

Introduction

The Kansas Board of Regents has received approximately \$11.7 million of GEER II funding from the U.S. Department of Education. Governor Laura Kelly previously approved the Regents' spending priorities, and the Kansas Board of Regents requests the SPARK Executive Committee to approve their spending authority to use GEER II funds on the previously approved priorities.

Background on Prior GEER Funds

The Coronavirus Aid, Recovery, and Economic Security (CARES) Act of March 2020 established the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund. The U.S. Department of Education awarded nearly \$3 billion in GEER grants to states to provide assistance to students and families through school districts, institutions of higher education, and other education-related organizations. Kansas received \$26,274,000 in GEER funding in 2020. Pursuant to provisions in the 2020 Special Session HB 2016, the Governor requested State Finance Council approval to allocate the entire \$26.3 million to the Kansas Board of Regents for distribution to state universities. State Finance Council approved the allocation on June 16, 2020.

GEER II

In December 2020, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 (HR 133) was signed into law and added an additional \$4.1 billion for the GEER Fund. Kansas received a second GEER allocation of \$11,678,709, referred to as the State's GEER II award. As a continuation of GEER I, the GEER II award was also allocated to the Kansas Board of Regents. The Board of Regents' spending priorities—outlined below in Appendix 1—were approved by the Governor.

Current Request

The Kansas Board of Regents is seeking spending authority from the SPARK Executive Committee for the GEER II funds in accordance with the priorities that were previously identified and approved.

Appendix 1: Kansas Board of Regents Priorities Approved by the Governor

Address Opportunity Gaps - \$5,000,000	
	Consulting services from the National Center for Student Success at Georgia State University
	Centralized professional academic advisors (one year of financial support)
	Support for Peer Tutors
Improve Student Well-Being - \$4,500,000	
	Recovery scholarships to attend public institutions of higher education
	Enhance the work study and internship programs to create more opportunities for students to gain work experience
	Expand mental health services for students
	Offer financial support for campus pantries to address students' food insecurity
Establish a Postsecondary Education Plan - \$2,000,000	
	Improve the rate of Kansas high school student FAFSA completion
	Improve the college going rate with greater postsecondary admission and recruitment of high school students impacted by COVID, with ACT or other similar preparation assistance, as needed
	Construct an online portal of college courses offered to any Kansas high school students (with college maintenance of the API source data)
Incentivize Widespread Adoption of Open Educational Resources (OER) - \$30,000	
	Pay faculty a stipend to review materials and encourage adoption; open educational resources are materials for teaching or learning that are either in the public domain or have been released under a license that allows them to be freely used, changed, or shared with others. Adoption of OER has benefit to students in reducing their cost of attendance.
Administrative Costs - \$148,709	
	The Board of Regents staff will incur costs to administer the grants identified above