

## Life Skills Program Description

### Who is a Life Skills student?

A life skills student has a combination of disabilities that require extensive communication and/or physical and mobility supports in order to meaningfully participate in the academic setting. This student is taking, or would be highly likely to require, the Kansas Alternate Assessment in all content areas. Although a student in the life skills program frequently has some degree of physical or neurological disability, one should not be assigned to a life skills program for these disabilities only. A Student in the life skills program has pronounced cognitive involvement that requires them to be educated exclusively in the extended standards and to be supported with intense and sustained resources throughout the day. The Life Skills curriculum will require an alternate graduation plan.

### Characteristics of Life Skills programs:

- Establish a multimodal communication system that enables the student to make decisions and positively influence people they interact with in multiple settings throughout the day.
- Learn the life skills required for supported or semi-independent living once they graduate from high school.
- Participate in a variety of community-based activities to gain access to a range of social, recreational, and employment opportunities after graduation.
- The school curriculum will consist of repetitive tasks aligned with basic academic content areas and the extended standards while embedding training of practical skills (i.e. toileting, dressing, cooking, laundry, house keeping) in naturally occurring events throughout their day.
- The skills learned in this program should increase the student's independence and their options for living and working in the community.

### Training and educational technologies employed by staff in this program:

- Regardless of the physical or cognitive involvement, a student has the right to contribute in the decision making process that influences events throughout the day.
- Services are provided in a manner that reflects an appreciation for the rights and dignity of the individual.
- All students can communicate preferences for employment and life after high school.
- Staff will receive training on lifting, positioning, and handling, as well as being delegated to administer medications.
- Staff will need to be familiar with a variety of augmentative communication devices and assistive technology to help the student demonstrate needs and accurately express what they know.

### Questions to ask when considering a program emphasizing Life Skills:

- Does the student have pronounced healthcare needs that require ongoing surveillance by specially trained staff?
- Does the student require frequent (i.e. 1 hour or more per week) related services in order to function in school activities?
- Does the student function exclusively in the extended standards in all academic content areas?
- Does the student have significant physical disabilities that require support for transitions and mobility?
- Does the school-aged student still require toileting and other hygiene assistance?
- Does the student need technological interventions and/or a symbol and gesture system in order to communicate?
- Does the student have a difficult time expressing his/her needs to people who are unfamiliar with them?
- Is the decision being driven exclusively by behavioral or physical challenges of the student?