The Kansas State Deaf-Blind Fund
Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

Early Childhood, Special Education, and Title Services

An Equal Employment/Educational Opportunity Agency

The Kansas State Department of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Kansas State Department of Education, 120 SE 10th Ave., Topeka, KS 66612; 785-296-3201.

NOTE: Prior to submitting an application, please review the information contained in *The Kansas State Deaf-Blind Fund Application Instructions and Forms* document for guidance on how to complete the application and subsequent forms.

WHO CAN ACCESS THE KANSAS STATE DEAF-BLIND FUND?

Students (ages birth through 21 years) who currently are certified deaf-blind and/or have severe multiple disabilities based on The Kansas Deaf-Blind Census and/or students with severe multiple disabilities who are included on the December 1 child count data can access the fund until it is depleted. Students who receive homebound services from the local education agency also **ARE** eligible to receive deaf-blind funds. Students who are home schooled and do not receive services from the local education agency **ARE NOT** eligible for deaf-blind funds.

The following categories of students will be considered **priority candidates** for funding:

- students who have current deaf-blind certification;
- children birth through 2 years;
- students who have exited or will be exiting from the state hospital schools to their neighborhood school districts;
- students who have a suspected vision loss and a documented hearing loss, and who are in need of an ophthalmological or optometric evaluation; and
- students who have a suspected hearing loss and a documented vision loss, and who are in need of an otolaryngolocial (i.e. ENT) or audiological evaluation.

HOW MUCH FUNDING CAN BE REQUESTED FOR A STUDENT THROUGH THE KANSAS STATE DEAF-BLIND FUND?

Applications will be approved up to $3,000.00 maximum per student, per fiscal year (July 1-June 30) with no exceptions until the total amount of the fund has be depleted or encumbered.

WHAT ARE THE PRIORITY AREAS FOR FUNDING?

Priority areas for funding are; (1) assistive technology (including adaptive equipment), (2) consultation, and (3) evaluation. Descriptions for each funding category are:

- **Assistive Technology**. The Kansas State Deaf-Blind Fund monies may be used for high or low technology, which enables a student with deaf-blindness including those students with severe disabilities to participate in educational program and activities with their nondisabled peers. The technology must reflect evidence-based practices for students who have deaf-blindness and/or severe disabilities. Additionally, requests can be made for adaptive equipment (e.g., prone standers, wedges, etc.). Some items for which costs may be reimbursed include: computers, adaptive equipment, hearing aids, glasses, computer peripherals, augmentative communication devices, micro switches, and/ or software. **A picture from a catalog (screen shot) and a written description of the items being requested MUST BE attached to the application form. (Refer to *The Kansas State Deaf-Blind Fund Application Instructions and Forms*.)**
- **Consultation.** The Kansas State Deaf-Blind Fund monies, which relate to funding priorities or evidenced-based educational practices for students who have deaf-blindness, including those students with severe multiple disabilities, may be used to provide technical assistance to the student's staff members or family members. The consultant who is being requested **MUST BE**, qualified, certified, or licensed. The consultation that is provided **MUST BE** based on evidenced-

based instructional practices for students who are deaf-blind and/or students with multiple disabilities. Inservice training, pre-service training, workshops, or conferences **ARE NOT** considered part of consultation under this category. **The consultant's resume or curriculum vita, and including a description of the consultation that will be provided MUST BE attached to the application form. (Refer to *The Kansas State Deaf-Blind Fund Application Instructions and Forms*.)**

- **Evaluation.** The Kansas State Deaf-Blind Fund monies may be used to reimburse districts for the cost of vision and / or hearing evaluations for students who are suspect of being deaf-blind. Either a hearing or vision evaluation can be requested for recertification on The Kansas State Deaf-Blind Census. (Refer to the above description on who can access The Kansas State Deaf-Blind Fund.) Assistive technology, adaptive equipment, educational evaluation(s) also can be requested. Evaluations other than audiological or ophthalmological **MUST BE** based on evidenced-based practices (e.g., assistive technology, adaptive equipment, etc.) for students who are deaf-blind and/or students with multiple disabilities. **Only one evaluation per fiscal year may be requested. The evaluator's name, degree, and other identifying information MUST BE attached to the application form. Evaluation requests other than audiological, ophthalmological must include a description of the evaluation on the application form. (Refer to *The Kansas State Deaf-Blind Fund Application Instructions and Forms*.)**

WHEN IS THE EARLIEST A KANSAS STATE DEAF-BLIND FUND APPLICATION CAN BE SUBMITTED?

A Kansas Deaf-Blind Fund Application for a student who currently is certified on The Kansas State Deaf-Blind Census may be submitted **NO EARLIER THAN MAY 15** and after, for the fiscal year beginning July 1. The application will be date stamped and time recorded before being placed in a pending file. Applications will be reviewed for approval on a first come, first serve basis beginning July 1 of each fiscal year. **Due to the volume of applications received, it is recommended that you submit the student's application prior to July 1; otherwise, funding may not be available.** A Kansas Deaf-Blind Fund Application may be submitted for a student with severe intellectual and/or physical disabilities, and who is not certified on The Kansas Deaf-Blind Census **NO EARLIER THAN JANUARY 1** for the current fiscal year. **The entire Kansas State Deaf-Blind Fund usually is encumbered by late summer. Typically, limited or no funds are available by the end of the funding cycle.**

New applications must be submitted for individual students during every fiscal year, including applications that were approved, but not funded. If funding is not available when the application is received, the application will not be held until the following year. **A new application will need to be submitted (without exception) within the above designated timelines.**

For those students who are not certified deaf-blind, or do not meet the above listed criteria, funding applications will be returned until the application or conditions for certification are completed. Follow-up correspondence (e.g., email, phone call, or fax) may be requested by KSDE staff members to answer any questions or clarify information that is needed to process the application.

PLEASE NOTE: ALL FUNDING MUST BE INITIATED, PROCESSED, AND APPROVED BY THE STUDENT'S LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY.

WHO APPROVES THE STUDENT'S DEAF-BLIND FUND APPLICATION ONCE IT IS SUBMITTED?

Beginning July 1 of each fiscal year, individual student applications are screened to determine priority candidates for funding. The remaining applications are arranged by date and time of submission. Each application is screened to make sure that all appropriate documentation, attachments, and signatures are included. After the initial screening, a student's application will be forwarded to the Administrators of The Kansas State Deaf-Blind Fund. They will review each application on a case-by-case basis and determine which requests are appropriate for funding. Decisions may be different for each student based upon evidenced-based practices documented in the literature, individual circumstances, and available funding.

HOW ARE APPLICATIONS APPROVED?

Once the funding application has been processed and approved, district contacts will be notified regarding the status of the student's funding application by the Kansas State Deaf-Blind Fund Assistant. The Kansas State Deaf-Blind Fund Assistant will encumber the total amount of the approved items. Once the items are purchased, receipts need to be submitted to the Kansas State Deaf-Blind Fund Assistant who will process the receipts and distribute the reimbursements. The Kansas State Deaf-Blind Fund operates on a reimbursement system only. District contacts must wait for approval from the Kansas Deaf Blind Fund Assistant prior to making purchases or be subject for costs of the items if they are disapproved. **PLEASE NOTE: Do not proceed with purchasing items listed on the student's application until you receive notification of approval from the Kansas State Deaf-Blind Fund Assistant.**

CAN A KANSAS STATE DEAF-BLIND FUND APPLICATION BE AMENDED ONCE IT IS ALREADY APPROVED?

A Kansas State Deaf-Blind Fund Application may be amended after it has been approved. Submit the appropriate amended form (i.e. Amended Forms A, B, or C) that identifies what is being amended and the amount. The amount of the amended item cannot exceed the original total that was previously approved. If necessary, send the appropriate documentation that is required for the items that are being requested. Once it is received in the office, the amended form will go through the approval process. You will be notified if the amended item is approved or not approved.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE SUBMITTED TO RECEIVE REIMBURSEMENT FOR THE ITEMS LISTED ON THE KANSAS STATE DEAF-BLIND FUND APPLICATION?

All receipts need to be attached to ***The Kansas State Deaf-Blind Fund Request for Reimbursement Form*** **and submitted within 30 days of receipt of the last item and absolutely no later than June 1.** The form must be signed by the Special Education Director of the local education agency or designee. If the cost of the items listed on the reimbursement form exceeds what was approved on the original application, only the amount listed on the original application will be reimbursed. **Reimbursement forms and receipts must be submitted absolutely within 30 days of receipt/purchase and absolutely no later than June1 of the fiscal year. Any reimbursement forms submitted after June 1 of the fiscal year can result in non - reimbursable payment.**

Submission by May 15 and no later than June 3rd is critical. The Kansas State Department of Education uses the window of June 2nd through June 20th to close out The Kansas Deaf-Blind Fund and ensure the balance of funds is expended.

WHAT ARE THE DATES FOR SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS AND REIMBURSEMENT FORMS?

July 1 Applications will undergo the approval process for the new fiscal year.

May 15 Applications will be accepted for the next fiscal year (window opens).

May 15 Reimbursement forms (accompanied by receipts) are due.

June 1 Reimbursements must be received by the close of business (window closes).

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE EQUIPMENT, TECHNOLOGY, OR MATERIALS PURCHASED WITH THE KANSAS STATE DEAF-BLIND FUND MONIES WHEN A STUDENT MOVES OUT OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM?

The equipment, technology, and materials that are purchased with The Kansas State Deaf-Blind Fund monies must be utilized by the student in the educational program. This means that when a student moves to another educational program within Kansas, the equipment follows the student. The exceptions are as follows:

1. If a student graduates, moves out-of-state, or transitions out of a Kansas education program (e.g., LEA, SPED Cooperative, or interlocal) and the equipment is uniquely personalized for the student's individual physical characteristics (e.g., ear molds, eye glasses, artificial foot orthotics (AFOs), etc.), the technology, equipment, or materials stays with the student.
2. If the equipment, technology, and materials were adapted or personalized for the student's use (e.g., augmentative communication devices or toy activated switches), the technology, equipment, and materials can be purchased at the current market value from the local education agency. This arrangement needs to be made with the local education agency, the student (if applicable), or the student's family.
3. If the equipment, technology, or materials no longer meets the student's needs, the local education agency may choose to:
   - use the equipment for another student in the program, or
   - donate the item to an equipment loan library (i.e. Assistive Technology for Kansans http://www.atk.ku.edu).

WHERE ARE THE KANSAS STATE DEAF-BLIND FUND APPLICATION FORMS AND INSTRUCTIONS ARE LOCATED?

There are several ways that an application of The Kansas State Deaf-Blind Fund can be accessed;

- access the application and forms from the website: http://www.ksde.org
- call Joan Houghton, EdD, phone 785.296.2515 or email jhoughton@ksde.org
- call Cynthia Penrod, phone 785.296.7454 or email cpenrod@ksde.org

Submit the application form with the appropriate documentation following the instructions provided. The student's application will be processed once it is received and dated in the office by The Kansas State Deaf-Blind Fund Assistant and/or Administrator. Notification, along with instructions for requesting reimbursement, will be sent to the Special Education Director or designee of the student's local education agency.