for Olathe Schools. Integrating DHH students with hearing peers in an inclusive setting can provide valuable, desirable, and educationally appropriate experiences, offering a broader range of academic, vocational, and social opportunities.

The decision for KSSD students to take courses in the Olathe Public School District is based on the student's needs, abilities, and preferences, with input from classroom teachers, the local education agency (LEA), parents, and school administrators. Dual placements are discussed and determined during IEP meetings. Students interested in enrolling in Olathe public school classes must adhere to the established policies and procedures.

Additionally, KSSD students have the opportunity to participate in career and technical education programs offered through the Olathe Advanced Technical Center (OATC). High school juniors and seniors may apply for placement in various programs available at the OATC. Interpreter services for students residing within the Olathe Public School boundaries are provided by the Olathe School District, while KSSD covers interpreter services for students outside these boundaries.

### **Alumni Association**

The KSD Alumni Association (KSDAA) continues to be a very vibrant organization that provides real life benefits for our students. Alumni also donate their valuable time to offer career support to current students as well as additional funds for student needs. The purpose of the KSDAA is to foster a spirit of loyalty and to promote the general welfare of the school. Every year they

alternatively host Hall of Fame/Distinguished Leader/Service events and the 25th, 50th & 75th class reunions.

### **Museum of Deaf History, Arts and Culture (MDHAC)**

Olathe is home to the Marra Museum at the MDHAC, the nation's only independently owned public museum dedicated to Deaf history, arts, and culture. Located directly across the street from KSD, the MDHAC showcases the rich heritage and experiences of the Deaf community. As a non-profit foundation, its mission is to advance and preserve knowledge about Deaf individuals, their languages, cultures, and experiences.

Students at KSD benefit from the museum's diverse offerings, including guided tours, interactive activities, and volunteer opportunities. The MDHAC also provides programs for people of all ages, whether they are signers or non-signers, fostering a broader understanding and appreciation of Deaf culture.

### **Johnson County Community College**

Located less than twenty minutes from KSSD, Johnson County Community College (JCCC) is one of the largest community colleges in the nation. Eligible KSSD high school students have the opportunity to enroll in classes at JCCC and earn dual credit. Seniors are particularly encouraged to participate in the Transition into Post-Secondary (T.I.P.S.) program at JCCC. This program includes the College Success Strategies class, a dual credit course designed to equip students with essential skills for a successful transition to college, vocational training, or the workforce.

The College Success Strategies class covers key areas such as:

- Utilizing college textbooks effectively
- Taking comprehensive lecture notes
- Integrating text and lecture information for effective study habits
- Preparing for and taking exams
- Developing critical thinking skills
- Time management principles
- Navigating electronic learning management systems
- Exploring career options and preparing for job searches

Students earn three college credits and one high school credit for completing this class. Additionally, seniors and KSTAR students are encouraged to explore courses at JCCC through Excel in CTE, which helps them begin their education in their field of interest.

JCCC has a long-standing commitment to serving the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) community. They offer a range of resources to support DHH students, including a counselor

proficient in ASL, certified ASL interpreters, DHH faculty and staff, public videophones across campus, personal FM systems, and accessible digital media. JCCC also provides a two-year ASL/Deaf Studies program, which serves as a feeder to the University of Kansas ASL/Deaf Studies program at the Edwards Campus for students pursuing a Bachelor's degree in ASL and Deaf Studies.

### **University of Kansas- Edwards Campus**

The Edwards Campus is located just outside of Olathe. JCCC and the KU Edwards Campus are partnering to offer a full bachelor's program in American Sign Language and Deaf Studies. Interested students are able to take courses in pursuit of a BA degree, a graduate certificate, or even take courses as part of their continuing education plans.

### **Education Trends and Needs**

Districts are asking for more support and services at the local level for students who are DHH and those with additional disabilities. At times this will involve discussions regarding the continuum of placement options to ensure students are served in the least restrictive environment where they have the most access to language and learning. This type of collaborative, interactive technical assistance requires highly specialized personnel.

Educational interpreters are a critical connection to accessing language for students who are DHH and are enrolled in a local school setting. Unless an interpreter has academic level ASL skills plus knowledge of the content being taught, students cannot fully access the curriculum/instruction. KSSD would like to have a greater role in increasing the level of proficiency of educational interpreters in districts across the state. Educational interpreters who undergo the Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment are rated on a scale of 1-5; full academic ASL is 4-5; many classroom interpreters are at the 2-3 level; that level simply cannot help a student achieve academic proficiency. Current Kansas Guidance from KSDE and Kansas Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (KCDHH) sets minimum proficiency at 4.0, and permits individuals scoring 3.5 or below to work provisionally so long as a supervision plan has been submitted to KCDHH. An additional consideration of interpreter services is the fact that the child has limited exposure to language models compared to their hearing counterparts, thus impacting their linguistic development.

### **Education Accountability**

In December 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was enacted, reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). Under ESSA, the Kansas Department of Education (KSDE) is tasked with evaluating whether schools meet the needs of every student effectively. All schools, including KSSD, are required to establish high standards for student

success in alignment with the Board of Education's Vision for Kansas Children - KANSANS CAN.

The Board has outlined the criteria for a successful high school graduate, ensuring that every student is equipped with the academic preparation, cognitive skills, technical expertise, employability skills, and civic engagement necessary to contribute meaningfully to society.

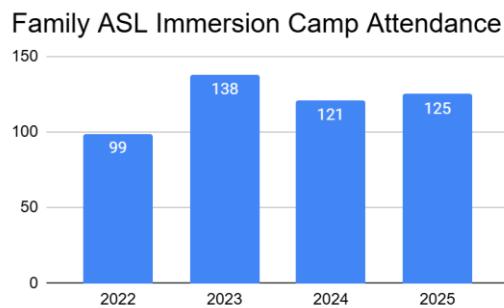
### **Family Signs Kansas (FSK)**

KSSD offers family ASL classes. Some parents would like to participate in sign language classes but cannot attend traditional classes for a variety of reasons. These reasons may include a lack of classes in their area, conflicts with work schedules, or they live too far away. KSSD continues to investigate ways to expand distance learning opportunities to help parents of children who are D/HH improve their sign language skills so they can communicate more effectively with their children. Family Signs Kansas (FSK) is a program that utilizes video conferencing technology to allow parents and other family members to participate in ASL classes at a time and day that is most convenient for them. Parents are matched with a teacher who can work with them at their preferred time on a weekly basis. These classes focus on ASL development and communication strategies in the home and family environment. FSK classes are open to all parents of DHH students in Kansas regardless of where their child attends school. There has been a positive response to this program. In several situations, multiple family members have joined the parents for class so the entire family can develop their ASL skills. This allows for a more natural flow of conversation at home that include both explicit and incidental language opportunities.

### **Family ASL Immersion Camp**

An additional opportunity for Kansas families with Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing children to learn ASL is the Family ASL Immersion Camp which takes place every June. This engaging camp occurs on KSSD's Olathe campus with the majority of registrants staying in our dormitories, while some local families choose to commute to campus for the duration of camp. Campers are split into age-appropriate classes which focus on learning a variety of ASL vocabulary with an emphasis on four key aspects of ASL grammar that the Language Assessment Program (LAP) research has indicated are relative weaknesses for children that have thus far been assessed.

Our goal through the class time is to build family members' confidence in their expressive and receptive use of ASL vocabulary and phrases which pertain to a culminating activity or field trip. Staff continue to see growth of parent-child, and sibling-sibling signed interactions. We believe this program has a positive impact on the social-emotional well-being of the families that participate. We continue to see an increasing number of grandparents and extended family members attend camp. Growth of this program over the last few years is shown in the following chart. The numbers indicate the total number of individual participants.



In June 2025 we celebrated our 10th year of Family ASL Immersion Camp, and look forward to continuing the tradition in June 2026.

### **Parent Engagement**

According to the EHDI E-Book (Chapter 17), “on reflection of the early intervention years, families rank parent-to-parent communication as one of the strongest measures of family support (Jackson, 2009). There is something incredibly unique and important about receiving support from other parents and families who have children who are DHH and have “been there”. Because of the low incidence of hearing loss, families of children who are DHH often feel isolated from each other and do not typically have support opportunities in their already established community.” In collaboration with SoundBeginnings (a KDHE program), KSSD has been able to provide a Parent-to-Parent Support Coordinator. This position is held by someone who is a parent of children who are DHH and can uniquely identify with families on their journey.

Through this position and with the support of KSSD Outreach, the PATHS group has been created to provide parent-to-parent support. The mission of this group is to foster connections among families of children who are DHH through their shared journey. This is done through networking events across Kansas, both social and informational, specifically designed for families of children who are deaf/hard of hearing.

### **Deaf Mentor**

Another key aspect of providing support to families of children who are DHH is connecting them with the Deaf Community. The Joint Committee on Infant Hearing (JCIH, 2007, 2013) emphasizes the importance of having opportunities for families to interact with the Deaf Community and other DHH individuals. In collaboration with SoundBeginnings (a KDHE program), KSSD has been able to provide the Deaf Mentor program to 29 families in FY 2025. The Deaf Mentor Program was created by the SKI-HI Institute to provide trained Deaf adults to be sign language models and teachers for families with children who are DHH and is seen as a complement to the Sound START program in supporting language development, specifically ASL. The current program provides families with 30 sessions. Depending on the family’s location, this may include a combination of

both in person and virtual visits, although in person sessions are ideal. The recent study from KECDS highlighted the lack of expertise of KECDS providers in supporting families with children who are deaf/hard of hearing in learning American Sign Language. It was recommended that the Deaf Mentor program be fully funded and expanded to better serve families across the state of Kansas and allow families to receive 60 sessions so that they more fully learn ASL.

### **Retention and Recruitment of Qualified Staff**

Educating students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) represents one of the most specialized fields in teaching due to the pervasive and complex effects of hearing loss on learning. Teachers of the Deaf (TODs) are expected to have dual endorsements in general and/or special education and Deaf Education. Unfortunately, Kansas currently lacks a university program offering a dedicated Deaf Education teacher preparation program. As a result, we face the challenge of recruiting TODs from across the nation or encouraging local licensed teachers to pursue online Deaf Education certification.

In response, the Kansas Department of Education has tasked KSSD with leading the effort to redesign and establish the Institute of Higher Education Standards for Deaf Education teacher preparation. These newly developed standards were approved by the Kansas State Board of Education in November 2021.

The state is experiencing a critical shortage of TODs, particularly in rural areas. To address this, KSSD has been awarded a Technical Assistance Support Network (TASN) contract by the Kansas Department of Education to enhance teacher preparation and increase the number of qualified TODs statewide. We have partnered with Valdosta State University, Texas Women's University, and other institutions to provide online training programs for prospective TODs in Kansas. Additionally, ongoing professional development and mentoring by KSSD professionals are essential to support this crucial group of educators.

Through the TASN project, we aim to boost the number of qualified TODs through targeted recruitment, training, professional development, and mentoring. Staff at KSSD, in collaboration with the Kansas State Department of Education Technical Assistance System Network (TASN), are facilitating these efforts. To date, seventeen (17) TODs have successfully completed the program and are now teaching in Kansas, with nine (9) current participants enrolled in classes. Graduates and participants of the TASN TOD Project are now serving in 17 districts across the state.

KSSD also continues to collaborate with universities that have teacher preparation programs by offering student teachers the opportunity to complete an 8-16 week practicum on-site. This initiative aims to attract and recruit potential teachers with the appropriate endorsements to serve at KSSD and other school districts in Kansas.

## **School Setting**

The KSSD campus is situated in the vibrant suburban city of Olathe, Kansas, which boasts a significant Deaf community and is recognized for its Deaf-friendly environment. This welcoming atmosphere is particularly advantageous for KSSD students, many of whom come from towns across Kansas where there may be limited or no presence of other Deaf individuals. In Olathe, students benefit from a supportive and inclusive community that fosters their ability to navigate both the Deaf and hearing worlds more effectively. This unique advantage helps them develop essential skills for success in diverse social and professional contexts.

## **INTERNAL FACTORS**

### **Leadership and Advocacy**

KSSD takes a leading role in addressing the educational needs of students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH), their families, and the K-12 schools that support them across the state. The agency is expanding its advocacy efforts to champion high-quality educational programs for DHH children, including those from birth to three years old and transitional students aged 18-21. By actively engaging with statewide organizational groups, KSSD is working to enhance educational standards and support for these students.

Additionally, KSSD maintains strong partnerships with local, state, and national organizations, including:

- Kansas State Department of Education
- Kansas Department of Health and Environment
- Kansas Technical Assistance System Network (TASN)
- Kansas Association of Special Education Administrators
- Conference of Educational Administrators of Schools and Programs for the Deaf (CEASD)
- Kansas Commission of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (KCD/HH)
- Kansas Early Childhood Developmental Services (KECDS)
- Kansas State School for the Blind (KSSB)
- USD #233 - Olathe Public Schools for dual placement and Olathe Advanced Tech
- Johnson County Community College
- University of Kansas-Edwards Campus
- Rochester Institute of Technology/National Technical Institute for the Deaf
- Gallaudet University, Visual Language and Visual Learning (VL2) Science Foundation
- Association of College Educators - Deaf & Hard of Hearing (ACE-D/HH)
- Museum of Deaf History, Arts & Culture (MDHAC)
- The University of Kansas Health System
- Hearing Loss Association of America of Kansas City (HLAAKC)

- Kansas American Speech-Language Hearing Association (KASHA)
- National Association of the Deaf (NAD)
- Kansas Association of the Deaf (KAD)
- National Helen Keller Center (NHKC) housed at KSSD
- Sertoma
- Deaf-Blind Project
- PATHS (Support for Families with DHH Children in Kansas)
- Valdosta State University
- Texas Woman's University
- University of Massachusetts
- American Sign Language Round Table (ASLRT)
- American Sign Language Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment (ASL-CIA)
- Vanderbilt University
- Temple University
- Sacramento State University

**Implementation of the Language Assessment Program (LAP-DHH) [K.S.A. 75-5397e]**

Early and fluent communication is crucial for typical cognitive, social, and emotional development and should be pursued with the utmost dedication, utilizing the most effective methods or modes for each individual child. To support this, the Legislature enacted K.S.A. 75-5397e in July 2016, mandating that all children in Kansas who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH), ages birth through eight, receive annual language assessments. These assessments are designed to ensure that these children meet language milestones comparable to their hearing peers. The goal is to monitor language acquisition, evaluate the effectiveness of current interventions, and determine if alternative strategies are needed.

The Kansas Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing coordinates this program, which is operated by KSSD. On July 1, 2018, following recommendations from an Advisory Committee, KSSD launched the statewide Language Assessment Program-Deaf/Hard of Hearing (LAP-DHH). This program began with infants and toddlers in the Sound START program (birth to three years) and those transitioning to Part B Early Childhood programs (ages 3-5). Enrollment has continued as staffing and funding have permitted. Annual reports are submitted to the Senate Committee on Education and the House K-12 Education Committee. The FY 2024 report, submitted on January 31, 2025, revealed that 91% of the children assessed did not meet their language milestones (see data on page 71).

Until 2021, KSSD covered all costs for implementing the program. However, in 2021, KSSD received \$345,738 from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment to partially fund the 0-3 LAP-DHH. In 2022, this funding was increased to \$386,000. Additionally, KSSD received \$200,000 from the Kansas State Department of Education for the 3-8 LAP-DHH. In 2022, KSSD

was authorized to assess and collect fees from unified school districts, special education cooperatives, and interlocals to further support the program for children ages 3-8. A fee-for-service model was established in FY 2023. Revenue for FY 2025 was \$244,000. One full-time and one part-time new LAP Specialists were hired in FY 2025 for the 3-8 LAP, with a strong focus on their training and support. The funding for the 0-3 LAP is included in KSSD's base budget for FY 2025.

### **Early Childhood Program**

The number of students (aged 3-5) in our Early Childhood program has remained steady and we have rearranged existing staff to provide increased adult support in the Early Childhood Center. An additional early childhood specialist has been added to accommodate the growth of students in the program. For the past few years, the enrollment of non-signing students has also increased. This has spurred a need for language facilitators to work with individual students to ensure they receive academic support to sustain learning in the classroom.

Peer Model Program within the Early Childhood allows hearing siblings of deaf students to join in an effort to increase sign language comprehension and use within the homes of our deaf students. This is an application process and students are screened for their cognitive and language levels. Hearing students, while learning American Sign Language, are modeling spoken English skills to any of our DHH students with access to sound.

### **Interpreting Services**

Interpreting services at KSSD coordinates and provides ASL/English interpreting services in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for both on- and off-campus meetings between adult staff members, parents/families, and other professionals with whom our staff interact, as well as for guest speakers on campus who are not ASL users. Due to the linguistic make-up of school families we serve, KSSD's Interpreting Services also coordinates provision of interpreting and translating services into a multitude of other languages as needed. All individuals presently working as ASL/English interpreters for KSSD are non-deaf, registered with the Kansas Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (KCDHH), and hold either National Interpreter Certification (NIC) or Board of Evaluation of Interpreters (BEI) certification.

The Interpreter Coordinator collects and analyzes data in regards to the volume of interpreted events as well as the financial commitment of providing such legally mandated services. Between FY 2022 and FY 2023 a 19% increase between the number of requests was noted. An additional increase of 22.65% in the number of requests was documented between FY 2023 and FY 2024. The number of requests remained steady between FY 2024 and FY 2025. We project that the FY 2026 number of requests will also remain flat in comparison with the last two fiscal years. Centralized coordination of interpreting services achieves significant cost savings and improves work time efficiencies. This approach allows for better scheduling and consistent use of best

practices in interpreting. Services are provided by three full-time staff interpreters, and a pool of temporary, part-time interpreters. For any overflow needs, we use a variety of interpreting agencies on a contractual basis.

### **Professional Development**

A continuous improvement in the agency's professional development programs allows professionals to have ongoing and regular opportunities to learn from each other and from other sources. Ongoing professional development keeps teachers up-to-date regarding new research on how D/HH children acquire and learn two languages, emerging technology tools for the classroom, new curriculum resources, and more. Teachers create and follow Individual Professional Development Plans to ensure continuous growth and development. School administrators are committed to ensuring that professionals at KSSD engage in continuous professional learning and apply that learning to increase student achievement.

As part of our commitment to ensuring a linguistically accessible educational and work environment, we believe it is vital for all KSSD staff to have at least basic sign language abilities. Expectations of ASL fluency vary according to role within the school with those staff who have the most direct interactions with students needing to be the most fluent. Additionally, we have deaf and hearing staff across all campus departments who only interact with one another. To support the continued bilingual and accessible approach of all communications, staff who are new to or still developing ASL fluency are provided ASL classes. During FY 2024 we began a program evaluation which included a survey of ASL class participants. As FY 2025 commences, we are in the early stages of strengthening this program to bolster the frequency and type of ASL instruction for staff.

KSSD will continue to collaborate with the universities and other organizations in presenting regional conferences and professional development for TODs, early intervention specialists, special education directors, interpreters, speech-language pathologists, families, and other interested parties.

### **Security**

KSSD continues to actively work towards:

- enhancing ways to retain and train security personnel on the safety and security systems deployed on campus;
- fully utilizing the School Resource Officers (SRO), and the enhance security service contract to meet the rising safety and security expectations;
- improving safety and security systems, including updating emergency notification lights in locations that enhance safety;
- retrofitting doors with security grade PRIMUS keys and upgrading doors with electronic locks to be managed by an access control card system to enhance safety;

- upgrading camera servers as part of a campus-wide video surveillance system with the latest features that enhance safety;
- upgrading and maintaining the integrated fire alarm and mass notification systems; and maintaining campus shelters, developing emergency protocols, and conduction drills.

Improvements are being made on these numerous and essential actions on an ongoing basis.

## Technology

KSSD continues to pursue compliance with information security and confidentiality practices as recommended by the Kansas Information Security Office and other responsible parties. The recent funding appropriated for IT personnel and consultants is allowing for major upgrades to the network architecture to current industry security standards. Use of cutting-edge technology to make information readily available will improve KSSD reputation and our ability to serve as a statewide resource.

KSSD adopted a technology model that incorporates a wide range of solutions from different manufacturers. Due to KSSD's statewide reach and delivery of instructional services to students coming from many districts with diverse technology deployments, our campus must deliver an equally diverse technology ecosystem on its campus. Unlike a traditional public school, which has the freedom to deploy a uniform platform for all students, KSSD must deliver solutions that meet the needs of each individual IEP. This results in a mixture of platforms, including cloud and on-premises solutions, as well as workstations running Microsoft Windows, Apple macOS, and Google ChromeOS.

Major cloud solutions used by KSSD include Google Workspace for Education and Pearson's PowerSchool Student Information System. In addition, integrations with over 100 smaller cloud platforms are selected and implemented on a case-by-case basis.

KSSD also operates a single highly robust network to serve multiple needs of the agency. Rather than supporting multiple separate networks for systems like basic Internet, security and surveillance, mass notification, and environmental control systems, KSSD operates a single network. This requires technology support staff with expertise across a broad range of technologies. The cost of such a network is more than the cost of any one separate network that could adequately support one of these applications, but collectively delivers a more cost-effective solution to satisfy the needs of each of these essential campus systems.

KSSD is in the midst of a reorganization of resources to form a more coherent Information Systems Department within Support Services. A multi-year overhaul of the network remains in progress. Under the new design, KSSD is adopting a rolling upgrade cycle to ensure the costs of maintaining the network are predictable and more consistent from year to year. In addition, KSSD is adopting

a distributed model with a focus on redundancy and efficiency, allowing critical services to remain operational if any single location experiences unexpected outages. To reduce the overall likelihood of outages, KSSD is also implementing weather-proof enclosures, which protects against the recurring environmental damage previously experienced as a result of some aging building infrastructure. We are currently in the second year of a ten-year plan to fully deploy this new design.

Improvements to wireless infrastructure are following the same model. Rather than deploying a system that requires a complete replacement every few years, KSSD is implementing wireless infrastructure that brings our classrooms up to current WiFi 7 standards, while allowing for incremental upgrades to WiFi 8 as this technology is released during the current system's expected lifespan. The new systems are also being deployed with an eye towards ease of use, to ensure staff and students are able to more easily comply with security expectations and avoid the insecure workarounds that have become prevalent in educational settings.

Where possible, servers have been relocated to cloud solutions, which reduce overall costs and allow for on-demand scaling. Flexible scaling allows for scaling up during peak seasons, and scaling down during off-peak seasons. For example, services can be reduced when school is not in session.

KSSD is highly dependent on continuous 24/7 internet connectivity to support daytime and evening instructional activities, as well as life-safety, security, and environmental systems. Historically, this was achieved through expensive “premium” connectivity from specialized Internet providers. Going forward, KSSD is leveraging advancements in technology to increase speed and reliability through cost effective on-premises solutions supporting fail-over functionality on redundant commodity Internet providers, potentially saving as much as 60% annually beginning in FY28. This is being achieved without exceeding existing resource constraints to implement the new solution. Cost savings will be used to bolster the resiliency of other technology systems that have suffered in the past due to limited resources.

For students, KSSD is committed to providing them with the technology resources and support to make sure they are able to maximize their learning potential, on or off campus. Flexibility and support for teachers, students, and families across the state while maintaining their online safety and security is key in our success. To further this commitment, KSSD has begun broader implementation of diverse computing platforms in classrooms, including devices running on Microsoft Windows, Apple macOS, Apple iOS, Google Android, and Google ChromeOS.

## **EXPENDITURE JUSTIFICATION FOR AGENCY**

### **PREVIOUS YEAR - FY 2025**

Total actual expenditures from all sources were \$15,923,600. Operating expenditures for FY 2025 were \$12,475,119. Approximately 71% of the operating budget was spent on Instructional Services, which are direct services to students on campus, as well as students throughout the state who receive contracted services and other instructional services. Administration and Support Services equal 29% of operating expenses. Revenue from the State General Fund (SGF) was \$12,111,850 which is 97% of our operating expenditures. It includes \$2,000 for Official Hospitality and \$396,994 designated for Language Assessment Program. The remaining operating expenses were funded with federal grant revenue and fee funds. Capital Improvements were \$2,301,775 funded by the State Institution Building Fund (SIBF).

### **CURRENT YEAR - FY 2026**

Total approved from all sources is \$18,047,426. The operating budget is \$14,051,607. Approximately 75% of the operating budget is allocated for Instructional Services, which are direct services to students on campus, as well as students throughout the state who receive contracted services and other instructional services. Administration and Support Services equal 25% of operating expenses. The SGF share of the operating budget is \$12,578,844 including \$2,000 for Official Hospitality, \$307,368 to fund the Language Assessment Program and \$300,00 for three (3) Resource Teachers. SGF is 90% of the operating budget.

The total appropriation for the Capital Improvement Budget is \$3,995,820 and is funded from the State Institutional Building Fund (SIBF). Included in this amount is the approved emergency repairs to collapse tunnel ceiling and water damage to elevator motor equipment and pumps in the elementary building.

### **BUDGET YEAR - FY 2027**

The total budget from all sources is \$20,148,170. The operating budget is \$14,483,930. Approximately 75% of the operating budget is allocated for Instructional Services, which are direct services to students on campus, as well as students throughout the state who receive contracted services and other instructional services. Administration and Support Services equal 25% of operating expenses. The SGF share of the operating budget is \$13,008,572 including \$2,000 for Official Hospitality, \$310,789 for the Language Assessment Program and \$302,937 for New Classroom Resource Teachers. SGF is 90% of the operating budget.

The requested Capital Improvement Budget is \$5,664,240 and is funded from the State Institutional Building Fund (SIBF).

## **TEACHER SALARY INCREASE FY 2027 - \$224,804**

In accordance with K.S.A. 76-11a16, each person employed or to be employed as a teacher or licensed personnel by the Kansas State School for the Deaf during a school year must be paid at a compensation rate not less than the compensation rate paid to any teacher or licensed personnel with a comparable education background and experience employed by Olathe School District, USD 233, as of September 1 of the preceding school year. Olathe USD 233 in conjunction with the Olathe USD chapter of the Kansas National Education Association (KNEA) updated their 2025-2026 school year teacher salary schedule. As a result, Kansas School for the Deaf updated their 2026-2027 salary schedule for FY 2027. The Teacher Salary Increase for FY 2027 is included as a line item in the position detail module of Ibar.

### **CHANGE PACKAGES – INSTRUCTIONS SALARIES AND SUPPLEMENTAL CONTRACTS**

1. Supplemental and Enhancements: Request for Teacher Pay Alignment with Olathe Public Schools	\$ 228,350
2. Supplemental and Enhancements: Request for Restoration of 1.5% cut to the Language Assessment Program (LAP)	\$ 94,880
3. Enhancement: Request for Three New Classroom Teaching Positions to be included in the Base Budget for FY2027 and beyond	\$ 300,000
4. Enhancement: ASL Proficiency Incentives and Supplemental Contracts	\$ 143,350

### **Explanation of Instructions Supplemental and Enhancements:**

1. <b>Alignment</b> of Teachers Pay with Olathe Public Schools and extension from 181 to 187 contractual days – Licensed Teachers for 6 days Adding 6 days for: Paraprofessionals and Dorm Teachers Kitchen Staff Nursing Staff Long-term Subs, Language Facilitators & Job Coach	\$ 172,450 \$ 28,200 \$ 8,800 \$ 5,400 \$ 13,500
Total	\$ 228,350
2. <b>Restoration</b> of 1.5% cut to the Language Assessment Program Restoring the funds will allow us to continue providing statewide Assessments, training and resources that directly impact children's Academic readiness and long-term success.	\$ 94,880
3. <b>Enhancement:</b> Three New Classroom Teaching Positions to be included in the Bases Budget. The funding was considered one-time and is not incorporated into our base budget for FY2027 and beyond.	\$ 300,000

4. <b>Enhancement:</b> ASL Proficiency Incentives and Supplemental Contracts	\$ 93,750
Stipend for ASL Proficiency Incentive Pay	
Supplemental Contract for Summer Curriculum Planning Workshop from \$150 per day to \$200 per day	\$ 8,700
Supplemental Contracts for ESY or Extended School Year/Summer School from \$150 per day to \$250 per day	\$ 40,900
 Total	\$ 143,350

#### KSSD FTE AND NON-FTE COUNTS FOR FY2027

PROGRAM	CLASSIFIED	UNCLASSIFIED	NON-FTE	TOTAL FTE
ADMINISTRATION		1		1
INSTRUCTION	1	108.55	5	114.55
SUPPORT SERVICES		25		25
TOTAL FTE AND NON-FTE COUNT				<b>140.55</b>

**Five-Year Capital Budget Plan--DA 418A**

Division of the Budget

State of Kansas

**Kansas School for the Deaf - 610**

7/1/2024

Project Title	Estimated Project Cost	Prior Year	Current Year FY 2025	Requested		FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	Subsequent Years
				FY 2026						
<b>1. Safety &amp; Security Systems (8130)</b>										
Safety & Security Systems & Infrastructure	–	\$ 316,651	\$ 364,149	\$ 397,356		\$ 417,224	\$ 438,085	\$ 459,990	\$ 482,989	\$ 507,139
<b>2. HVAC Systems Maintenance &amp; Repair (8145)</b>										
HVAC Efficiency Upgrades & Maintenance	–	\$ 683,269	\$ 655,000	\$ 1,592,750		\$ 901,638	\$ 387,313	\$ 406,679	\$ 427,013	\$ 448,363
<b>3. General Rehabilitation &amp; Repair (8108)</b>										
Maintenance & Repairs	–	\$ 1,448,274	\$ 1,112,969	\$ 1,295,712		\$ 1,118,062	\$ 847,965	\$ 763,863	\$ 802,057	
<b>4. Major Upgrade Projects (NEW1)</b>										
Major Capital Projects	–	–	\$ 1,317,500	\$ 710,000		\$ 1,200,000	\$ 1,200,000	\$ 1,100,000	\$ 500,000	–
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$ 2,448,194</b>	<b>\$ 3,449,618</b>	<b>\$ 3,995,819</b>	<b>\$ 3,636,924</b>	<b>\$ 2,873,364</b>	<b>\$ 2,730,532</b>	<b>\$ 2,212,059</b>	

**Project Request Explanation--DA 418B**

<b>1. Project Title: Safety &amp; Security Systems (8130)</b>	<b>2. Project Priority:</b>
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Agency: Kansas State School for the Deaf #610	1
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**3. Project Description and Justification:**

These on-going funds are necessary to keep campus safety and security systems in optimal condition, performance. On-going maintenance of facility infrastructure and critical safety and security systems, procedures and protocols to provide a complete educational experience for all students in a safe and secure environment. Ensures Life/Safety equipment meet safety code compliance and standards.

No reappropriation from FY24 to FY25 required.

**Highlights of Expenditures in the next five fiscal years:**

In FY 2026, recurring service & upgrading of safety systems, including 5% inflation guard

In FY 2027, continue upgrading Life/Safety systems & equipment to evolving standards, and inflation guard

In FY 2028, continue upgrading Life/Safety systems & equipment to evolving standards, and inflation guard

In FY 2029, continue upgrading Life/Safety systems & equipment to evolving standards, and inflation guard

In FY 2030, continue upgrading Life/Safety systems & equipment to evolving standards, and inflation guard

<b>4. Estimated Project Cost:</b>	<b>5. Project Phasing:</b>
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1. Construction (fixed equipment and sitework)	\$ 1,860,971	1. Preliminary plans*	\$ -
2. Architect or engineer fees	\$ 642,881	2. Final plans*	\$ 642,881
3. Moveable equipment	\$ -	3. Construction*	\$ 1,860,971
4. Project contingency	\$ -	*(Including misc. & Other costs)	
5. Miscellaneous costs (Server/Client Licensing & Maintenance Costs)	\$ 879,732		\$ 879,732
	<b>Total \$ 3,383,584</b>		<b>Total \$ 3,383,584</b>

**6. Amount by Source of Financing:**

Fiscal Years	1. SGF	2. SIBF Fund	3. ____ Fund	4.	5.	Total
Prior Years		\$ 316,651				\$ 316,651
2025		\$ 364,149				\$ 364,149
<b>2026</b>		<b>\$ 397,356</b>				<b>\$ 397,356</b>
2027		\$ 417,224				\$ 417,224
2028		\$ 438,085				\$ 438,085
2029		\$ 459,990				\$ 459,990
2030		\$ 482,989				\$ 482,989
Subsequent Years		\$ 507,139				\$ 507,139
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$ 3,383,584</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 3,383,584</b>

**Project Request Explanation--DA 418B**

<b>1. Project Title: HVAC Systems Maintenance &amp; Repair (8145)</b>	<b>2. Project Priority:</b>					
Agency: Kansas State School for the Deaf #610	2					
<b>3. Project Description and Justification:</b>						
<p>The upgrading of old HVAC &amp; boiler systems over a planned period of time will allow energy savings and proactive approach to address issues in a cost effective manner with minimal disruption to students. Significant utility infrastructure upgrades to multiple buildings over many years will allow for the eventual decommissioning of the central boiler infrastructure. Funding maintains past investments.</p>						
No reappropriation from FY24 to FY25 required.						
Highlights of Expenditures in the next five fiscal years:						
In FY 2026, recurring service & upgrading of HVAC systems, and phasing out central steam heating boiler						
In FY 2027, recurring service & upgrading of HVAC systems, and decommissioning central steam heating boiler						
In FY 2028, recurring service & upgrading of HVAC systems						
In FY 2029, recurring service & upgrading of HVAC systems						
In FY 2030, recurring service & upgrading of HVAC systems						
<b>4. Estimated Project Cost:</b>	<b>5. Project Phasing:</b>					
1. Construction (fixed equipment and sitework) \$ 3,576,316	1. Preliminary plans* \$ -					
2. Architect or engineer fees \$ 1,045,385	2. Final plans* \$ 1,045,385					
3. Moveable equipment \$ -	3. Construction* \$ 4,126,518					
4. Project contingency \$ 550,202	*(Including misc. & Other costs) \$ -					
5. Miscellaneous costs \$ 330,121	\$ 330,121					
Total \$ 5,502,024	Total \$ 5,502,024					
<b>6. Amount by Source of Financing:</b>						
Fiscal Years	1. SGF	2. SIBF Fund	3. ___ Fund	4.	5.	Total
Prior Years		\$ 683,269				\$ 683,269
2025		\$ 655,000				\$ 655,000
2026		\$ 1,592,750				\$ 1,592,750
2027		\$ 901,638				\$ 901,638
2028		\$ 387,313				\$ 387,313
2029		\$ 406,679				\$ 406,679
2030		\$ 427,013				\$ 427,013
Subsequent Years		\$ 448,363				\$ 448,363
Total	\$0	\$ 5,502,024	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,502,024

**Project Request Explanation--DA 418B**

<b>1. Project Title:</b> General Rehabilitation & Repair (8108)	<b>2. Project Priority:</b>					
Agency: Kansas State School for the Deaf #610	3					
<b>3. Project Description and Justification:</b>						
These funds are necessary to keep campus facilities in functional and safe condition for the students, staff and general public. Examples of these include but are not limited to: pumps, masonry and metal repair, electrical motors, sheetrock repairs, maintenance and preventative services, reconditioning and replacement of equipment, and ensure facility is safe and comfortable.						
No reappropriation from FY24 to FY25 required.						
<b>Highlights of Expenditures in the next five fiscal years:</b>						
In FY 2026, on-going general and nominal emergency repairs, including 15% inflation guard (base \$55,648)						
In FY 2027, on-going general and nominal emergency repairs, and inflation guard						
In FY 2028, on-going general and nominal emergency repairs, and inflation guard						
In FY 2029, on-going general and nominal emergency repairs, and inflation guard						
In FY 2030, on-going general and nominal emergency repairs, and inflation guard						
<b>4. Estimated Project Cost:</b>	<b>5. Project Phasing:</b>					
1. Construction (fixed equipment and sitework) \$ - 2. Architect or engineer fees \$ - 3. Moveable equipment \$ - 4. Project contingency \$ - 5. Miscellaneous costs \$ -	1. Preliminary plans* \$ - 2. Final plans* \$ - 3. Construction* \$ - *(Including misc. & Other costs) \$ -					
<b>Total</b> \$ -	<b>Total</b> \$ -					
<b>6. Amount by Source of Financing:</b>						
Fiscal Years	1. SGF	2. SIBF Fund	3. ___ Fund	4.	5.	Total
Prior Years		\$ 1,448,274				\$ 1,448,274
2025		\$ 1,112,969				\$ 1,112,969
2026		\$ 1,295,712				\$ 1,295,712
2027		\$ 1,118,062				\$ 1,118,062
2028		\$ 847,965				\$ 847,965
2029		\$ 763,863				\$ 763,863
2030		\$ 802,057				\$ 802,057
Subsequent Years						
Total	\$ 0	\$ 5,940,629	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,388,903

**Project Request Explanation--DA 418B**

1. Project Title: Major Capital Projects	2. Project Priority:					
Agency: Kansas State School for the Deaf #610	4					
<b>3. Project Description and Justification:</b>						
Major remodeling of main campus buildings, or new construction.						
<b>Highlights of Expenditures in the next five fiscal years:</b> Projects listed by fiscal year in order of importance of program support and/or facility operations: In FY 2026, continued hazardous material abatement to remove asbestos pipe wrapping, flaking lead paint and other hazardous environments. New gas service to Taylor pool mechanical room. Finalize tunnel repairs/reconditioning. Replace roof, guttering and improve drainage of Taylor complex. In FY 2027, roof replacements and begin phased atrium replacement to resolve chronic leaks/damage. Summer Project In FY 2028, roof replacements and finish phased atrium replacement. Work starts end of FY27 & start of FY28. Lockrooms of Taylor remodeling. Work starts end of FY28 and start of FY29. Summer Project In FY 2029, roof replacements and finalize Taylor remodeling. In FY 2030, roof replacements						
4. Estimated Project Cost	5. Project Phasing:					
1. Construction (fixed equipment and sitework) \$ 3,917,875 2. Architect or engineer fees \$ 1,145,225 3. Moveable equipment \$ - 4. Project contingency \$ 602,750 5. Miscellaneous costs \$ 361,650	1. Preliminary plans* \$ - 2. Final plans* \$ 1,145,225 3. Construction* \$ 4,520,625 *(Including misc. & Other costs) \$ - Total \$ 361,650					
Total \$ 6,027,500	Total \$ 6,027,500					
<b>6. Amount by Source of Financing:</b>						
Fiscal Years	1. SGF	2. SIBF Fund	3. ___ Fund	4.	5.	Total
Prior Years						
2025		\$ 1,317,500				\$ 1,317,500
2026		\$ 710,000				\$ 710,000
2027		\$ 1,200,000				\$ 1,200,000
2028		\$ 1,200,000				\$ 1,200,000
2029		\$ 1,100,000				\$ 1,100,000
2030		\$ 500,000				\$ 500,000
Subsequent Years						
Total	\$0	\$ 6,027,500	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6,027,500

## REVENUE FUNDS

### LOCAL SERVICES REIMBURSEMENT FUND – 2091

We receive monies from local school districts for lease of hearing assistive technology equipment used by DHH students in local school districts throughout the state. Use of the equipment amplifies the teacher's voice while reducing the background classroom noise for the student, allowing the student better access to classroom instruction. The program is managed by the KSSD audiologist, who counsels local school district professionals regarding appropriate equipment needs for each student. Each unit consists of many components. Inventory is housed at KSSD to provide quick replacement parts. Rental fees are used to pay for servicing equipment and purchasing units on a 5-year replacement schedule.

Fees for hearing aid repair monies are also deposited in this fund.

<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Estimated</u>	<u>Estimated</u>
Revenue Source	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
Auditory Training Equip Rental	\$ 119,555	\$ 110,273	\$ 120,000	\$ 120,000

### GENERAL FEES FUND – 2094-2000

Beginning in FY 2013 we received reimbursements from local school districts per K.S.A. 76-1006 for paraprofessionals working with students with additional disabilities and behavior challenges. We also receive money for out of state tuition, extended school year instruction, and weekend student supervision. These funds are subject to fluctuation based on the number of students who qualify for additional paraprofessional assistance, who attend KSSD from out of state, who attend KSSD from far western areas of the state, or who qualify to attend the ESY program.

The agency plans to use money from this fund for salaries and staff training in working with students with additional disabilities, as well as adaptive communication devices and instructional resource materials.

The National Helen Keller Center is a federal program for adults who are D/HH and is now housed on the KSSD campus. KSSD rents space to this program which came to the campus in the fall of 2014 and rent monies are deposited to this fund. We also rent the former superintendent residence to a maintenance employee who handles on-call maintenance in the evenings and on weekends. This rent money is also deposited into the General Fee Fund.

Miscellaneous fees are charged to the public for rental of various campus facilities, and in FY 2022 it included one-time refunds of \$11,143 from vendors for overpayment of natural gas and building

improvement cost. It also includes payments of parents to damages caused by students such as technology equipment, property, loss of id badge etc.

<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Actuals</u>	<u>Actuals</u>	<u>Estimated</u>	<u>Estimated</u>
Revenue Source	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
School District Paras	\$ 115,645	\$ 112,618	\$ 115,645	\$ 115,645
Out-of-State Tuition	\$ 192,500	\$ 290,000	\$ 290,000	\$ 290,000
Extended School Year	\$ 56,625	\$ 63,712	\$ 70,000	\$ 70,000
Rental Fee-HK Center, House	\$ 21,435	\$ 22,625	\$ 9,600	\$ 9,600
Miscellaneous Fees	\$ 37,834	\$ 250	\$ 14,355	\$ 14,355
Weekend Student Supervision	\$ 16,800	\$ 4,200	\$ 8,400	\$ 8,400
KDHE LAP	\$ 9,855	\$ 92,000	\$ 92,000	\$ 92,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$450,694</b>	<b>\$ 585,405</b>	<b>\$ 600,000</b>	<b>\$ 600,000</b>

### STUDENT ACTIVITY FEE – 2147

This fund receives money from enrollment fees (\$30) and yearbook sales (\$37 each). The agency anticipates receipts of \$3,294 for FY 2025. The agency plans to use money from this fund for the purchase of instructional resource materials and student yearbooks.

<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Actuals</u>	<u>Actuals</u>	<u>Estimated</u>	<u>Estimated</u>
Revenue Source	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
Enrollment Fee	\$ 3,101	\$ 3,829	\$ 3,900	\$ 3,900
Yearbook & Woodshop Fee	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 3,101</b>	<b>\$ 3,829</b>	<b>\$ 3,900</b>	<b>\$ 3,900</b>

### **LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT FEE FUND (3-8) – 2891**

Receipts from school districts to conduct language assessments for deaf students age 3-8 per K.S.A. 75-5397c.

<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Actuals</u>	<u>Actuals</u>	<u>Estimated</u>	<u>Estimated</u>
Revenue Source	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
LAP Assessments	\$ 142,000	\$ 320,000	\$ 256,000	\$ 244,000

### **FEDERAL FUNDING - GRANTS – 3234**

Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), Title VI-B Pass Thru money flows through from the State Department of Education and is used for salaries. Title VI-B TASN funds (3234 – 3236) pays tuition for educators statewide to become licensed teachers of the deaf (TODs).

<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Actuals</u>	<u>Actuals</u>	<u>Estimated</u>	<u>Estimated</u>
Revenue Source	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
Title VI-B Pass Thru 3234-3234	\$ 110,405	\$ 108,593	\$ 108,593	\$ 108,593
TASN 3234-3236	\$ 85,500	\$ 85,500	\$ 89,775	\$ 89,775
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$195,905</b>	<b>\$194,093</b>	<b>\$ 198,368</b>	<b>\$ 198,368</b>

### **TITLE VI-B TARGETED IMPROVEMENT PLAN – 3234-3235**

This is Title VI-B IDEA funding that pays for family training in American Sign Language and instructor training.

<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Actuals</u>	<u>Actuals</u>	<u>Estimated</u>	<u>Estimated</u>
Revenue Source	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
Federal Grant	\$ 11,235	\$ 11,235	\$ 11,235	\$ 11,235

### **SOUND BEGINNINGS GRANT - 3459**

This is a grant through the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. It is used to provide early intervention for Birth-three year old Infant/Toddler families.

<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Actuals</u>	<u>Actuals</u>	<u>Estimated</u>	<u>Estimated</u>
Revenue Source	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
Federal Grant	\$ 58,750	\$ 48,612	\$ 48,612	\$ 48,612

### **FEDERAL BREAKFAST PROGRAM – 3529**

Federal funding for the school breakfast program flows through Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE). In FY 2021 all federal food monies were received as Summer Food Service Program due to flexibility offered during the coronavirus pandemic.

<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Actuals</u>	<u>Actuals</u>	<u>Estimated</u>	<u>Estimated</u>
Revenue Source	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
Federal Grant	\$ 15,197	\$ 17,143	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000

### **FEDERAL LUNCH PROGRAM – 3530**

Federal funding for the school lunch program flows through Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE). In FY 2021 all federal food monies were received as Summer Food Service Program due to flexibility offered during the coronavirus pandemic.

<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Actuals</u>	<u>Actuals</u>	<u>Estimated</u>	<u>Estimated</u>
Revenue Source	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
Federal Grant	\$ 51,177	\$ 62,821	\$ 53,000	\$ 53,000

### **PRE-SCHOOL EARLY CHILDHOOD GRANT – 3535**

Federal funding flow-through from Kansas Department of Education.

<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Actuals</u>	<u>Actuals</u>	<u>Estimated</u>	<u>Estimated</u>
Revenue Source	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
Federal Grant	\$ 6,245	\$ 6,243	\$ 6,243	\$ 6,243

### **COVID-19 FEDERAL RELIEF FUND – 3649**

Monies received from KDHE and used for supplies, nursing, and other staff salaries for Covid response.

<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Actuals</u>	<u>Actuals</u>	<u>Estimated</u>	<u>Estimated</u>
Revenue Source	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
Federal Funds	\$ 249,479	\$ 62,788	\$ 0	\$ 0

### **SPECIAL REQUEST FUND – 7321**

This fund includes donations, gifts from individuals or corporations and Medicaid reimbursements. These monies vary and are difficult to predict.

<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Actuals</u>	<u>Actuals</u>	<u>Estimated</u>	<u>Estimated</u>
Revenue Source	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
Medicaid	\$ 166,453	\$ 175,399	\$ 175,000	\$ 175,000

## **AGENCY DEPARTMENTS**

### **ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES**

At the Kansas State School for the Deaf (KSSD), teamwork is a reality, not a concept; that is why the Administration has an active role in all aspects of the management and operation of KSSD. At KSSD all aspects of administration are driven by our three goals that define the Administrative Services, Instructional Services, and Support Services departments. These goals support the education of children/youth who are DHH, regardless of where the student is located or schooled in the state of Kansas.

## ADMINISTRATIVE GOAL AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

**Goal #1:** To advance the agency's mission, vision, and core values by assuring quality services are provided to KSD employees.

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	OUTCOME MEASURES	OUTPUT MEASURES
To promote a safe, linguistically accessible, and healthy work environment for employees to experience job satisfaction through their achievements and contributions to the agency's mission and vision each year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Collect satisfaction survey through the Human Resources department</li><li>● Require all new employees to complete mandatory training</li><li>● Provide individual or small group ASL class in a safe and welcoming environment for employees required to learn ASL due to contract obligations</li></ul>		<p>Increase to, and maintain, a 90% job satisfaction rate by employees via end-of-year survey for the next 5 years</p> <p><b>2024: Determine baseline</b></p> <p>2025: 90% (goal) 2026: 90% (goal) 2027: 90% (goal) 2028: 90% (goal)</p>
Increase the recruitment of qualified staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Enhance recruitment efforts by expanding job postings to specialized platforms and leveraging social media and professional networks</li><li>● Strength partnerships with local and out-of-state educational institutions</li></ul>	Increase the recruitment of qualified staff by 15% within the next 12 months.	Post appropriate job postings on specialized platforms

## EXPENDITURE JUSTIFICATION - ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

### Object Code 100 - Salaries & Wages

#### Summary

This section is the Superintendent's position. There were two (2) positions included in FY25. The Purchasing Officer position has since been transferred to Support Services.

Previous Year FY 2025 – Actuals	\$ 314,792
Current Year FY 2026	\$ 192,643
Budget Year FY 2027	\$ 192,450

### Object Code 200-290 - Contractual Services

Contractual Services for Administration are as follows:

Previous Year FY 2025 – Actuals	\$ 59,637
Current Year FY 2026	\$ 60,583
Budget Year FY 2027	\$ 72,060

### Object Code 300-390 - Commodities

This mainly consists of the paper, clerical, and professional materials used by the Superintendent's office. Includes \$2,000 for Official Hospitality moved from allocated SGF beginning in FY 2021.

Previous Year FY 2025 – Actuals	\$ 2,051
Current Year FY 2026	\$ 2,700
Budget Year FY 2027	\$ 3,100

### Object Codes 400-490 Capital Outlay and 900 – Other Assistance

Previous Year FY 2025 – Actuals	\$ 0
Current Year FY 2026	\$ 500
Budget Year FY 2027	\$ 500

## **INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES**

The Kansas State School for the Deaf (KSSD) operates as a specialized 100% Special Education program, tailored specifically to meet the unique needs of students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH). The program is crafted to provide both general academic and DHH-specific educational services through an accredited curriculum. This curriculum features direct and individualized instruction, aligned with the Kansas College and Career Readiness Standards, Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM), and Essential Elements.

All services at KSSD are guided by individualized Education Plans (IEPs) tailored to each student, ensuring that their unique educational needs are met with precision and care.

### **Campus-based Program and Statewide Outreach Services**

The Kansas School for the Deaf (KSSD) is fully accredited by both the State of Kansas Department of Education and the Conference of Educational Administrators of Schools and Programs for the Deaf (CEASD). The school's academic curricula are meticulously aligned with the Kansas Department of Education's College and Career Readiness Standards and Essential Standards. Students participate in state and local assessments appropriate to their grade levels.

At KSSD, bilingual education is fundamental, recognizing the necessity for students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) to be proficient in both American Sign Language (ASL) and English. This dual-language approach is crucial for effective academic instruction and incidental learning, ensuring that students achieve developmental milestones. KSSD's mission is to foster native fluency in one or more languages for each student, providing barrier-free access to language. This approach enables DHH students to attain academic outcomes equivalent to their hearing peers in Kansas public schools.

### **Early Childhood Center**

The Early Childhood Center (ECC) offers specialized early childhood education for students aged 3-5 years. This program creates an accessible and inclusive environment tailored to the unique needs of Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) students. Our ASL/English bilingual education framework promotes bilingual literacy development and cultivates critical thinking skills.

Our curriculum emphasizes play-based learning, allowing children to explore and learn at their own pace. This approach supports the development of social, emotional, and cognitive skills as they interact with peers and engage with their surroundings. Additionally, our family-centered approach leverages each family's strengths, providing them with the necessary support and resources to enhance their child's growth and educational experience.

## **K-6 Education**

The elementary school at KSSD offers a comprehensive K-6 instructional program specifically designed to address the diverse educational needs of Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing students. Our curriculum, aligned with the Kansas College and Career Readiness Standards, spans a wide range of subjects, including Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, American Sign Language, Deaf Studies, Library/Media, Art, Physical Education, and Keyboard/Technology.

We are committed to tailoring the curriculum to fit the student rather than requiring students to conform to a one-size-fits-all curriculum. Our Language Arts and Math groupings are organized according to language proficiency and ability levels, allowing educators to deliver instruction that matches each student's language and academic capabilities while also challenging them to advance their skills.

Students engage in various programs aimed at achieving individual, classroom, and school-wide goals, enhancing their reading, writing, signed and/or spoken language (ASL and/or spoken English), socioemotional development, and physical skills. Additionally, field trips are an integral part of the program, providing real-world experiences that complement and enrich classroom learning and discussions.

## **7-8 Education**

The middle school is a part of the secondary program. The middle school offers a comprehensive instructional program for grade 7-8 students, which has been designed to meet the individual needs of DHH students. The middle school curriculum, following the Kansas College and Career Readiness Standards, is used to teach a variety of areas, including English Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, American Sign Language, Deaf Studies, Career Exploration, Career and Life Planning, and Physical Education. The middle school curriculum also allows for students to take a variety of electives that allow for the development of soft skills and provides students an opportunity to explore interests. Elective courses include art, automation and robots, computer applications, computer science, ELA support, employability skills, essential skills, health, home improvement, introduction to digital technology, leadership, multimedia, STEM, and woodworking. ASL Immersion courses are offered to students who are needing to develop ASL skills or who are learning ASL as a second language.

Placement of students in core classes are based on language and ability levels, which allows teachers to provide materials at the student's instructional level of language and academic functioning while challenging students to improve their skills.

KSSD students benefit from taking core and elective courses at KSSD; however, if the students meet specific criteria, they also have the option of taking some elective classes at a public school as dual placement. Students may take courses at a local Olathe school or may opt to take courses at their home school. This provides an opportunity to experience a wide range of specialized classes, and interaction between DHH and hearing students in an integrated setting. Unique Learning curricula are available for our students with additional challenges.

## **9-12 Education**

The high school is a part of the secondary program. The high school offers a comprehensive instructional program for grade 9-12 students, which has been designed to meet the individual needs of DHH students. The high school curriculum, following the Kansas College and Career Readiness Standards, is used to teach a variety of areas, including English, Math, Science, History and Government, American Sign Language, Deaf Studies, Careers, Physical Education, Health, Communications, STEM, Fine Arts, and Financial Literacy. The high school curriculum also provides a variety of CTE courses and elective courses for students including but not limited to animation, auto repair, ceramics, computer applications, computer science, construction trades, culinary essentials, digital photography, entrepreneurship, game design, graphic design, leadership, theatre arts, video production, and web design. ASL Immersion courses are offered to students who are needing to develop ASL skills or who are learning ASL as a second language.

Placement of students in core classes are based on language and ability levels, which allows teachers to provide materials at the student's instructional level of language and academic functioning while challenging students to improve their skills. Placement of students in elective courses are based on student interests. KSSD students benefit from taking core and elective courses at KSSD; however, if the students meet specific criteria, they also have the option of taking some elective classes at a public school as dual placement. Students may take courses at a local Olathe school or may opt to take courses at their home school. Students also have the option to apply for the Olathe Advanced Technical Education program, for Transition Into Postsecondary Education (TIPS) at Johnson County Community College (JCCC), or to take CTE courses at JCCC. This provides an opportunity to experience a wide range of specialized classes, and interaction between DHH and hearing students in an integrated setting. Unique Learning curricula are available for our students with additional challenges.

The high school program encourages students to complete an internship or take a course at JCCC prior to graduation. Students are also required to complete a senior portfolio and a minimum number of community service hours prior to graduation.

## **KSTAR Education**

The KSTAR (Kansas Student Transition and Academic Readiness) program serves young Deaf adults ages 18-21 in the state of Kansas who have completed the requirements necessary for obtaining a high school diploma but need additional time to focus on transitioning to life after high school. Eligibility is dependent on IEP team determination. Students spend, on average, a year in the program to work on goals and skills related to career and employment, college and technical training, and independent living. Goals are outlined in students' transition plans and within their IEPs. Once students gain skills and experience, they connect with resources available in their hometowns and begin to transition back to their home community.

**Career and Employment:** Students learn hard and soft skills that are essential to being successful in the workplace. Students may partake in on and off campus volunteer experiences, internships, and employment opportunities. The program utilizes fading job coach supports to ensure student success and increase student independence.

**Education and Training:** Students may enroll in college courses or training programs that relate to future career interests. Students may opt to take courses at Johnson County Community College, take online courses from other colleges or technical training programs, or work towards obtaining certifications. Students are responsible for paying for any courses they may wish to take.

**Independent Living:** Students may be eligible to live in a partially supervised on-campus apartment that includes a kitchen, a living/dining space, a bathroom, and two bedrooms. Apartment staff work with students on meal planning, cooking, relationships, health, household safety, and more. Students are taught to utilize community transportation, such as RideKC and MicroTransit. KSTAR students who need supervised living support have the option to stay in the dormitory yet participate in evening meal planning, cooking, building relationships, personal health lessons, and household safety.

The KSTAR wing contains five two-bedroom apartments and one single-bedroom apartment; the wing is able to accommodate a total of eleven students. The wing contains a large lobby area that provides space for instruction, meetings, and activities. During school hours, instruction is led by the KSTAR teacher and supported by three job coaches. During afternoon and evening hours, instruction is led by the apartment coordinator. Student schedules vary for each individual and are dependent upon their goals and action plans. Students must be able to follow schedules independently or with limited supervision and support.

## **Student Life Program**

The Student Life program at KSSD provides a range of opportunities for students who live too far from campus to attend as traditional day students. Through this program, students can expand their world knowledge and develop leadership skills, athletic interests, and social abilities by participating in various organizations and athletic teams.

Students reside on campus for several key reasons:

- Support is provided in the student's most accessible language, ensuring effective help with academic tasks.
- For students with significant language delays, living on campus offers an immersive environment where communication and language skills can be developed beyond the school day.
- A consistent daily routine on campus helps students cultivate age-appropriate social behaviors.
- On-campus living provides access to opportunities for peer interaction and involvement in extracurricular activities, enhancing social development and engagement.

## **Extended School Year Program**

KSSD provides a three-week Extended School Year (ESY) Program tailored to support Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing (DHH) students, as outlined in their Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). This program is designed to help students maintain and enhance their academic, social, behavioral, communication, and other skills during the summer months.

In recent years, the ESY Program has expanded to accommodate more students from local districts, offering them valuable educational and social opportunities alongside their peers. Despite this growth, there remains potential for further expansion, particularly for transitional students. This continued growth could enhance the program's ability to meet the diverse needs of an even broader range of students.

## **Related Services**

KSSD delivers a comprehensive range of related services mandated by each student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), including audiology, speech and language therapy, counseling, social work, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and student health services. For students with more specialized needs or multiple disabilities, additional services are provided as specified in their IEPs.

All related services are systematically reviewed and evaluated in accordance with the IEP process and special education regulations, ensuring that they consistently meet the evolving needs of each student.

## **Instructional Technology**

We have begun a multi-step overhaul of the network. Because of the number of devices needed to maintain two, spread out campuses in separate geographical locations and the complexity of the network needed to make it work as needed and be accessible, we are implementing these improvements piece by piece. The beginning stages will help keep some of the primary backend systems functional and should be completed over the next couple of years, while the following steps have been delayed until the funding is available.

We have implemented some new wireless connections that give us more flexibility for users that are connecting while still keeping in line with security recommendations and best practices. We've also replaced a number of failing servers and devices to maintain the network and are building a plan to continue the replacements, hopefully before they reach end of life in the future.

KSSD has increased our technology capacity with funding from a grant and students' using their own personal equipment. Past telecommunications improvements over the last few years, including videophone capabilities, were essential in providing instruction for all deaf staff and students across campus and the state.

KSSD continues to expand the use and capabilities of Pearson's "PowerSchool" student information system. This system aids in the collection and management of data to be used for required reports for the Kansas State Department of Education, federal agencies, the Kansas legislature, and for parents. While this system provides tremendous capacity for the school to operate more efficiently, adequate professional development time is required to ensure staff can use the system effectively.

For students, KSSD is committed to providing them with the technology resources and support to make sure they are able to maximize their learning potential, on or off campus. Flexibility and support for teachers, students, and families across the state while maintaining their online safety and security is key in our success.

## **Statewide Coordination Efforts through Outreach Services**

The Outreach Team at KSSD is dedicated to delivering top-tier services, resources, and support to children aged from birth to 21 who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH). Our approach involves close collaboration with families, communities, and professionals across the state of Kansas.

We offer a broad spectrum of services, including coaching and mentoring, consultations, on-site observations, IEP consultations, professional development training, and workshops for both parents and professionals. Additionally, we provide ASL classes for families and students, available in-person and via distance technology. Our offerings also include a professional and family resource library, community presentations, and a statewide parent support network.

These services are designed to support both families and students within the KSSD campus program and those attending educational programs in local districts throughout Kansas. The demand for these comprehensive services is high among local districts, parents, and professionals working with DHH students.

### **Sound START (Birth to Three Program)**

KSSD founded and maintains the Sound START program to provide evidence-based early intervention services for families with children ages birth to three. KSSD works collaboratively with the Kansas SoundBeginnings Program (KDHE), the Kansas Early Childhood Developmental Services (KECDS), and the KSSD LAP-DHH program to provide the specialized support and resources necessary to improve language outcomes for newly identified infants and toddlers who are DHH and their families. Current staffing capacity of the Sound START program limits the frequency and intensity that is necessary to provide full support for all of our families who request our services. The KECDS Issue Paper indicates a desire to fully fund the Sound START program so that providers and families can receive the frequency and intensity of supports they need to improve language outcomes for children who are DHH.

### **KANSAS LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM (LAP)**

As required by K.S.A. 75-5397e, KSSD began implementation of the Language Assessment Program-Deaf/Hard of Hearing (LAP-DHH) on July 1, 2018. This law requires annual language assessments of all Kansas children who are deaf/hard of hearing (DHH) ages birth through eight as well as the monitoring and tracking of the language developmental milestones of those children.

Because a budget was not attached to the original bill when it was passed, KSSD began administration of the program by absorbing the initial costs of the first three years of implementation while seeking an enhancement to the annual budget to expand the program.

In FY 2022, KDHE and KSDE provided temporary funds to continue implementation of the program. This funding allowed for two LAP-DHH specialists to be hired to focus solely on LAP-DHH assessments. In 2022, the legislature approved permanent funding of 0-3 LAP-DHH through the KSSD SGF, after ARPA funding for one year in FY 2023. KSSD was also authorized to assess and collect a fee from unified school districts, special education cooperatives, and interlocals to further fund the operations of the language assessment program for children ages 3-8. A \$2,000 fee for service was charged to school districts and special education cooperatives beginning in FY 2023. Revenue for FY 2025 was \$244,000. This fee includes the cost of salaries for LAP-DHH specialists (to include direct service hours, indirect service hours, and drive time), interpreters, assessment tools, mileage, per diem, lodging, technology, training, database, and administrative time. KSSD is consistently looking for ways to lower the cost of the assessment process.

#### **BUDGET EXPLANATION – LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM-DEAF/HARD OF HEARING**

##### **Salaries, Training, Interpreters**

LAP-DHH projects a minimum of twelve full-time staff will be necessary to serve a minimum of 772 children. Finding highly qualified LAP-DHH specialists, particularly those who can assess ASL and those who live outside the KC metro area, continues to be a challenge. The number of students assessed in LAP-DHH will increase as we increase the number of staff dedicated to LAP-DHH assessments. LAP-DHH has three (3) staff who live and work throughout the state, outside of the Kansas City Metro. The program is transitioning to regional caseloads as appropriate.

It will be imperative that specialists and team members continue to receive professional development to ensure assessment fidelity is maintained, knowledge of bilingual development is acquired and/or reinforced, and skills for working with children with multiple disabilities are developed.

Interpreters are a critical component to facilitating communication between LAP-DHH specialists and the families they serve. KSSD staff interpreters are used to facilitate communication in ASL/English, and interpreters for other spoken languages are contracted on an as needed basis. When possible, regional ASL/English interpreters will be contracted to reduce travel costs. There is 0.5 FTE of interpreter services available for LAP-DHH.

##### **Database, Assessment Tools, Travel Costs**

The current annual cost to maintain a database will be \$21,600 which allows for 25 users. It is expected that the cost to maintain the database will increase by 3% every year.

The program will continue to purchase additional manuals, forms, and licenses to accommodate additional children and staff, as needed. Several assessment forms follow a child over several

years, and they will not need to be purchased annually, but other assessment forms are consumed each time an assessment is given.

The funding for 0-3 includes travel costs for two assessments per child. The 3-8 fee for service includes travel for one assessment per child per year. Travel costs may include lodging and per diem depending on the distance from KSSD. KSSD continuously attempts to decrease the travel costs by assessing multiple students in regional areas at the same time as well as hiring specialists who live outside of the KC metro area. KSSD currently has one specialist who works from each of the following towns: Wichita, Ulysses, and Parsons. Travel costs will be dependent on the ability to hire highly qualified regional specialists throughout the state.

## **Technology**

Technology such as laptops and cell phones will be essential to support the specialists who will be traveling to assess children statewide. As new specialists are hired, new equipment will need to be purchased for them. Equipment is typically updated every five years. In order to ensure consistent and cohesive management of technology resources in the LAP-DHH program, technology expenses from the program will be transferred into the Information Systems Department in Support Services in future years.

## **Research Opportunities**

In addition to collecting data to fulfill the requirements of K.S.A. 75-5397e, the LAP-DHH collaborates with researchers at Vanderbilt University, Temple University, and Sacramento State. They are investigating various research questions using LAP-DHH data to improve the education of students who are deaf. Their most recent research questions looked at ways to determine the rate of language growth from across multiple time points for users of ASL and spoken English using the ASL/English Language Milestones tool as well as patterns of relationships among several characteristics of social identity and language development.

## **EDUCATIONAL SERVICES**

Educational services statewide are available for families of students who are DHH and their school district staff. These include:

*On-Site Observation/Consultation* - includes student observation and interview(s) with staff who work with the child, prior to a meeting with the local school team (LEA) and parents. During the meeting, Outreach Team members provide recommendations and resources for the LEA and family. A brief report summarizing the observation, interview results, implications, and recommendations is provided to the local education agency (LEA) and parents.

*Professional Development* - a variety of in-service programs to meet the needs of the students, professionals, and family members.

Lending Library - provides a wide variety of media, assessments, and resources to professionals and families.

Teacher of the Deaf (TOD) Program - collaborative interstate partnership with the DHH teacher preparation program at Valdosta State University and Texas Woman's University for teachers of the deaf (TODs) to fulfill their Deaf education licensure endorsement. This is a project in the Technical Assistance Support Network (TASN) led by the Kansas Department of Education.

Mentoring Support - available for TODs in Kansas via E-mentoring program and Outreach.

Coaching - provides models and support for professionals in the mainstream setting to implement appropriate instructional strategies to reduce the achievement gap in both academics and intra-/interpersonal development. A combination of on-site visits in addition to video conferencing are utilized.

American Sign Language (ASL) Classes - ASL classes provided for family members throughout the state of Kansas. Instructors use distance technologies to reach families wherever they live in the State.

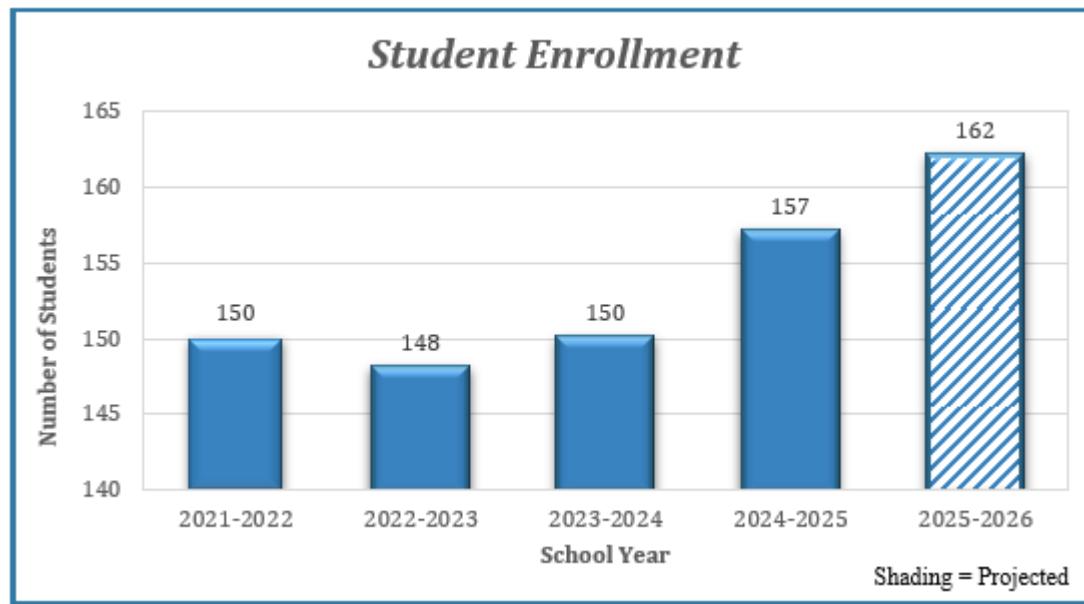
## **HEARING ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY**

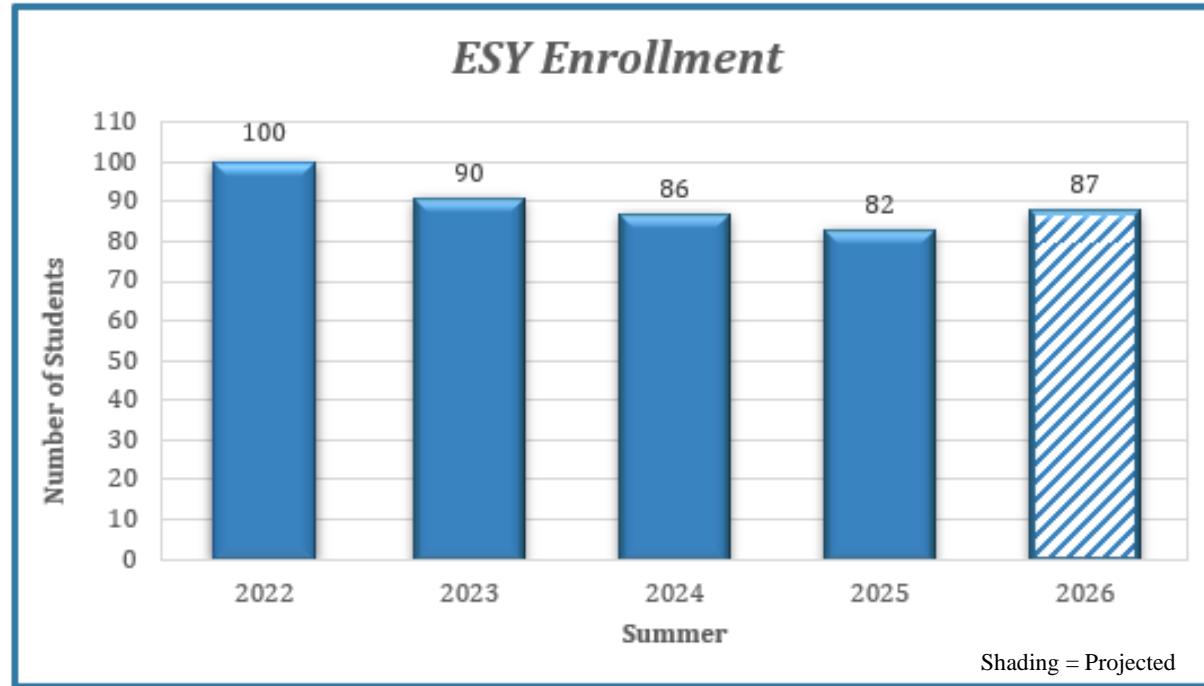
KSSD continues to maintain the statewide Hearing Assistive Technology (HAT) program (formerly known as the ATU program) that supports local school districts with HAT systems for students. These specialized systems increase auditory access by reducing the negative impact of noise and distance by transmitting the teacher's voice directly to the student's hearing aid/cochlear implant via a receiver. The program is staffed by one audiologist, who travels the state providing expert support to teachers and students, manages all equipment, and coordinates repair services, and provides direct audiological services and hearing assistive technology support to the KSSD on campus students. The HAT program is significant in supporting students who are DHH in their local districts.

## INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES GOAL & OBJECTIVES

**Goal #2:** To provide leadership and technical assistance to campus-based and outreach programs to ensure high quality early intervention, Early Childhood and K-12, and Kansas Student Transition and Academic Readiness (KSTAR) programs and success for all students who are D/HH.

Objectives	Strategies	Outcome Measures	Output Measures
To increase student enrollment at the campus-based program	Raise awareness of the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and continuum of placement options in the IDEA and through IEP meetings and professional development	X	Increase number of students enrolled at KSSD by five (5) per year  Increase number of students attending the Extended School Year (ESY) by five (5) per summer

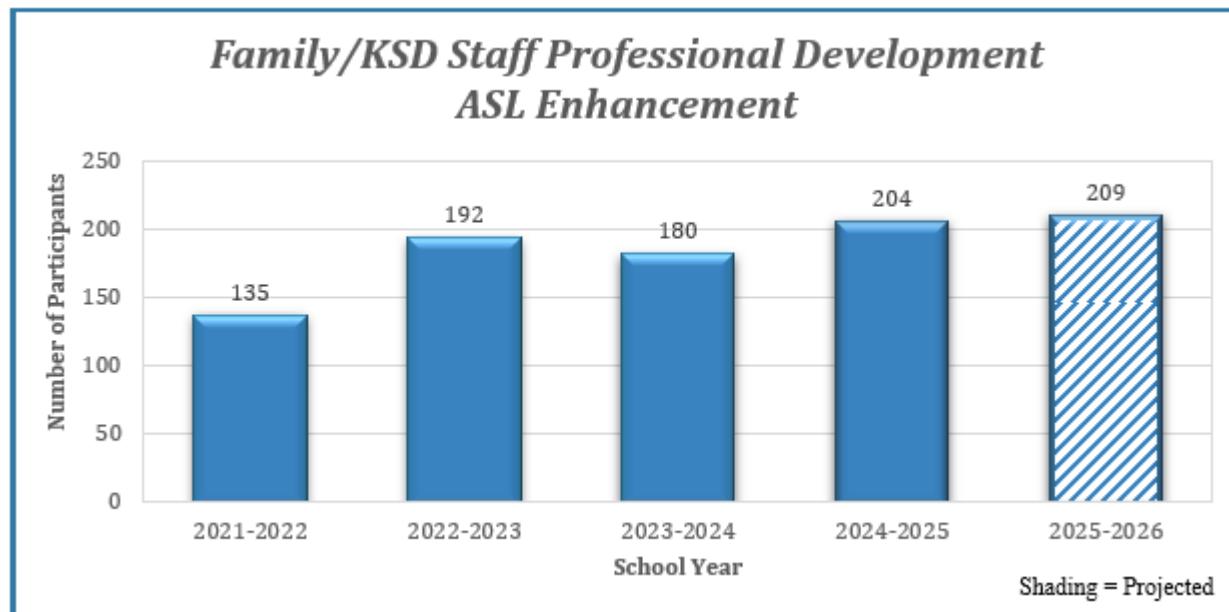




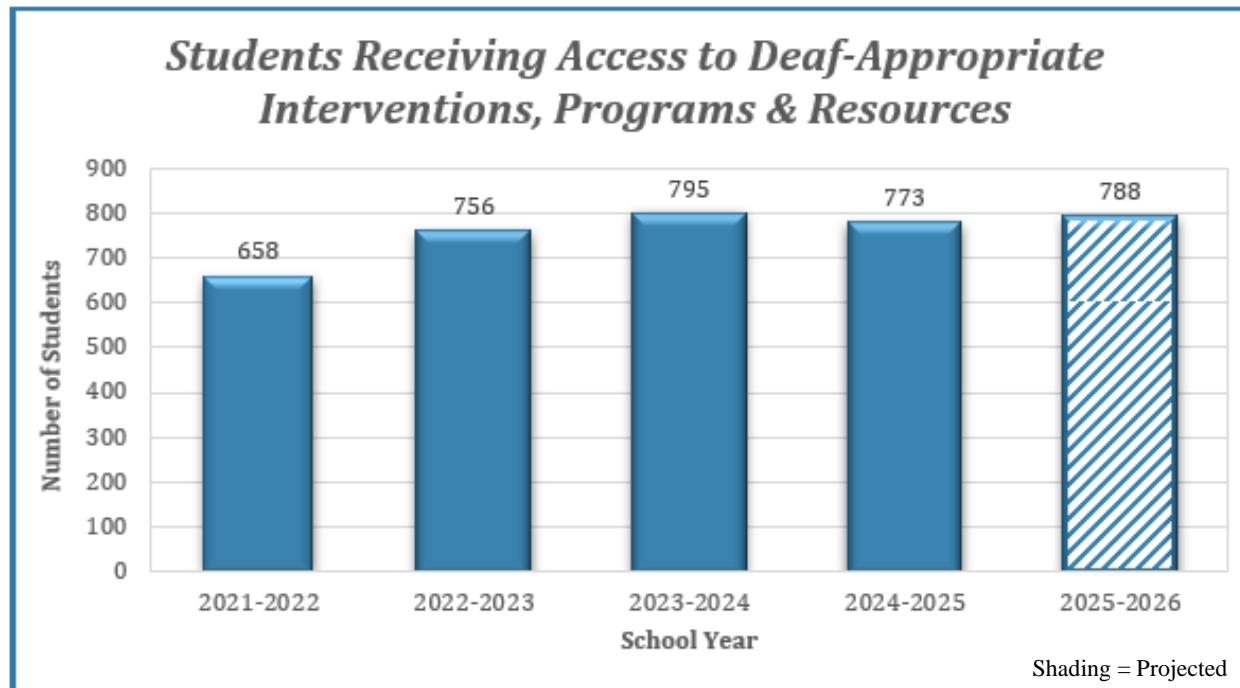
Objectives	Strategies	Outcome Measures	Output Measures
To increase direct* and indirect** support for students, as well as families and professionals that serve them, through a variety of technical assistance by 2% each year	Family Signs Kansas (FSK), on-site classes, ASL immersion	Increase the number of family members/KSD staff enrolled in ASL learning opportunities	Increase the number of family members/KSD staff taking ASL class by five (5) each year

\* Direct service/support includes student observations, consultations, Sound START Part C Services, Family Signs Kansas classes, KSD staff ASL classes, Family ASL Immersion Camp, Hearing Assistive Technology leasing and audiological consultation, Lending Library services.

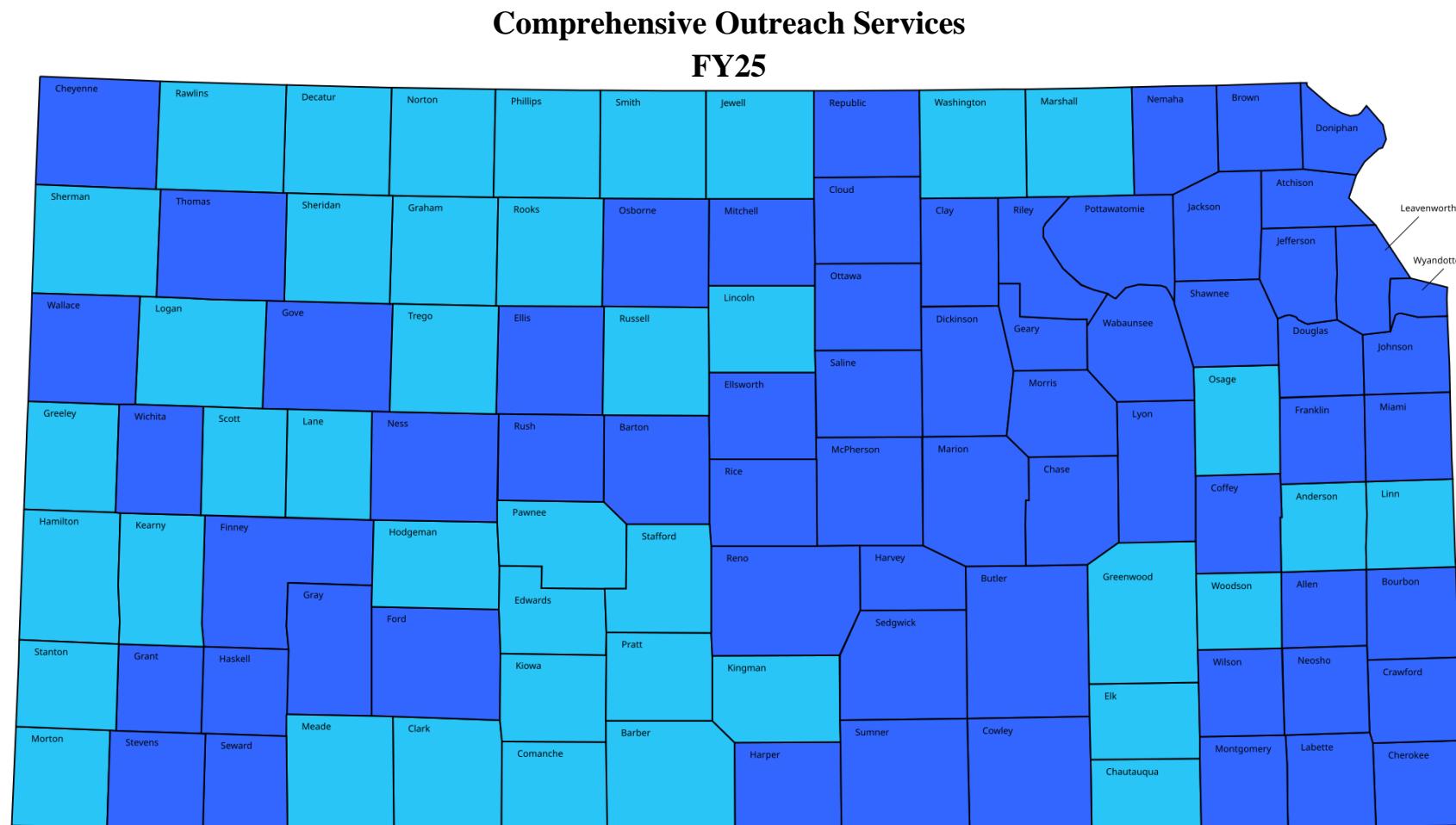
\*\* Indirect service/support includes Parent Support Groups, TOD (Teacher of the Deaf) training Program.

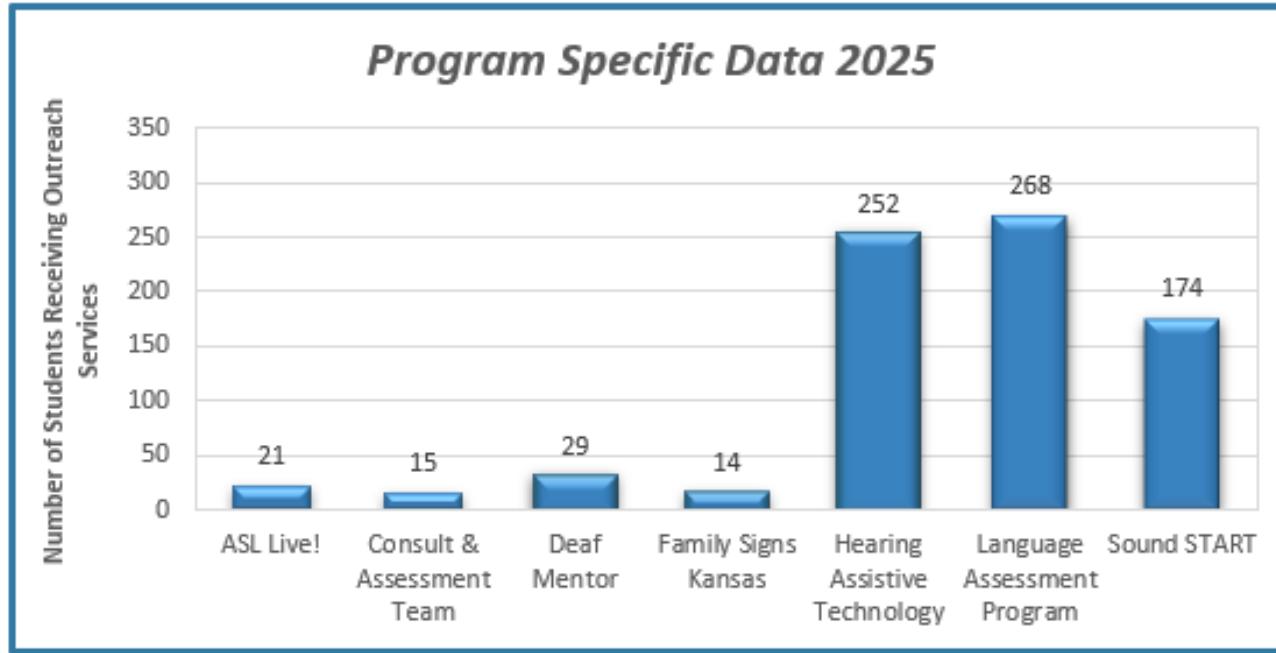


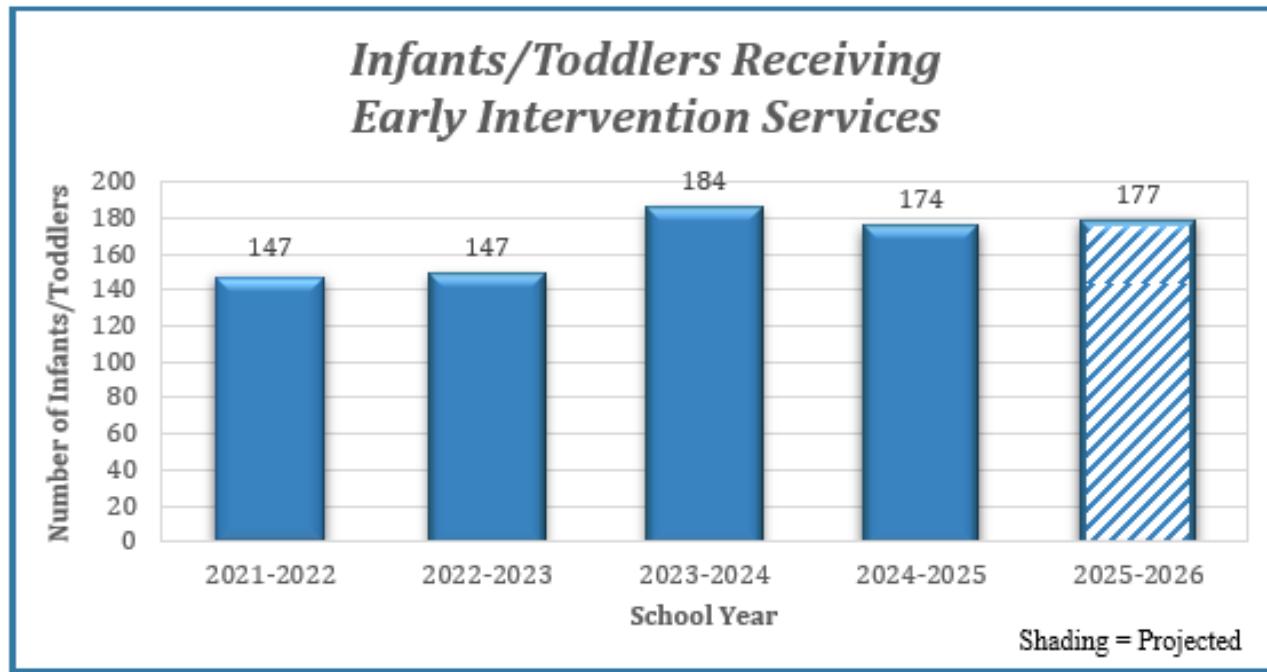
Objectives	Strategies	Outcome Measures	Output Measures
<p><i>Objective continued-</i> To increase direct and indirect support for students, as well as families and professionals that serve them, through a variety of technical assistance by 2% each year</p>	Initial consults, observations, evaluations, HAT, Sound START, professional development, ASL Live!, Language Assessment Program for DHH	Number of students served via direct/indirect support	Increase by 2% the number of students receiving access to deaf-appropriate interventions, programs, and resources



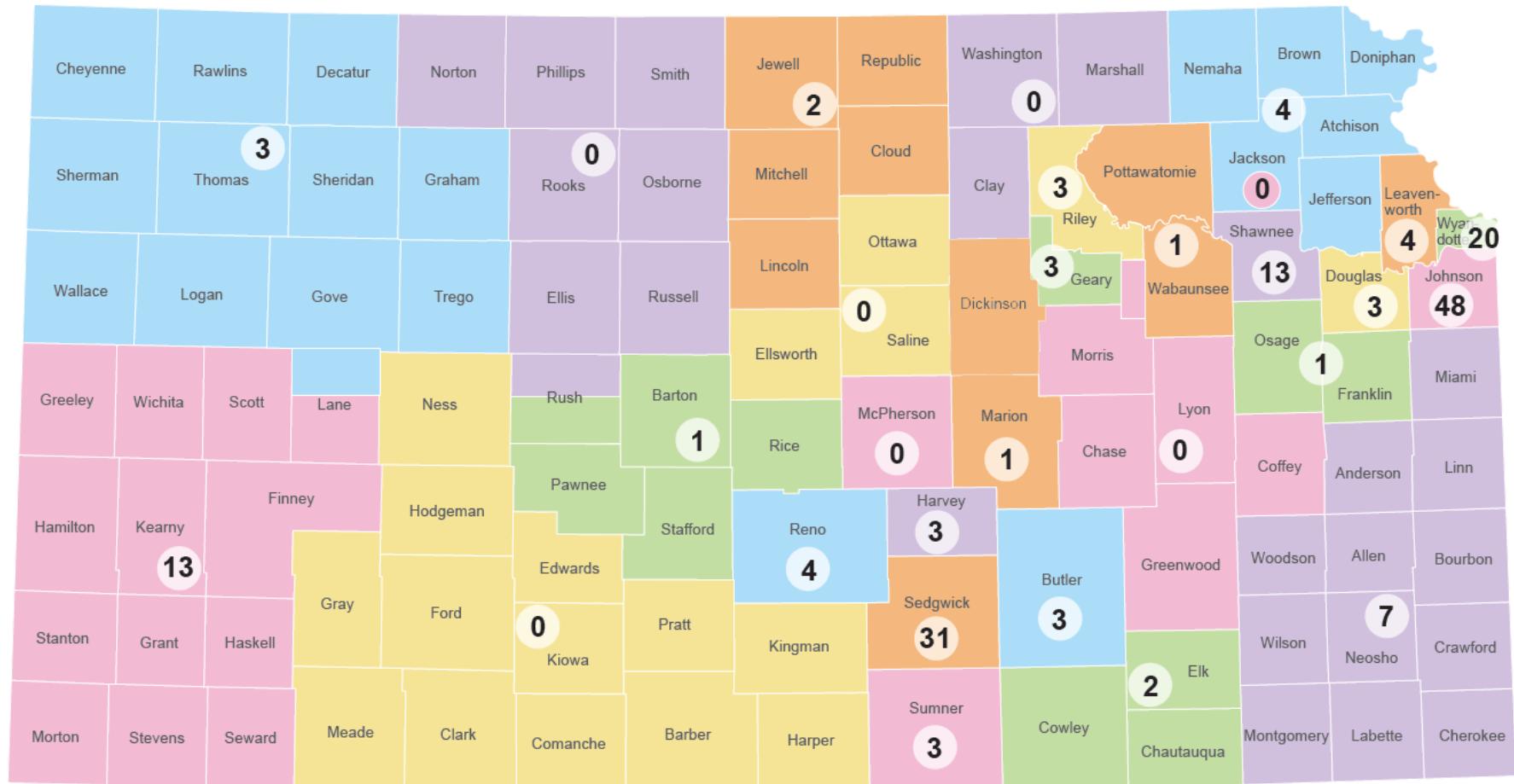
This map reflects where KSSD Outreach programs are currently active. 773 services were provided in 64 counties (61% of total counties) in Kansas.







## ***Counties of Infants/Toddlers Receiving Early Intervention Services***



Objectives	Strategies	Outcome Measures	Output Measures
<p><i>Objective continued-</i></p> <p>To increase direct and indirect support for students, as well as families and professionals that serve them, through a variety of technical assistance by 2% each year</p>	<p>Disseminate information and promote awareness through listservs and other means of communication</p> <p>Collect surveys to determine satisfaction rate with Outreach services</p> <p>Lower the cost of off-site professional development by using more distance learning/virtual opportunities</p> <p>Promote agency's services through a variety of promotional avenues</p> <p>Provide leadership in promoting and relationship building</p> <p>Develop appropriate professional development training</p>	<p>Number of listserv members</p>	<p>Increase listserv membership by 2% to build awareness of programs, activities, and resources to support DHH students, their families, and professionals who serve them</p>

Objectives	Strategies	Outcome Measures	Output Measures
To increase the number of children who are assessed through the Language Assessment Program-DHH (LAP-DHH) to track their language development in American Sign Language (ASL) and English (per KSA 75-5397e)	<p>Train new and continue to train current LAP-DHH specialists to ensure fidelity in the use and interpretation of required assessments.</p> <p>Communicate effectively with families, early childhood developmental services, school districts, and special education cooperatives to schedule and share results of the assessment</p>	Number of students who receive a LAP-DHH assessment.	Increase the number of students receiving LAP evaluations by 4.

LAP-DHH	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Projected	FY 2027 Projected
Number of Children Assessed	206	286	290	294

Number of FTEs for LAP-DHH (ages 0-8)

FY 23	3.5 FTE
FY 24	6.0 FTE
FY 25	6.25 FTE

FY 26 Projected	7.25 FTE
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LAP-DHH Assessments

	LAP-DHH 0-3	LAP-DHH 3-8
Number of Children Assessed: FY 2021	62	40
Number of Children Assessed: FY 2022	55	77
Number of Children Assessed: FY 2023	56	77
Number of Children Assessed: FY 2024	75	131
Number of Children Assessed: FY 2025	78	153
Number of Children Assessed: FY 2026 (projected)	50	200

Figure 3

*LAP-DHH: Number of Children Assessed in Each County*

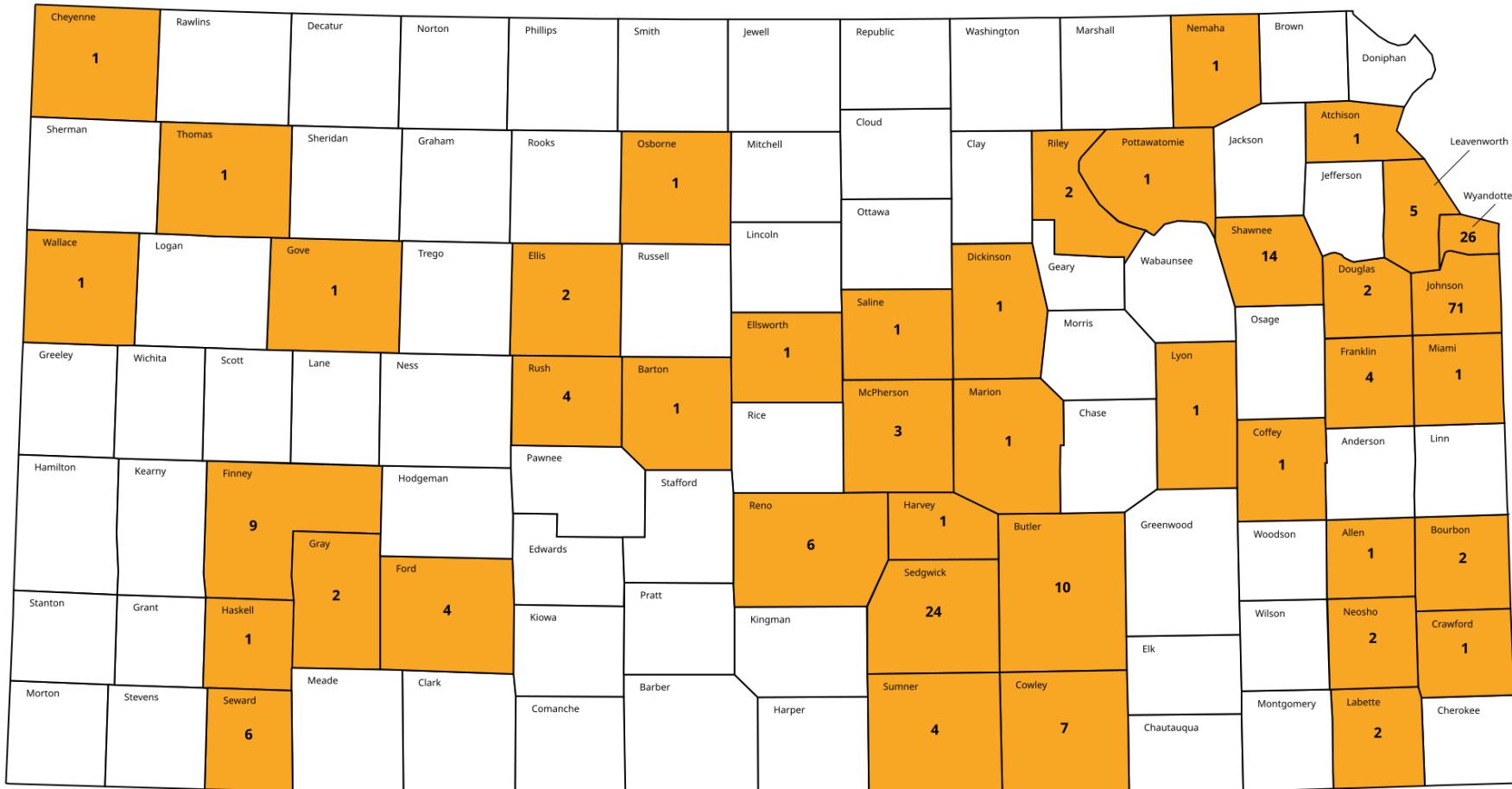
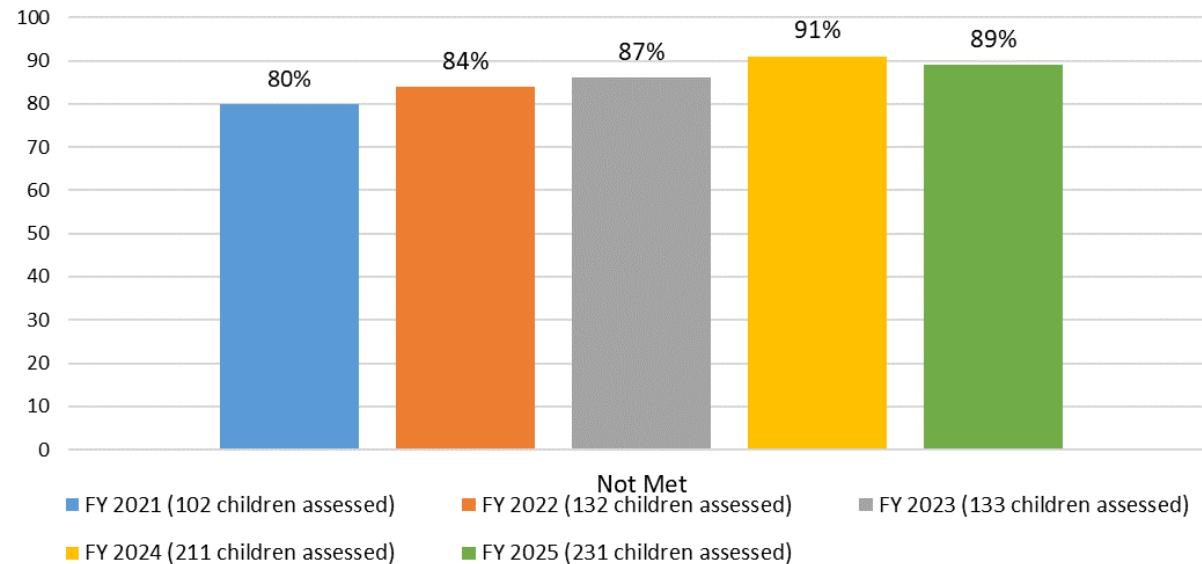


Figure 4  
*Percent of DHH children who did not meet milestones in one or more language  
(FY 2021, FY 2022, FY 2023, FY 2024, FY 2025)*



Using the results of the various assessments, LAP-DHH specialists complete a *Language Milestones: American Sign Language and English* document for each child. The document indicates whether or not the child had met their age-appropriate language milestones. The results reported above are based on that document.

Limited access to language (signed and/or spoken) remains a primary factor causing the language delay of deaf/hard of hearing children (DHH), and the potential impacts of a language delay have significant, long reaching effects. In fact, limited access to language and communication has been identified as a critical root cause for the gaps in postsecondary outcomes of people who are DHH. Language and communication are the basis for development in all aspects of life. Language delay can have a negative effect

on an individual's social-emotional well-being, disposition, cognitive ability, daily living skills, and the ability to be a contributing, tax-paying citizen. Without language, our DHH children will not have the same opportunities to reach social, academic, and employment success as their hearing peers.

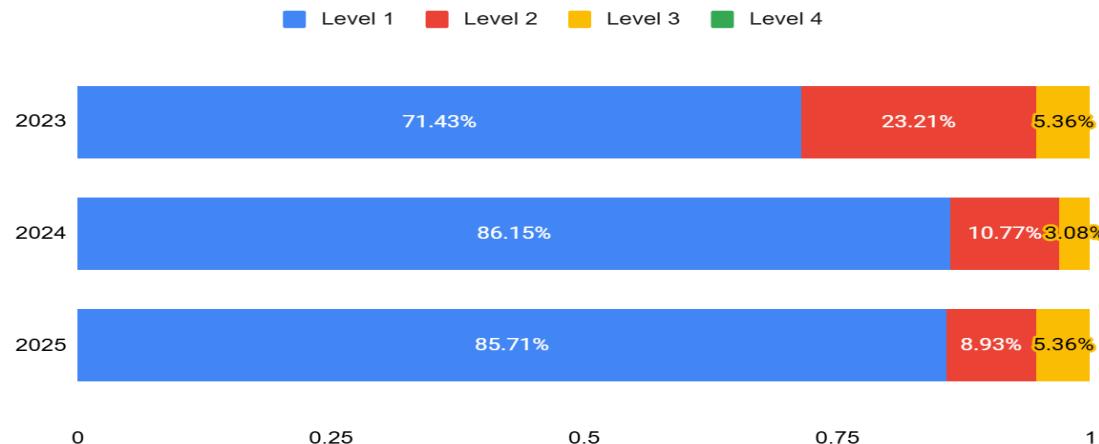
<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Outcome Measures</b>	<b>Output Measures</b>
To improve performance on state and district assessments over a three-year period	Develop appropriate professional development for teachers and dorm teachers Increase effort to support parents on the importance of test-taking skills Direct teach students test-taking strategies Develop practice tests Analyze data Provide appropriate, individualized interventions and frequent monitoring for students	Percentage of students scoring above level 1 on the state assessments:  Reading (4 <sup>th</sup> ) grade Reading (8 <sup>th</sup> ) grade Reading (high school)  Math (4 <sup>th</sup> ) grade Math (8 <sup>th</sup> ) grade Math (high school)  Percent of students increasing their math and reading scores on the NWEA Measures of Academic Proficiency (MAP) Assessment	Percentage of students scoring above level 1 on the state assessments:  Reading (4 <sup>th</sup> ) grade 0% Reading (8 <sup>th</sup> ) grade 0% Reading (high school) 0%  Math (4 <sup>th</sup> ) grade 66% Math (8 <sup>th</sup> ) grade 0% Math (high school) 17%  Percent of students increasing their NWEA MAP Assessment scores:  Math: 87% Reading: 73%

## KANSAS STATE ASSESSMENTS

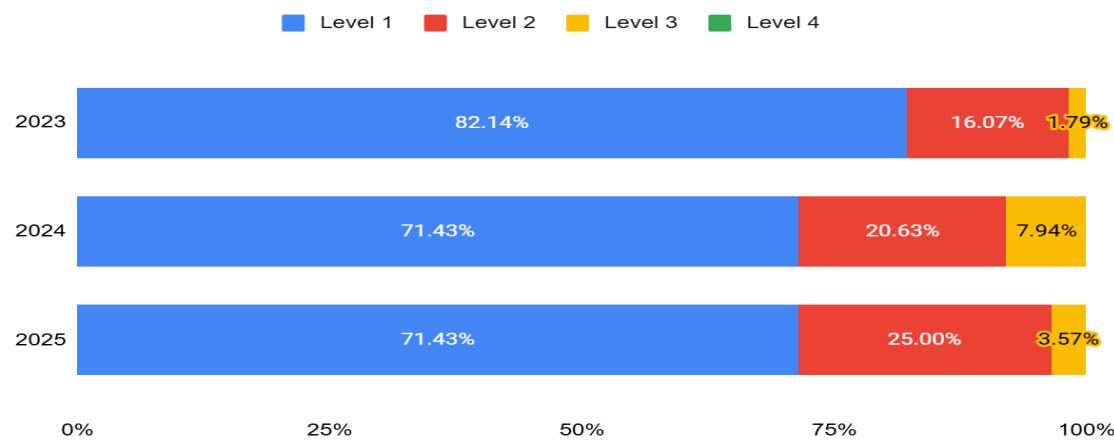
### KSSD Student Achievement FY 2023 – FY 2025

The information provided in the tables is an aggregate of all grade levels.

#### English Language Arts



#### Math



Kansas assessment results are now reported in four levels. It is the goal of the Kansas State Board of Education for all students to be at a minimum of Level 3 by the time they are ready to graduate from High School. The State Board considers Level 2 and 3 as adequate progress toward graduation. The actual definitions are listed below.

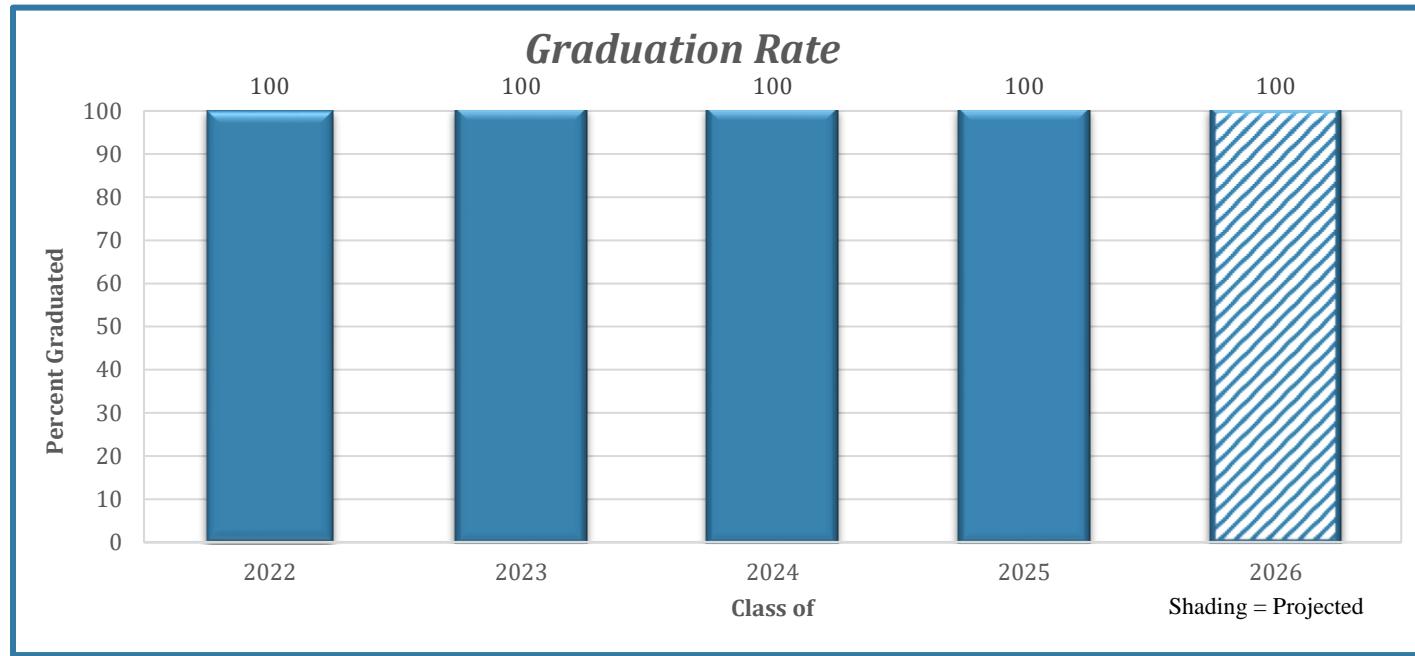
Level 1 – A student at Level 1 shows a limited ability to understand and use the reading, writing, and listening skills and knowledge needed for college and career readiness.

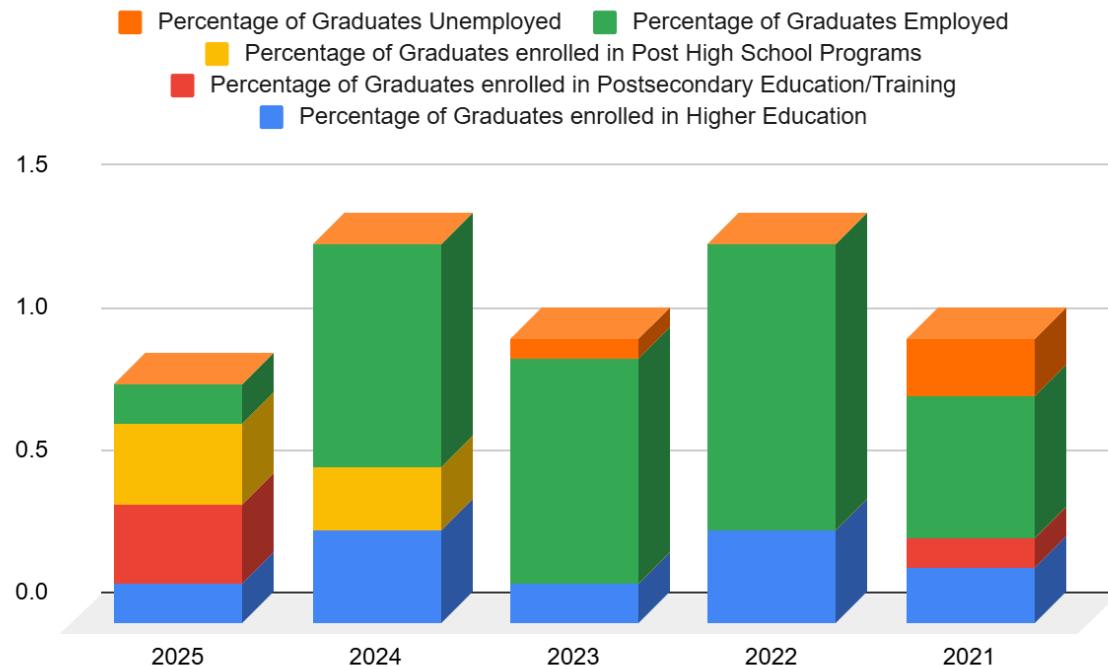
Level 2 – A student at Level 2 shows a basic ability to understand and use the reading, writing, and listening skills and knowledge needed for college and career readiness.

Level 3 – A student at Level 3 shows an effective ability to understand and use the reading, writing, and listening skills and knowledge needed for college and career readiness.

Level 4 – A student at Level 4 shows an excellent ability to understand and use the reading, writing, and listening skills and knowledge needed for college and career readiness.

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Outcome Measures</b>	<b>Output Measures</b>
To ensure that 100% of students make a successful transition from high school to college, career and technical training, or the workforce	<p>Ensure all students from 6th grade and up have Individual Plans of Study based on their interests and college plans</p> <p>Have each student present their transition plan at every IEP</p> <p>Provide individualized support for students with additional support needs</p> <p>Engage parents in their children's transition planning</p> <p>Strengthen connection between KSSD and business partners</p>	<p>Number of students participating in dual placement program (8) 2024-2025</p> <p>Number of students participating in dual placement program (14) 2025-2026</p> <p>Number of students in the KSTAR program (4) 2024-2025</p> <p>Number of students in the KSTAR program (4) 2025-2026</p>	Maintain 100% graduation rate and postsecondary education plans for all graduates





Class of	Percentage of Graduates enrolled in Higher Education	Percentage of Graduates enrolled in Postsecondary Education/Training	Percentage of Graduates enrolled in Post High School Programs	Percentage of Graduates Employed	Percentage of Graduates Unemployed
2025	14%	28%	28%	14%	0
2024	33%	0	22%	78%	0
2023	14%	0	0	79%	7%
2022	33%	0	0	100%	0
2021	20%	10%	0	50%	20%

## **EXPENDITURE JUSTIFICATION - INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES**

### *Object Code 100 - Salaries & Wages\**

Summary: The Instructional Program provides direct and indirect student instructional services. These are services provided directly to students enrolled at KSSD and indirect instructional services for students across the state.

Previous Year FY 2025 – Actuals	\$ 7,752,930
Current Budget Year FY 2026	\$ 9,884,438
Budget Year FY 2027	\$ 10,470,194

### *Object Code 200-290 - Contractual Services*

Summary: Contractual Services for Instructional Services includes field service travel related expenses for the Language Assessment Program (LAP).

Previous Year FY 2025 – Actuals	\$ 561,958
Current Budget Year FY 2026	\$ 728,140
Budget Year FY 2027	\$ 778,919

### *Object Code 300-390 - Commodities*

Commodities expenditures for Instructional Services:

Previous Year FY 2025 – Actuals	\$ 136,570
Current Budget Year FY 2026	\$ 110,400
Budget Year FY 2027	\$ 131,760

Object Code 400-490 – Capital Outlay

Actual Capital Outlay expenditures include replacement Hearing Assistive Technology equipment for the local school district lease program to serve mainstreamed students across Kansas. Our Audiology department must have replacement units and parts available when equipment malfunctions. Without the equipment students do not have amplification needed to access teacher instruction.

Previous Year FY 2025 – Actuals	\$ 561,827
Current Budget Year FY 2026	\$ 65,000
Budget Year FY 2027	\$ 116,000

## **SUPPORT SERVICES**

The focus of Support Services is to make sure students at both schools have safe and secure facilities to enable the delivery of high-quality educational services. Support Services includes the Finance/Business office, Human Resources Department, capital budgets, and the service areas of maintenance, groundskeeping, housekeeping, food service, Information Technology Systems, security, and central receiving/distribution on both the KSSB and KSSD campuses. The Human Resources Department focuses on payroll, benefits, and all other employment matters, including the recruitment and retention of qualified personnel for the highly specialized work forces of both agencies. The finance director ensures sound fiscal management practices as well as collaborating to align the business offices of both agencies within the SMART system in order to attain possible efficiencies.

### **Facilities Operations**

- Develop and manage five-year Capital Budget
- Manage all facets of Capital Improvement projects, including contract compliance and resolution
- Troubleshoot problems with physical plant systems and components and determine appropriate corrective action
- Operation, maintenance, safety checks and repair of boilers
- Regular inspections and repair of roofs
- Install and repair electrical equipment, refrigeration, and plumbing
- Maintenance of vehicles
- Preventative maintenance on all equipment
- Performs specialty trades: carpentry, electrical, HVAC, and plumbing
- Maintain campus buildings and grounds, and infrastructure systems
- Ensuring safety and security of students, staff, visitors, and school property
- Training of students and staff in safety and security related matters
- Monitor and provide daily shift reports and conduct and document regular safety drills
- Preparation of menus using federal school lunch regulations and including special dietary needs of students
- Preparation and serving of breakfast, lunch, and dinner meals that meet the State Wellness Policy and Child Nutrition guidelines
- Provide nutritional information to students on menu planning and their dietary needs for healthier diets

### **Finance and Business Office**

- Prepare and manage each department's budget and manage day to day business functions
- Procurement and inventory of supplies, equipment, and capital outlay consistent with GAAP accounting and reporting and state regulations
- Accounts Payable/Accounts Receivable, Budgets, and business transactions, coding and tracking via SMART System

### **Human Resources**

- Manages payroll, benefits, recruitment, labor relations, legal, and regulatory compliance
- Services workforce development and employment needs of both campuses

### **Information Technology Systems**

- Support and maintain network infrastructure spanning all twelve buildings on the KSSD campus in Olathe
- Support and maintain over 1,000 technology devices used by students, staff, and building automation systems
- Support and maintain technology devices deployed to staff working remotely throughout the state of Kansas
- Support and maintain numerous cloud services used in classroom instruction, business administrative activities, and facility operations
- Identify appropriate technology solutions in collaboration with department leaders, and guide technology projects through selection, procurement, deployment, support, and disposal processes
- Provide training on technology usage and information security to staff across all departments
- Monitor all systems for reliability and security, and respond to incidents in a timely manner

## SUPPORT SERVICES GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

### *Goal #3*

Facilities Operation Services ensures facilities, equipment and services efficiently and effectively provide a comprehensive research-based 21<sup>st</sup> century educational experience for students in a clean, safe, and secure environment. This single goal reflects the collective mission and driving focus of all activities performed by all the professional disciplines that constitute support services.

#### **Maintenance & Repair Services**

Ensure campus buildings, equipment, and services are functional and in safe condition for the staff, students and the general public.

Objectives	Strategies	Outcome Measures	Output Measures
1. Maintain a fully functional campus to ensure critical infrastructure is operational and available for the specialized education needs of our students and the professionals that provide these services.	1. Work with engineers, architects, trade professionals, and government officials on pursuing best practices.	1. Percentage of facilities that are in good safe condition and meet building code?  <b>98% - The 2% that is not used is the upper portion of the Vocational Building and is used only for storage due to the condition of the area (asbestos floor tiles, and old plumbing).</b>	1a. Number of work order tickets resolved by maintenance support staff or outsourced contractors: <b>824</b>  1b. Percentage of work order tickets left unresolved for more than ten (10) business days: <b>10%, usually due to supply chain delays</b>  1c. Number of core facility systems maintained (Boilers, HVAC, Electrical, Pumps, etc.): <b>35</b>

			<p>1d. Number of maintenance support staff for entire facility: <b>3.5</b></p> <p>1e. Number of hours of professional development training received regarding operations and safety: <b>12 per employee</b></p>
2. Maintain a safe fleet of vehicles in order to safely transport students and instructional staff to cultural activities, medical appointments, off-campus academic classes, and extracurricular activities.	2. Work with all agency departments to maintain a calendar of events from which to estimate vehicular needs, track fuel consumption, and schedule preventative maintenance.	2. Percentage of time fleet vehicles are available and operational: <b>95% – The 5% that the fleet is not available is for repairs and maintenance.</b>	<p>2a. Number of fleet vehicles maintained and are in good safe condition: <b>11</b></p> <p>2b. Total number of miles logged for the entire fleet: <b>1,007,736</b></p> <p>2c. Number of days vehicles out of service for repairs: <b>10 days</b></p> <p>2d. Number of vehicles that qualify for replacement due to condition and/or repair costs: <b>(see chart below)</b></p>

**Fleet Mileage**

	<b><i>FY 2025</i></b>	<b><i>FY 2026</i></b>	<b><i>FY 2027</i></b>	<b><i>FY 2028</i></b>
Average mileage per vehicle in fleet	85,017	91,612	98,000	93,000
Average mileage per vehicle over 100,000	125,166	126,558	137,000	142,000
Vehicles with 100,000 to 130,000 miles	5	4	4	5
Vehicles with over 130,000 miles	2	2	3	4

*Current threshold used to consider replacement of a vehicle is an odometer reading of 130,000 miles or more for a passenger car/van or 150,000 miles or more for a truck; or required repairs are estimated to cost more than the amount equal to 30.0 percent of the replacement value of a new passenger car/van or truck of the same class, as the case may be, including parts and labor, in order to be safely driven.*

This agency will attempt to replace any vehicle reaching or exceeding the 130,000 mile odometer reading that has depreciated more than 30.0 percent, or is considered unsafe to drive.

## Housekeeping Services

Ensure campus facilities are clean, sanitary and in safe condition for the staff, students and the general public.

Objectives	Strategies	Outcomes	Outputs
1. Maintain cleaning standards as outlined by the Association of Physical Plant Administrators (APPA) for educational environment to meet the specialized education needs of our students and the professionals that provide these services.	1. Apply the APPA levels of cleaning standards and frequency of cleaning to determine adequate staffing levels.	1a. Percentage of facilities that are cleaned to a normal standard - <u>level 4</u> (general offices, infrequently used rooms, etc.): <b>40%*</b>  1b. Percentage of facilities that are cleaned to a higher school classroom standard - <u>level 3</u> (general classrooms, conference rooms, etc.): <b>39%</b>  1c. Percentage of facilities that are cleaned to uppermost school standard - <u>level 2</u> (restrooms, kindergarten, food prep and serving areas, etc.): <b>19%</b>  1d. Percentage of facilities that are cleaned to highest standard - <u>level 1</u> (hospital, medical setting, etc.): <b>2%</b>	1a. Percentage of work order tickets satisfactorily resolved by custodial support staff: <b>99%</b>  1b. Percentage of work order tickets left unresolved for more than three (3) business days: <b>1%</b>  1c. Number of custodial support staff for entire facility: <b>4 plus outsourced custodial services contractor</b>  1d. Number of hours of professional development training received regarding operations and safety: <b>12 per employee</b>

\* Note: Upper level of Vocational building not used. Sq. ft. of 6,623 not included. The maintenance industrial area is not included.

## Dietary Services

Ensure compliance with all nutritional regulations and guidelines, and that food preparation and delivery meets all the local, state, and federal sanitary requirements.

Objectives	Strategies	Outcome Measures	Output Measures
1. Meet all the nutritional regulations established by KSDE Nutrition Services, comply with health and safety requirements, and meet the dietary needs of our students.	1. Work with staff, other departments, inspectors, and state officials on pursuing best practices.	1. Percentage of dietary services that adhere to nutrition and health standards: <b>100%</b>	1a. Number of dietary support staff for entire facility: <b>9</b> 1b. Number of special dietary meals prepared and served (breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks and special events): <b>968</b> 1c. Total number of meals prepared and served (breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks and special events): <b>56,812</b> 1d. Number of health and safety inspections conducted: <b>2</b> 1e. Number of health and safety inspections passed: <b>100%</b> 1f. Number of hours of professional development training received regarding operations and safety: <b>12 hours per employee</b> 1g. Average price per meal: <b>\$4.00</b>

## Safety & Security Services

Ensures campus is safe and secure, utilizing a number of safety and security upgrades, for the staff, students and the visiting general public. The past appropriation specifically provided to enhance security has allowed for the contracting of an SRO and security services.

Objectives	Strategies	Outcome Measures	Output Measures
1. Provide a safe and secure campus environment for the specialized education needs of our students and the professionals that provide these services.	1. Provide training to security staff and others on the School Safety Plan requirements and best practices.	1. Percentage of security services that adhere to industry standards concerning safety and security practices: <b>90%</b>  2. Percentage of staff completing annual safety and security awareness training: <b>100% with drills, but additional training beyond drills needed</b>	1a. Number of safety and security staff for entire facility: <b>2 plus SRO and outsourced security contractors</b>  1b. Number of security incident reports concerning criminal activity on campus: <b>0</b>  1c. Number of fire drills performed: <b>4</b>  1d. Number of tornado drills performed: <b>2</b>  1e. Number of intruder drills performed: <b>3</b>  1f. Number of unscheduled alert events initiated (false alarm and/or actual security event): <b>5</b>  2a. Number of times the Emergency Procedures and

			<p>related safety information reviewed and updated: <b>5</b></p> <p>2b. Number of hours of professional training provided to school employees regarding emergency procedures: <b>none outside of drills</b></p> <p>2c. Number of hours of professional development training received by security personnel regarding safety and security: <b>16</b></p>
2. Continue upgrading and standardizing safety and security systems to allow collaborative support between the two campuses.	2. Work with contractors that provide camera, secure building access, and integrated fire and emergency notification systems	2. Percentage of fire and safety inspections certified that safety and security services meets safety standards: <b>100%</b>	<p>2a. Number of safety inspections conducted (fire marshal, OSHA, EPA, etc.): <b>5</b></p> <p>2b. Number of safety inspections passed (with or without the need of corrective action): <b>5</b></p>

Note: The Kansas State School for the Blind will serve as an emergency alternative in the event of an emergency situation that renders the KSSD campus unsafe and/or unusable. The two schools have a strong history of support.

## **Information Technology Applications and Direct Support**

*Ensures the management and support of user-space technology, devices, applications and account access that is used directly in support of instruction and other user experiences.*

Due to a complete restructuring of the technology services under an Information Systems Department within Support Services, expected outcomes and measures are being reevaluated to determine new baselines, expectations, and projections.

Under the new Information Systems Department model, technology staff will be scheduled into rotating roles ensuring 60% of their time is spent directly supporting end-users. Over 1000 hours (10%) of the total technology staff schedule will be committed to obtaining and providing professional development training regarding technology systems. The combination of direct support and professional development is 70% of the time spent by full time members of the joint technical team.

A re-evaluation of the way support tickets are being created, processed, and tracked is expected to result in dramatic changes to reporting data. Despite known inaccuracies in the ticketing process that have resulted in significant under reporting of tickets, in FY25 the joint team collectively resolved 2,689 support requests, with more than half of those requests being exclusive to the KSSD campus, and many of them impacting both KSSD and KSSB.

The time-to-resolution data within the existing tracking system is unreliable at best, but in excess of 50% of tickets were opened for more than 3 business days. Under the new department model, expectations are being re-aligned with the classroom instructional needs, with a goal of achieving a maximum response time of 4 business hours and a maximum resolution target of 3 business days.

KSSD has disposed of a significant amount of outdated and nonfunctional technology devices within the past year. Efforts are underway to ensure the accuracy of inventory and disposal records to near 100%, and current data shows the joint team is supporting 623 workstations across both the KSSD and KSSB campuses, with the majority being in use at KSSD.

The joint technology team currently supports one public facing system, the school's website hosted at the newly implemented <https://www.kansasdeaf.gov> domain.

Due to the number of significant projects underway, KSSD is also planning to implement a formal Project Management solution across multiple departments within Support Services, and members of the technology team will complete professional development regarding project management

#### **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE AND INDIRECT SUPPORT**

*Ensures the management and support of fixed network technology, server applications and devices integral to the operation of facilities, such as security cameras, life safety systems, and environmental controls. These secure services indirectly support the user-space use of technology.*

Once again, due to a complete restructuring of the technology services under an Information Systems Department within Support Services, expected outcomes and measures are being reevaluated to determine new baselines, expectations, and projections.

Under the new Information Systems Department model, technology staff will be scheduled into rotating roles ensuring 30% of their time is spent on indirect support activities, including deploying, maintaining, and decommissioning infrastructure and facilities systems.

Infrastructure and indirect support will take place primarily in the form of projects under the aforementioned project management system KSSD is intending to deploy. Thus, project work packages will replace help desk tickets as a measure for these activities. Because projects are often significantly longer in scope than a typical support ticket, measures for timely completion will be based on the ability to accurately estimate and meet deadlines.

Rather than metrics based on the number of infrastructure devices, which can be severely misleading, the focus will be on measuring the square footage of coverage, number of rooms with wired connectivity, and number of edge ports in active use. These metrics will be presented as raw numbers and as the ratio of the total possible for a given metric. For example, wireless coverage of 9,000 square feet in a building with a footprint of 10,000 square feet will show 90% coverage, and 72 active edge ports in a building with infrastructure capable of supporting 96 edge ports will show 75% usage of available ports in the infrastructure.

Once baselines are established, KSSD will be able to show progress towards its intended target of 100% wireless coverage, 75% of occupied rooms with wired connectivity, and 80% active usage of deployed edge ports.

## Digital Information Security

### *Ensures digital data is secure and managed in compliance with education requirements and industry standards.*

Once again, due to a complete restructuring of the technology services under an Information Systems Department within Support Services, expected outcomes and measures are being reevaluated to determine new baselines, expectations, and projections.

Under the new Information Systems Department model, technology staff will be scheduled into rotating roles ensuring their familiarity with all systems and the security requirements associated with each component. While there will still be team members who specialize in certain areas due to experience or training, information security must involve all members of the team.

KSSD has adopted industry standard practices of (1) prohibiting deployment of new systems with shared administrative password, (2) ensuring every system has at least two active administrators, (3) use of separate accounts for elevated privileges, and (4) use of the highest security multi-factor authentication for systems which support this functionality.

Performance metrics are largely meaningless when based on the raw quantity of changes, devices, or data stored. Instead, KSSD will focus on identifying the proportion of systems which have adequate protection to defend against in-house mistakes and external malicious attacks. For example, it is meaningless to state that KSSD has 70GB of nightly backups. That fails to identify whether the total sensitive data is 70GB or 700GB. What is relevant is the proportion of data protected, which in this example could be either 100% (70GB of 70GB) or a mere 10% (70GB of 700GB).

Once baselines are established, KSSD will aspire to achieve 100% ransomware-proof backups of mission critical data, 100% separation of elevated privileges in systems which support this feature, and 100% of systems having no fewer than two active administrators clearly documented and systematically verified.

During the early stages of this transition to a new department, KSSD has identified multiple systems which can be shut down and consolidated into other systems without diminishing the capability of the school to carry out its mission. In some instances, this reduces costs, while in others, it is a cost-neutral way of reducing the exposure of sensitive data to multiple possible attack vectors.

KSSD is also taking secure disposal very seriously. Over a significant amount of outdated or nonfunctional equipment was securely wiped and disposed of during the 2025 calendar year. This was completed through a combination of efforts from in-house staff and contractors. This stockpile of devices holding sensitive data had accumulated over a period of nearly a decade due to inadequate internal disposal procedures. KSSD will ensure that such equipment is disposed of appropriately on an annual basis going forward.

## EXPENDITURE JUSTIFICATION - SUPPORT SERVICES

### Object Code 100 – Salaries and Wages

The Support Services Division was reorganized at the beginning of FY 2013 to create consistency between KSSD and KSSB, and the Business Office completed reorganization in FY 2015. The division consists of maintenance, housekeeping, safety and security, food service, human resources, and business services. All supervisors in the Support Services Division are responsible for operations at both campus locations.

Previous Year FY 2025 - Actuals	\$ 1,879,781
Current Budget Year FY 2026	\$ 2,084,428
Budget Year FY 2027	\$ 2,089,983

### Object Codes 200-290 – Contractual Services

Contractual Services include outsourced lawn care services as implementation of the Efficiency Study.

Previous Year FY 2025 - Actuals	\$ 870,663
Current Budget Year FY 2026	\$ 926,589
Budget Year FY 2027	\$ 977,455

### Object Codes 300-390 – Commodities

Commodities expenditures; food is a significant percentage of this category.

Previous Year FY 2025 - Actuals	\$ 299,339
Current Budget Year FY 2026	\$293,900
Budget Year FY 2027	\$304,850

### Object Code 400 – Capital Outlay and 500-700 – Claims

Summary: No Capital Outlay or Claims anticipated.

Previous Year FY 2025 - Actuals	\$ 192,480
Current Budget Year FY 2026	\$ 20,350
Budget Year FY 2027	\$ 50,000

## CHANGE PACKAGES-SUPPORT SERVICES

### ***CHANGE PACKAGES - Capital Improvements***

1. Enhancement FY 2027, 8100 - 8108 Base Rehab & Repair-10% Inflation	\$129,571
2. Enhancement FY 2027, 8100 - NEW Roof Replacement-Emery	\$1,200,000
3. Enhancement FY 2027, 8100 - NEW Demolition of Powerhouse	\$1,800,000

### **EXPLANATION OF CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT SUPPLEMENTALS AND ENHANCEMENTS:**

1. **Enhancement** request for FY2027 allocation of \$129,571 to reflect the increase in expenditures for normal maintenance rehabilitation and repair due to inflation and long deliverable timelines on various materials and products. This amount is a 10% increase.
2. **Enhancement** request for FY2027 allocation of \$1,200,000 to replace the roof and atrium of the elementary dorm/school building, which are 30 years old and leaking.
3. **Enhancement** request for FY2027 allocation of \$1,800,000 for the demolition of the Powerhouse structure, which is no longer used and once abandoned will be a financial and safety liability.