

Guidelines: Kansas At-Risk Pupil Assistance Program



1. What is the purpose of the Kansas At-Risk Pupil Assistance program?

The purpose of the Kansas At-Risk Program is to provide at-risk students with additional educational opportunities, interventions, and evidence-based instructional services to assist in meeting State Board of Education outcomes.

2. What does the term “additional educational opportunities” mean?

The intent of the At-Risk Pupil Assistance Program is to provide “additional educational opportunities” which are evidence-based educational services offered to at-risk students above and beyond regular educational services.

K.S.A. 72-5153(c) Expenditures from the at-risk education fund of a school district shall only be made for the following purposes:

- a. At-risk educational programs based on evidence-based best practices identified by the State Board of Education;
- b. personnel providing educational services in conjunction with such programs; or
- c. services contracted for by the school district to provide at-risk educational programs based on best practices.

3. Does an at-risk student have to be a free-lunch student?

No, free lunch applications determine the funding while academic needs determine who is identified and served.

4. What is the definition of an at-risk student and what criteria identify an at-risk student?

At-risk students can be defined by one or more criteria. Predominantly, a student who is not working on grade level in either reading or mathematics is the major criteria used.

An at-risk student is one who meets one or more of the following criteria (a-j):

- a. Is not working on academic grade level.
- b. Is not meeting the requirements necessary for promotion to the next grade; is failing subjects or courses of study
- c. Is not meeting the requirements necessary for graduation from high school. (e.g., potential dropout)
- d. Has insufficient mastery of skills or is not meeting state standards
- e. Has been retained
- f. Has a high rate of absenteeism
- g. Has repeated suspensions or expulsions from school
- h. Is homeless and/or migrant



Definition of an at-risk student and criteria (continued):

- i. Is identified as an English Language Learner
- j. Has social emotional needs that cause a student to be unsuccessful in school
- ***Students are often at-risk as a result of the following situations:***
 - Low attachment to or involvement with school
 - Continual or persistently inappropriate behavior
 - Repeated discipline infractions
 - A high rate of transition or mobility
 - Living in an environment of poverty
 - Living in an environment of limited educational achievement
 - Has a drug or alcohol problem
 - Is pregnant or is a parent or both
 - Participates in gang or gang-like activity
 - Is adjudicated as a juvenile offender
 - Is a “child in need of care” (CINC)

5. May students identified for special education services receive at-risk services?

Yes, students with disabilities may be served by the at-risk funds if the services are not the same area of service being provided by special education funds as identified on the student’s IEP. For example, a student with a disability receiving special education instructional support in the area of reading could receive at-risk instructional support in the area of mathematics, but not in reading.

6. What are districts to use to identify at-risk students?

Districts are to use some form of diagnostic assessment and/or evidence-based educational criteria to identify students who are at-risk to determine their needs and to guide their interventions.

7. What assessments or data can be used to identify at-risk students?

Some examples of data and assessments that can be used to select and serve at-risk students include:

- a. Records of performance demonstrating a lack of growth
- b. State assessment results
- c. Local assessments
- d. Performance based assessments
- e. Norm referenced assessments
- f. Screening assessments
- g. Diagnostic assessments such as:
 - Qualitative Reading Inventory
 - Degrees of Reading Power
 - Gates MacGinite
- h. Supplemental services needed through the school day

8. What are some examples of how at-risk services can be delivered?

The primary means of providing additional services that are above and beyond what is offered to all students primarily includes additional time or additional staff hired specifically to work with identified at-risk students.



Some appropriate examples of how at-risk services can be delivered are:

- a. Extended year
- b. Before school
- c. After school
- d. Summer school
- e. Extra support within a class
- f. Tutorial assistance
- g. Class within a class

9. May alternative, virtual and charter schools be funded with at-risk funds?

Yes, alternative, virtual and charter schools can use at-risk funding to provide educational services to identified at-risk students.

10. May at-risk funds be used to fund an instructional coach for K-12?

Yes, at-risk funds may be used to hire instructional coaches who work with teachers of at-risk students in grades K-12.

11. How may at-risk funds be used to support direct instruction?

Funds used to support direct instructional services provided to at-risk students includes the hiring of teachers or paraprofessionals (who are appropriately supervised by licensed staff) to offer additional services to at-risk students.

12. May at-risk funds be used to support administrative salaries?

In general, at-risk funds **cannot** be used to support administrative salaries unless the administrator is providing direct instructional services and/or support services to identified at-risk students beyond their regular contract duties. However, if an administrator is fully employed to serve a school that has 100% of its students identified as at-risk based on the at-risk criteria in question #4, at-risk funds can be used to support the administrator's salary. An alternative school is an example in which this situation might apply.

13. May at-risk funds be used to support classroom teacher salaries?

Yes. At-Risk funds may be used for a proportion of a classroom teacher's salary. The proportion that may be paid must be equal to or lower than the proportion of at-risk students in the teacher's class(es). The district would need to be able to verify that evidence-based best practices are being used in the teacher's classroom in order to pay a proportion of their salary.

14. May at-risk funds be used to support social workers, counselors or translators salaries?

At-risk funds can be used to support social workers, counselors or translator's salaries if they are providing direct instructional services and/or support services to identified students. The support services provided should directly impact the reason(s) for which the student was identified as at-risk.

15. May at-risk funds be used to support resource officer's salaries?

No. At-risk funds **cannot** be used to support resource officer's salaries.



16. May at-risk funds be used to support clerical staff salaries?

If clerical staff are fully employed to serve a school that has 100% of its students identified as at-risk according to the criteria in question #4, at-risk funds can be used to support that person's salary. An alternative school is an example of a school that might meet the 100%.

17. May funds be used to support professional development activities?

No, at-risk funds must be spent on additional educational opportunities and instructional services to assist in closing the achievement gap of at-risk students. At-risk funds, however, may pay the salaries of instructional coaches who work with teachers of at-risk students.

18. May at-risk funds be used to purchase equipment?

At-risk funds can be used to purchase equipment that will be used to support at-risk student learning; however, those purchases should be limited to 25% of the total at-risk allocation.

19. May at-risk funds be used for qualified preschool students?

Yes.

20. May at-risk funds be spent on transportation?

Yes, funds may only pay for transportation for at-risk students attending after school programs, extended school or summer school.

21. How must high-density at-risk funds be spent?

School districts that qualify to receive the high-density at-risk weighting pursuant to this section shall spend any money attributable to the school district's high-density at-risk weighting on the at-risk best practices approved by the state board. [K.S.A. 72-5151](#)

22. What student records must be kept for the at-risk program?

Annual records must be kept at the district on the following:

- a. List of students served
- b. Selection criteria including name of assessment and/or evidence-based educational criteria

Link to Evidence-Based Best Practices homepage <http://www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=748>

23. What information on at-risk must districts report at the end of each school year?

According to the school finance law, districts must report annually the following information:

- a. The number of at-risk pupils served or provided assistance
- b. The type of service(s) provided
- c. The research (e.g., student assessment data) upon which the district relied in determining the need for the service or assistance existed
- d. The results (e.g., student impact data) of the service(s) or assistance provided
- e. Any other information required by the State Board

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