Kansas Early Learning Standards Curriculum Analysis Tool

## Preparation

The following items are needed for this alignment activity:

* Kansas Early Learning Standards
* Scope and sequence of the curriculum you are reviewing (enough for each participant to have one or the online version may be used).
* The Standards/Curriculum Checklist for 3-5 (found in the KELS Alignment Toolkit)
* Chart Paper
* Sticky notes (enough to write down each theme/objective in the scope and sequence)
* Markers/writing utensils

Before the alignment process begins, consider the following:

* Each of the standards need to be written on a piece of chart paper with room for sticky notes to be added to it. There will be only one standard per paper. These pages should be posted throughout the room you work in so participants can easily find each of the standards.
* The scope and sequence of the curriculum you are reviewing also needs to be available for each of the participants as they will review each of the themes and objectives.
* Allow for enough physical space for participants to be able to move around the room and reach each of the standards.
* Aligning curriculum to standards is a process that takes time. Carefully planned professional development time is crucial to this process.

## Process

* Place the paper for each standard on the walls or spread out on tables around the room.
* Review the scope and sequence. Write down each theme/objective on a sticky note. Place each item from the scope and sequence to the corresponding standard or standards (they may address more than one standard. For example, if the objective on the scope and sequence is “Child engages in conversations in appropriate ways.” This would be written down on a sticky note. This sticky note would then be placed on the Kansas Early Learning Standard paper that lists “CL.SL.p4.1a: Follows agreed-upon rules for discussions.”
  + While writing down objectives, note any differences between the objective and the standard- especially if there are any gaps. For example, if an objective requires students to count in sequence to 3, and our standards require them to count to 10, there is a gap that needs addressed. These should also be noted on the standard sheet.
* After all sticky notes are placed on the chart papers, gather the group back together and discuss the resulting data.
  + On the Standards Curriculum Checklist, record all of the alignment documentation and notes to create an easy to refer to document for continued work and quick reference. It may be helpful to have one person in charge of recording everything in the checklist as discussions take place.
    - What standards are missing/have no sticky notes on the chart paper?
    - What items in the curriculum do not match what is required in the Kansas Early Learning Standards?
    - Is there another tool we are already using that covers these gaps?
* Continued conversation should focus on how the district plans to address the gaps that were discovered.
  + Are these items already covered in other areas? If so, are all staff doing it?
  + What supplementary tools or activities could support those gaps?
  + What are our next steps?
* This process can be done for all 8 Kansas Early Learning Standards content areas, but particular importance should be placed on the areas of Literacy, Mathematics, and Social Emotional Development.

## Digging Deeper

With the information gathered during the curriculum analysis exercise, programs can dig even deeper to look at vertical alignment across ages and/or grades.

* Look at vocabulary alignment across grades. Are your teachers using the same vocabulary across classrooms. For example, if a child learns the term “oval” in their preschool curriculum, is that the term used for that shape in kindergarten, or is it referred to as an “ellipse”? Vocabulary alignment can be added in the alignment tool under the vocabulary alignment column.
* Look at preceding standards for kindergarten. What do children need to know before they can meet the standards they will be working on in kindergarten?

## Monitor and Revise

Through daily observation, activities and periodic assessments, teachers continuously check for student learning and understanding and adjust as needed. Plan intentionally for early childhood educators to be actively involved in reviewing the children’s outcomes and analyzing that information to decide if adjustments or changes to the curriculum should be made. Regularly review and update the curriculum based on this feedback and data.

Remember that curriculum alignment is an ongoing process, and collaboration among early childhood educators, administrators, and stakeholders is crucial for its success.