

LIMITED-SCOPE AUDIT PROPOSAL

Evaluating the Need for Developmental Education Courses

SOURCE

This audit proposal was requested by Representative Kristey Williams.

BACKGROUND

Some students must take developmental courses in college. Typically, colleges identify these students through a basic skills test. Although the students are admitted to college, their test scores show they are not prepared in the core areas of math, reading, or writing. Developmental (remedial) courses are meant to prepare students for more rigorous college-level work.

In Kansas, developmental education occurs primarily at community colleges. In 2020, 34% of community college students and about 10% of Kansas public university students took a developmental course.

Many students continue to struggle even after taking these courses. Data from the Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR) show that a third of Kansas students who take developmental courses fail to complete them. Further, most of those who complete the course still fail to graduate from college.

Legislators have expressed concern about why Kansas high school graduates need developmental courses.

AUDIT OBJECTIVES AND TENTATIVE METHODOLOGY

The audit objective listed below is the question we would answer through our audit work. The steps listed for each objective convey the type of work we would do. These may change as we learn more about the audit issues.

Objective 1: What do stakeholders say about why developmental courses in college are necessary?

- Interview Board of Regents staff and review documents to develop an overview of developmental courses including how they are funded, the costs associated with such courses, how many recent Kansas high school graduates took developmental courses, and the process for determining who needs them.
- Interview college and university professors and other staff to get their opinions on why developmental courses are necessary.

- Interview KSDE and other K-12 personnel to get their opinions on why some recent high school graduates still require developmental courses in college.
- Collect opinions on what steps could be taken to reduce the number of students who need developmental courses, and the associated impacts.

ESTIMATED RESOURCES

We estimate this audit would require **100 staff hours** to complete.