



Kansas Alternate Literacy Screener Kdg-3rd grade - Reporting Requirements

For students with a most significant cognitive disability

Purpose of Alternate Assessments

IDEA

Sec. 300.160 Participation in assessments

(a) General. A State must ensure that all children with disabilities are included in all general State and districtwide assessment **programs**, including assessments described under section 1111 of the ESEA, 20 U.S.C. 6311, with appropriate accommodations and alternate assessments, if necessary, as indicated in their respective IEPs.



What is the KS Alternate Literacy Screener?

- The Kansas Alternate Literacy Screener is a simple rubric that assesses students' literacy skills as they relate to skill domains within English Language Arts (print concepts, phonological awareness, phonics and word recognition, fluency and comprehension). The rubric is meant to be completed for each student with a Most Significant Cognitive Disability (grades K-3) by their teacher, based on the student's performance on Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals and everyday literacy instruction within the classroom.



Who qualifies to participate in the KS Alternate Literacy Screener?

- Student is in grades Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, or 3rd grade; and
- Student has a most significant cognitive disability that significantly impacts intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior; and
- Student is learning content linked to the DLM Essential Elements; and
- Student requires extensive, repeated, direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in the grade-and-age-appropriate curriculum, and
- IEP teams determine who participates in an alternate assessment.
- The IEP must have alternate assessment indicated for district assessments in order to participate in the Alternate Literacy Screener.



Participation is Not determined by:

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



Additional Guidance Documents

- [Participation Guidelines \(PDF\)](#)
- [Kansas Alternate Assessment Flow Chart \(PDF\)](#)
- [Rubric for Determining Student Eligibility for the Kansas Alternate Assessment \(DLM\) \(PDF\)](#) (Companion document to the DLM Participation Guidelines)
- [IEP Team Resource Making Decisions about Participation in the Alternate Assessment \(PDF\)](#)



Tool B: Intellectual Functioning Tool

- The Kansas criteria to participate in the DLM is: the student has a most significant cognitive disability (defined as typically functioning 2 ½ or more standard deviations below the mean).
- It may be more helpful for the IEP team to consider a continuum of intellectual functioning as shown in the tool.
- No one characteristic should solely determine whether intellectual functioning is at a level that suggests the AA-AAAS is the appropriate assessment

Intellectual Functioning Tool

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Not limited	Mild Cognitive Limitations	Moderate to Significant Cognitive Limitations	Most Significant Cognitive Limitations
Verbal Intelligence/Cognition (related to language skills)			
Verbal intelligence in average range or above (85 IQ or above)	Verbal Intelligence 1 to 2 SD below mean (84-71)	Verbal Intelligence 2 to 2.5 SD below mean (70 - 64)	Verbal Intelligence 2.5 SD or more below mean (63 or lower)
Nonverbal Intelligence/Cognition (related to visual-spatial skills)			
Non-verbal intelligence in average range or above (85 IQ or above)	Non-verbal Intelligence 1 to 2 SD below mean (84-71)	Non-verbal Intelligence 2 to 2.5 SD below mean (70 - 64)	Non-verbal Intelligence 2.5 SD or more below mean (63 or lower)
Thinking/Reasoning/Problem-Solving			
Reasoning and problem-solving skills at age-level or within average range on an assessment.	Minimal assistance (e.g., general education interventions/supports) needed to carry out reasoning and problem-solving tasks	Requires special education services, including modifications and levels of scaffolding to complete reasoning and problem-solving tasks	Dependent on others for completing tasks that require reasoning and problem-solving
Executive Function/Attention/Memory			
Cognitive planning and working memory at age-level or within average range on an assessment	Minimal assistance (e.g., general education interventions/supports) needed to support cognitive planning and working memory	Requires special education services, including modifications and levels of scaffolding to support cognitive planning and working memory	Dependent on others for completing tasks that require cognitive planning and working memory
Learning			
Learning grade level academic skills	Learning grade level academics with general education supports	Learning general standards or mastering target or successor linkage level EEs with increasing levels of assistance from special education services and supports	Making progress on the Essential Elements (EEs) with moderate/maximal levels of supports



Tool C: Adaptive Functioning Tool

Adaptive Functioning Tool

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Adaptive Behavior Scale

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

Conceptual

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

Social

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

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

Practical

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

- The Kansas criteria to participate in the DLM is: the student has significant deficits in adaptive behavior (defined as typically functioning 2 ½ or more standard deviations below the mean).
- It may be more helpful for the IEP team to consider a continuum of adaptive functioning rather than a yes or no response.
- No one characteristic or rating should solely determine whether adaptive functioning is at a level that suggests the AA-AAAS is the appropriate assessment.



What materials do I need to administer the screener?

The materials needed to administer the Kansas Alternate Literacy Screener will differ for each student. The screener should be reviewed prior to administration to determine how each task will be assessed. For example, if a task is "Student can identify lowercase letters," materials needed could include lowercase flashcards, a keyboard, or a student's assistive technology device. In general, materials needed could include:

- Copies of the rubric for each student
- A familiar text (literature and informational)
- Letter flashcards
- CVC words/flashcards
- Picture cards
- Familiar word cards (words used in everyday routines)
- Familiar objects
- Photos of familiar people

You will need a copy of the [Alt Literacy Screener](#) rubric for each student.



Examples of sources of data used

- Anecdotal notes
- Work samples
- Photographs
- Videos
- Performance data
- Others as determined

There will be a great amount of variety in how each indicator is assessed for each individual student. Consideration should be made for each student about whether assistive technology is required for a student to learn or demonstrate a skill. For example, a student could identify a detail in a story by selecting a message on a single message output device or they could select their answer from a field of five. Each indicator should be assessed in the same way and given the same supports for all three testing windows (Beginning of the Year (BOY), Middle of the Year (MOY), and End of the Year (EOY)).



Kindergarten

Table 1: Reading foundation Print Concepts/Fluency

DLM Essential Elements Reading Foundational Skills	Not Yet Emerging 1 point	Emerging 2 points	Approaching Target 3 points	At Target 4 points	Advanced (Bridge to Kansas ELA Standard) 5 points
EE.RF.K.1 Demonstrate emerging understanding of the organization of print A. With guidance and support during shared reading, demonstrate understanding that books are read one page at a time from beginning to end EE.RF.K.4 Engage in purposeful shared reading of a familiar text	☐ Unable to demonstrate skills at an emergent level	☐ Will open a book with correct orientation ☐ Will point to and/or repeat the title of a familiar book during a shared reading experience	☐ Will open a book with correct orientation ☐ Will point to and/or repeat the title of a familiar book during a shared reading experience ☐ Will attend to words or pictures in the reading material throughout the reading activity	☐ Will open book with correct orientation ☐ Will point to and/or repeat the title of a familiar book during a shared reading experience ☐ Will attend to words or pictures in the reading material throughout the reading activity ☐ Will turn the pages in the book or swipe on an electronic book (with support, if needed, such as a popsicle stick taped to the page) ☐ Will participate in reading a repeated word from the reading material	☐ Will turn the pages in the book or swipe on an electronic book (with support, if needed such as a popsicle stick taped to the page) ☐ Will participate in reading a repeated word from the reading material ☐ Will identify some (10 or more) letters' names ☐ Will identify that words are read left to right and or top to bottom



Scoring

1. For a student to score at a performance level for beginning, middle or end of year, they must be able to do **each skill listed** within a performance level, (except in the 'Not Yet Emerging' level) to a level of mastery as determined by the teacher (80% correct or 80% independence is a general guideline for mastery).
2. As performance levels are determined for each skill domain, the points should then be transferred to the Score Sheet.
3. After they are added up, the student's overall score will then be determined by the Scoring Guide.



Scoring Sheet - KDG

Table 5: Score Sheet

Strands	Beginning of Year (BOY)	Middle of Year (MOY)	End of Year (EOY)
Reading Foundation Print Concepts/ Fluency	/5	/5	/5
Reading Foundation Phonological Awareness	/5	/5	/5
Reading Foundation Phonics & Word Recognition	/5	/5	/5
Reading Literature Craft and Structure	/5	/5	/5
Total	/20	/20	/20

Table 6. Scoring Guide: Required for Dyslexia Reporting

Score	Performance Level
4-10 Points	High Risk
11-15 Points	Some Risk
16 to 20 Points	Benchmark



Using the rubrics for IEP development

- The rubrics are based on the Essential Elements and are aligned with the general education standards at a reduced depth, breadth, and complexity.
- Information from the rubrics provide valuable information on the student's literacy development for the PLAAFPs
 - Strengths and needs can be pulled from the rubric and included in the PLAAFPs.
- IEP goals and benchmarks can be developed to align with the students needs as identified by the screener.



Kansas Alternate Literacy Screener Changes

KSDE Dyslexia Screening Protocol Reporting,

- Screening data will be received via the KEDS platform. The deadline for fall is **October 10, 2026**. Deadline for spring is **May 28, 2027**.
- The scoring guide will be used to determine high risk, some risk, or at benchmark based on the student's overall score on the score sheet for the student's grade – refer to the score sheet and scoring guide for the specific grade.
- Due to the changes in reporting for fall and spring, **8th grade comprehension will not be reported during the 2026-2027 school year.**
- KSDE is in the process of building out the Alternate Literacy Screener for grades 4th through 8th grade which will be used for the 2027-2028 school year.



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