

DCF LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY



January 23, 2023

TESTIMONY OF

Scott Henricks, Director of Permanency
Kansas Department for Children and Families

TESTIMONY ON

Foster Care Report Card

Chair

Representative Thomas

Vice Chair

Representative Estes

Ranking Minority

Representative Stogsdill

and

Members of the Committee

KSDE / DCF Foster Care Report Card

Chair Thomas and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to present information on the 2021-2022 education report card for students in foster care. This annual education report card for students in foster care is a continuing opportunity for KSDE and DCF to collaborate and learn about the current outcomes and needs of students in foster care.

Ensuring educational stability and positive educational outcomes for children in foster care remains a high priority for both agencies. Since the creation and distribution of this report card, it has grown and expanded to help both KSDE and DCF in making policy decisions and determining efficacy of current practices. A new data element that has grown over the years includes the inclusion of students in foster care who were suspended or expelled during the school year. The 2021-2022 report reflects differences in outcome achievement for students who are foster care compared to all students in Kansas.

- There was a slight decrease overall in the rate of graduation overall by 1 point for all students regardless of being in foster care or not. Though there was a small decline in graduate rates for those students in foster care by 1.9 points. There was an increase in graduation rates specifically for those African American students by 3.3 points
- The rate of students promoted to the next grade level from the 2019-2020 school year has increased from 50.7 to 89.0 and has remained stable.
- The decrease in the use of the mental health intervention team program may also be to the decrease in total students, as comparison from the last school year to the 2021-2022 term there were 767 less students (2020-2021=6,165, 2021-2022=5,398).
- Assessment Levels for students has seen some variation as outlined below:

Assessment Level	Math		English Language Arts		Science	
	2020-2021	2021-2022	2020-2021	2021-2022	2020-2021	2021-2022
1 (limited)	55.86%	59.00%	51.18%	58.22%	53.11%	63.04%
2 (basic)	33.29%	31.29%	31.13%	28.54%	26.86%	24.09%
3 (effective)	8.92%	8.31%	15.63%	11.19%	16.13%	10.29%
4 (excellent)	1.99%	1.38%	2.04%	2.03%	3.88%	2.57%

- 2021-2022 Assessment Comparisons for foster care (FC) data to **all students** (AS) is:

Assessment Level	Math		English Language Arts		Science	
	FC	AS	FC	AS	FC	AS
1 (limited)	59.00%	28.29%	58.22%	29.45%	63.04%	34.85%
2 (basic)	31.29%	39.05%	28.54%	33.95%	24.09%	29.58%
3 (effective)	8.31%	23.25%	11.19%	27.86%	10.29%	24.53%
4 (excellent)	1.38%	9.39%	2.03%	8.72%	2.57%	11.03%

Kansas Assessment results are reported in four levels.

- Level 1 indicates a student shows limited ability to understand the area of assessment skills (i.e., math, English language arts or science).
- Level 2 indicates a student shows a basic ability in the assessed skills area.
- Level 3 indicates a student shows an effective ability in the assessed skilled area
- Level 4 indicates a student has excellent abilities in the assessed skills area

These assessments capture a point-in-time and represent a small part of a student's overall educational experience. Assessments are not completed by every student every year; rather, only certain grades and certain times of year are utilized for this assessment tool. For instance, in 2022-2023, assessments for Math, English Language Arts will be completed for students in grades 3-8 and 10th. Science will assess grades 5, 8, and 11. All assessments will occur in the March-April timeframe. Thus, while these data points can help provide prospective, it is just one part of a students in foster care's educational progression.

(see: https://ksassessments.org/sites/default/files/documents/2022-23_Kansas_Assessments_Overview_Calendar.pdf)

We appreciate the opportunity this report presents and the dialogue it generates to improve outcomes. We look forward to continuing our efforts in creating meaningful reports so conversations can occur locally. DCF is committed to using this data and insights to improve policy and practices to achieve better outcomes for all foster youth. There is much to learn about the impact of a child's stay in foster care on outcomes and level assessments.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this annual report, I am happy to answer any questions at the appropriate time.