

In collaboration with the **Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE)**, the **Center for Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education (TAESE)** supports Kansas mediators, complaint investigators, due process hearing officers, KSDE staff, and state and local school district administrators and practitioners to maintain and increase their understanding of special education law and related issues necessary for them to perform their respective roles.

BUILDING CAPACITY THROUGH PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

TAESE assisted with the planning, facilitation, implementation, and evaluation of the 2020 virtual Tri-State Special Education Law Conference. The conference provided the latest information from due process hearings, circuit court cases, Office of Special Education Programs and Office of Civil Rights guidance letters, and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) procedural requirements.



"Thank you for another great conference. This is the only conference I attend that focuses solely on my job as a complaint investigator. I'm so thankful!"

— Conference Participant

Session topics were developed to help school personnel and other stakeholders stay current on legal issues in special education. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the conference shifted from an in-person to virtual format, with 850 participants attending the conference. Of the 414 responses to an evaluation survey, 73% rated the session topics as excellent and 69% rated the breakout rooms as excellent. For each of 20 preconference and breakout sessions, on average 70% of participants rated the speaker as excellent.

TAESE facilitated three dispute resolution workgroups, each of which met four times during the 2020–21 school year. These workgroups were specifically designed for due process hearing officers, mediators, and complaint investigators to improve and maintain a special education dispute resolution system as part of IDEA general supervision responsibilities and to collaborate with individuals serving similar roles in other states. In addition to the quarterly meetings, TAESE facilitated a webinar, *Primer on Accessibility Awareness in Special Education: A Focus on Dispute Resolution Systems*, that guided participants through web accessibility mandates in education.

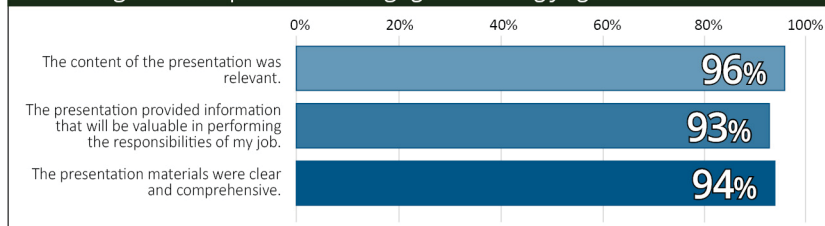
"This was my first year of attendance and it was simply excellent. Thank you so much for this high-quality session."

— Conference Participant

Of the 14 responses to the webinar evaluation, 100% were satisfied with the webinar and agreed that the information was useful. Further, TAESE maintains a subscription to the *Legal Report Publication*, ensuring that dispute resolution contractors have access to the latest legal alerts and information in special education.

TRI-STATE SPECIAL EDUCATION LAW CONFERENCE FEEDBACK

Percentage of Participants Answering *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* Across 20 Sessions



EXPANDING ACCESS TO SCHOOL-BASED SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS

TAESE coordinates the TASK12 Assessment for school-based sign language interpreters in order to improve services and outcomes for children and youth who are deaf or hard of hearing. As part of this service, TAESE administers a valid and research-based educational interpreter performance assessment to eligible, school-based, sign language interpreters in Kansas and facilitates a multi-state TASK12 Advisory Board. Fifteen Kansans completed the onsite assessment in Fall 2020 and 10 Kansans completed the assessment in Spring 2021.



ANALYZING DATA TO INFORM DECISIONS

TAESE, in collaboration with Data Driven Enterprises, supported the KSDE by collecting, analyzing, and reporting data for Indicators 4, 8, 9, 10, and 14 within the IDEA State Performance Plan. Highlights of this technical assistance included interviewing 387 individuals who exited high school during the prior year to determine their postschool outcomes, analyzing data from 454 completed surveys from parents/guardians of students with disabilities, calculating disproportionate representation indicators, and providing both state-level and district-level reports. Additional data are available on the KSDE website.

MORE INFORMATION AT:

WWW.KSDE.TASN.ORG/CAPACITY_DEVELOPMENT