

- 75-5397e. Language assessment program; given, when; advisory committee; recommendations; reports; definitions.** (a) There is hereby established a language assessment program to be coordinated by the Kansas commission for the deaf and hard of hearing. The purpose of the program is to assess, monitor and track the language developmental milestones of children who are deaf or hard of hearing from birth through the age of eight. The recognized languages used in the education of children who are deaf and hard of hearing are English and American sign language. The scope of the program includes children who may use one or more communication modes in American sign language, English literacy and, if applicable, spoken English and visual supplements.
- (b) On and after July 1, 2018, an annual language assessment shall be given to each child who is deaf or hard of hearing and who is less than nine years of age. Language assessments shall be provided either through early intervention services administered by the Kansas department of health and environment, or if the child is three years of age or older, through the school district in which the child is enrolled. Such language assessments shall be provided in accordance with the provisions of this section and any recommendations adopted pursuant to this section.
- (c) There is hereby established within KCDHH an advisory committee on the language assessment program. The advisory committee shall consist of 16 members as follows:
- (1) Nine members of the advisory committee shall be appointed by the governor as follows:
 - (A) One member shall be a credentialed teacher of the deaf who uses both ASL and English during instruction;
 - (B) one member shall be a credentialed teacher of the deaf who uses spoken English with or without visual supplements during instruction;
 - (C) one member shall be a credentialed teacher of the deaf who has expertise in curriculum development and instruction of ASL and English;
 - (D) one member shall be a credentialed teacher of the deaf who has expertise in assessing language development in both ASL and English;
 - (E) one member shall be a speech language pathologist who has experience working with children from birth through the age of eight;
 - (F) one member shall be a professional with a linguistic background who conducts research on language outcomes of children who are deaf or hard of hearing and use ASL and English;
 - (G) one member shall be a parent of a child who is deaf or hard of hearing and who uses both ASL and English;
 - (H) one member shall be a parent of a child who is deaf or hard of hearing and who uses spoken English with or without visual supplements; and
 - (I) one member who is knowledgeable about teaching and using both ASL and English in the education of children who are deaf and hard of hearing; and
 - (2) seven members of the advisory committee shall be ex officio members as follows:
 - (A) One member shall be the executive director of KCDHH;
 - (B) one member shall be the coordinator of the sound start program, or such coordinator's designee;
 - (C) one member shall be the KCDHH commission member representing the state school for the deaf, or such commission member's designee;
 - (D) one member shall be the KCDHH commission member representing the department of health and environment, or such commission member's designee;
 - (E) one member shall be the KCDHH commission member representing the state board of education, or such commission member's designee;
 - (F) one member shall be the coordinator of the early intervention program administered by the department of health and environment, or such coordinator's designee; and
 - (G) one member shall be the coordinator of the early education program administered by the department of education, or such coordinator's designee.
- (d) The executive director of KCDHH shall call an organizational meeting of the advisory committee on or before August 1, 2016. At such organizational meeting, the members shall elect a chairperson and vice-chairperson from the membership of the advisory committee. The advisory committee may meet at any time and at any place within the state on the call of the chairperson. A quorum of the advisory committee shall be nine members. All actions of the advisory committee shall be by motion adopted by a majority of those members present when there is a quorum. Any vacancy on the committee shall be filled in accordance with subsection (c).
- (e) On or before January 31, 2018, the advisory committee shall develop specific action plans and make recommendations necessary to fully implement the language assessment program. In carrying out its charge under this section, the committee shall:
- (1) Collaborate with the coordinating council on early childhood developmental services and the Kansas state special education advisory council;
 - (2) solicit input from professionals trained in the language development and education of children who are deaf or hard of hearing on the selection of specific language developmental milestones;
 - (3) review, recommend and monitor the use of existing and available language assessments for children who are deaf or hard of hearing;
 - (4) identify and recommend qualifications of language professionals with knowledge of the use of evidence-based, best practices in English and American sign language who can be available to advocate at IFSP or IEP team meetings;
 - (5) identify qualifications of language assessment evaluators with knowledge on the use of evidence-based, best practices with children who are deaf or hard of hearing and the resources for locating such evaluators; and
 - (6) identify procedures and methods for communicating information on language acquisition, assessment results, milestones, assessment tools used and progress of the child to the parent or legal guardian of such child, teachers and other professionals involved in the early intervention and education of such child.
- (f) The specific action plans and recommendations developed by the advisory committee shall include, but are not limited to, the following:
- (1) Language assessments that include data collection and timely tracking of the child's development so as to provide information about the child's receptive and expressive language compared to such child's linguistically age-appropriate peers who are not deaf or hard of hearing;
 - (2) language assessments conducted in accordance with standardized norms and timelines in order to monitor and track language developmental milestones in receptive, expressive, social and pragmatic language acquisition and developmental stages to show progress in American sign language literacy, English literacy, or both, for all children who are deaf or hard of hearing from birth through the age of eight;
 - (3) language assessments delivered in the child's mode of communication and which have been validated for the specific purposes for which each assessment is used, and appropriately normed;
 - (4) language assessments administered by individuals who are proficient in ASL for ASL assessments and English for English assessments;
 - (5) use of assessment results, in addition to the assessment required by federal law, for guidance on the language developmental discussions by IFSP and IEP teams when assessing the child's progress in language development;
 - (6) reporting of assessment results to the parents or legal guardian of the child and the applicable agency;
 - (7) reporting of assessment results on an aggregated basis to the committees on education of the house of representatives and the senate; and
 - (8) reporting of assessment results to the members of the child's IFSP or IEP team, which may be used, in addition to the assessment required by federal law, by the child's IFSP or IEP team, as applicable, to track the child's progress, and to establish or modify the IFSP or IEP.
- (g) The state department of education, the department of health and environment and the state school for the deaf shall enter into interagency agreements with KCDHH to share statewide aggregate data.
- (h) On or before January 31, 2019, and each January 31 thereafter, KCDHH shall publish a report that is specific to language and literacy developmental milestones of children who are deaf or hard of hearing for each age from birth through the age of eight, including those who are deaf or hard of hearing and have other disabilities, relative to such children's peers who are not deaf or hard of hearing. Such report shall be based on existing data reported in compliance with the federally required state performance plan on pupils with disabilities. KCDHH shall publish the report on its website.
- (i) The advisory committee shall cease to exist from and after July 1, 2018.
- (j) As used in this section:
- (1) "ASL" means American sign language.

- (2) "English" means English literacy, spoken English, signing exact English and morphemic system of signs, CASE, cued speech and any other visual supplements.
- (3) "IEP" means individualized education program.
- (4) "IFSP" means individualized family service plan.
- (5) "KCDHH" means the Kansas commission for the deaf and hard of hearing.
- (6) "Language" means a complex and dynamic system of conventional symbols that is used in various modes for thought and communication.
- (7) "Literacy" includes the developmental stages of literacy, including pre-emergent, emergent and novice levels, as necessary beginning stages to master a language.

History: L. 2016, ch. 83, § 2; May 19.