

KANSAS



State Highlight

Individual Plan of Study Rubric. Kansas requires schools to support their students, starting in 8th grade, in developing their Individual Plan of Study (IPS). The state provides a detailed rubric for districts to leverage to evaluate their IPS implementation and operation. The rubric outlines specific performance criteria, including parent engagement, educator guidance, use of labor market data, and more.



VISION



A Vision for Education in Kansas. The Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) established a Vision for Education in Kansas, which outlines a strategic plan to help students gain the skills and preparation needed to be a successful graduate. Stakeholders involved in developing this vision included KSDE leaders and board members, as well as community partners, parents, educators, and business leaders across the state.

Kansas has yet to codify the definition of career exploration or coordinate across state agencies on career exploration.



POLICY



Individual Plans of Study (IPS). Students in 8th grade are required to develop an IPS in conjunction with school staff and family members. Schools are responsible for guiding students through this process including annually updating the IPS through 12th grade. The IPS is developed based on students' career interests and includes the development of a flexible career focus and an education plan to help ensure a successful and efficient transition to postsecondary education and the workforce.

Kansas Education Systems Accreditation (KESA). Kansas established a new accreditation model, KESA, to assess system/district-level accreditation. One of the KESA criteria includes Career Awareness and Guidance, which evaluates districts' adherence to student IPS development.



INFRASTRUCTURE



Annual Survey. KSDE administers an annual survey for schools to provide insight into local implementation progress, highlighting the barriers and obstacles that schools face in IPS implementation. The survey implementation is important in developing state support for schools, educators, and families as they support students in the development of their IPS.




Educator Training. Kansas allows Perkins V expenditures for professional development. This expenditure is now allowable for middle school Pathway teachers (holding the appropriate current teaching certification) and related staff for introductory courses.

Kansas has yet to include middle school career exploration into data collection processes or provide dynamic training opportunities to staff related to middle school career exploration.





KANSAS • VISION

Category	Status	Description
<p>Leadership</p> <p>Does the state leadership include career exploration as a valued or prioritized component of students' middle school experience?</p>	 <p>Building Emerging Advanced</p>	<p>KSDE's strategic plan states that a successful KS graduate has the skills to be successful postsecondary, including academic preparation, cognitive preparation, technical skills, employability skills, and civic engagement. The completion of an IPS focused on career interests was integral to the state's vision of a graduate.</p>
<p>Career Exploration Definition</p> <p>Does the state formally define career exploration for middle school students?</p>	 <p>Building Emerging Advanced</p>	<p>KSDE defines career exploration within their Work-based Digital Reference Guide as strategies that build on the knowledge gained through the Awareness Strategies conducted outside of the classroom learning environment. These strategies include focusing on developing career readiness skills, enhancing awareness of career options, providing a means to connect to local and area businesses, helping prepare students for careers through practical hands-on experiences, and taking place during the school day or through summer experiences. The Individual Plan of Study (IPS) Digital Reference Guide defines career exploration similarly.</p>
<p>Advocacy</p> <p>Are there organizations within the state that are advocating for middle school career exploration?</p>	 <p>Building Emerging Advanced</p>	<p>KS does not have any organizations advocating for middle school career exploration that rose to recognition within the landscape.</p>



KANSAS • POLICY

Category	Status	Description
Standards Does the state have policies that establish standard practices for career exploration in middle schools?	 Building Emerging Advanced	As determined by the KS Board of Education, schools <u>must develop</u> student's IPS in collaboration with the student, their parents, and their school counselor, and update the IPS annually through grade 12.
Accountability Does the state integrate career exploration into their accountability systems?	 Building Emerging Advanced	The KS ESSA State Plan does not specifically mention career exploration. However, the IPS is addressed as part of the “Career Awareness and Guidance” criteria in the state's new <u>accreditation model</u> .
Student Requirements Does the state have policies that require middle school students to complete career exploration activities?	 Building Emerging Advanced	Starting in grade 8 students are <u>required</u> to complete an IPS based on their career interests and developed cooperatively between the student, school staff members, and family members. The IPS operates as roadmap that includes the development of a flexible career focus and an education plan that is clearly-defined, rigorous, and relevant to assure a successful and efficient transition to postsecondary education and the workforce.
Incentives Does the state have policies that incentivize career exploration in middle schools?	 Building Emerging Advanced	The KS State Board of Education <u>offers a number of grants</u> that can be used to support career exploration programs, such as the Carl D. Perkins CTE Act Basic Grant and the CTE State Leadership Grant.



KANSAS • INFRASTRUCTURE

Category	Status	Description
<p>Funding</p> <p>Does the state use state or federal funding sources to support career exploration for middle school students?</p>		<p>KSDE used Perkins V Reserve grant funds to scale work-based learning across the state via a pilot project in partnership with the Kansas Department of Commerce and KBOR. The five pilot districts will serve as models for other school districts in the region to scale high-quality work-based learning by utilizing a regional intermediary and developing an aligned statewide process, some of which would be integrated into the IPS process. Perkins V leadership funds were used for professional development to support teacher training and student leadership.</p>
<p>Professional Development</p> <p>Does the state support the training of school counselors (and other school staff) in career exploration?</p>		<p>To promote quality teaching in approved Pathways, KS allows Perkins V expenditures for professional development. This expenditure is now allowable for middle school Pathway teachers (holding the appropriate current teaching certification) and related staff (administration, counselors, paraeducators, etc.), as appropriate, for introductory courses (taught at the 7th grade and transcribed for high school level 8th grade) beginning July 1, 2020. The IPS Digital Reference Guide links a training module for educators.</p>
<p>Material Supports</p> <p>Does the state provide material supports on the implementation of middle school career exploration?</p>		<p>KSDE provides various resources to support the implementation of students' IPS, including an IPS Digital Reference Guide and a detailed IPS Rubric.</p>
<p>Data Collection</p> <p>Does the state collect data on middle school career exploration opportunities in the state?</p>		<p>Each year since 2017, KSDE has administered an annual survey providing opportunities for schools to provide insight into local implementation progress, highlighting the barriers and obstacles that schools face in IPS implementation. The survey implementation is important in developing state support for schools, educators, and families as they support students in the development of their IPS. The most recent annual report was published in 2019-2020.</p>
<p>CTSOs</p> <p>Does the state support student participation in career and technical student organizations?</p>		<p>KS has middle school chapters in FFA and FBLA. KS has allocated Perkins V leadership funds to support professional development opportunities for teachers and leadership opportunities for students.</p>
<p>Organizations</p> <p>Are there organizations within the state that support career exploration in middle schools?</p>		<p>FutureMaker Lab is a partnership started in 2016 between WSU Tech and Goodwill Industries. Evergy, Textron Aviation, AT&T, Koch Industries, and several other organizations signed on to sponsor the program, which provides middle school, high school, and GED-seeking students with introductory information about STEM careers along with hands-on activities virtually or in person.</p>