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Office of Recovery Newsletter | July 1, 2022

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July 1, 2022



This week's edition of the Office of Recovery Newsletter features information about

recently announced appreciation bonuses for Kansas childcare providers. Child Care Aware of Kansas will be distributing \$53M to approximately 22,650 early childhood care staff in one-time bonus payments.

Also highlighted below is a US Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration grant awarded to Exploration Place Inc., in Wichita. The \$1.3M in federal funding provided through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) will be used to create an outdoor riverfront park to expand events and encourage tourism. Also included is an update on the federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and resources for Kansans to access information about BIL programs and funding opportunities.

For the latest SPARK updates and information about resources available to Kansans, see the “Updates to Services and Support” section of this newsletter. For the most up-to-date information, please visit the Office of Recovery website at: COVID.ks.gov

Program Spotlight



\$53 Million Available for Appreciation Bonuses for Child Care

Providers in Kansas

Governor Laura Kelly recently announced that a total of \$53 million is available to provide bonuses for eligible childcare staff at licensed facilities as a reward for their incredibly essential, hard work. The funds will be made available through Child Care Workforce Appreciation Bonuses that will soon be directly distributed to approximately 22,650 early childhood care staff members across Kansas. Individual bonus amounts will range from \$750 to \$2,500 per person.

Eligible childcare providers must be regularly working in a paid position at a licensed facility and have a minimum of six months continuous employment at their current employer or six months of combined continuous employment with a licensed provider. Home-based and relative providers may also qualify for the bonus program. There is also an opportunity for those who have worked less than six months at a licensed facility to receive a bonus. The Appreciation Bonus is a one-time payment that will begin in mid-to-late July and is funded through federal Child Care Development Funds.

Licensed facilities include childcare centers, including all Head Start programs and preschools; school age programs; day care homes; and DCF relative providers.

In total, more than \$272 million has been invested to support childcare providers in Kansas, including three rounds of Child Care Sustainability Grants to aid childcare providers to meet the costs of operating their businesses through the remaining impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The third round of Child Care Sustainability Grants announced in March [made more than \\$160 million](#) available for childcare businesses to use toward payroll expenses, costs of operations, and potential revenue losses. Rounds one and two of the Sustainability grants provided nearly \$100 million in support to ensure childcare centers and home-based providers were able to remain open.

Child Care Aware of Kansas (CCAKS) will implement the program on behalf of the Kansas Department for Children and Families and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. All eligible childcare workers will receive a letter in July outlining the process to accept the bonus and will have until Nov. 18 to act. CCAKS will offer educational webinars about the process as well. Learn more at www.ks.childcareaware.org.

Economic Development





Wichita's Exploration Place Receives \$1.3M in Federal Funding to Create Outdoor Park

This week the US Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) awarded a \$1.3 million grant to Exploration Place, Inc., in Wichita to create an outdoor riverfront park. This grant is funded through the American Rescue Plan.

This project will provide [Exploration Place](#), the Sedgwick County science and discovery center, a space for new and expanded events, bringing new visitors to the city, its businesses, and attractions. This EDA grant will be matched with \$313,997 in local funds and is expected to create 21 jobs, according to estimates.

"The outdoor riverfront park at Exploration Place will attract tourists to Wichita, create high-quality jobs for local residents, and provide more educational opportunities to our students," said Governor Laura Kelly. "This investment will help our state's economy continue to grow in a way that benefits every Kansan."

This project is funded under EDA's \$240 million competitive American Rescue Plan [Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation program](#). Over 150 applications were

received nationwide for the competitive grant, with only 27 awarded as of today, with Wichita's award among the largest.

Infrastructure Funding



Learn More About Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Funding Opportunities

On November 6, 2021, Congress passed the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law \(Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act\)](#). This bill provides funding to States and communities for investments in roads, bridges and rails, expanding access to clean drinking water and high-speed internet, addressing the climate crisis, and investing in under-developed communities.

Local governments that have received American Rescue Plan Act funding can use a portion of those dollars alongside funding opportunities provided by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). The US Treasury Final Rule states that ARPA funding up to the amount of the recipient's reduction in revenue due to the public health emergency, generally may be used to meet the non-federal cost-share or matching requirements of other federal programs.

A new resource for local governments is the recently created [Kansas Infrastructure Hub](#), which will coordinate Kansas state agencies and local entities as they administer and apply for funding available through the federal BIL. The Hub will identify statewide and regional infrastructure priorities, strategize as to how to maximize investment opportunities, and promote best practices in securing and distributing funding.

Kansas is set to receive close to \$3.8 billion in direct funds for transportation, water, energy, and broadband projects. Kansas could potentially receive more by applying for competitive grants. The Hub will provide resources and a point of connection for

Kansas state and local agencies as they track funds and grant opportunities. It is not a governing body, nor will it distribute funds to individual entities.

Government, infrastructure, and business leaders are invited to the Hub's Kansas Infrastructure Summit in Wichita on July 13th and 14th to learn more about the grant opportunities available under the BIL, discuss strategies for preparing winning grant applications, and share input on infrastructure priorities in Kansas. In-person and virtual attendance is available. [Click here to register](#) and learn more.

Any questions or inquiries about the BIL or infrastructure funds should be directed to BIL@ks.gov.

Updates to Services and Support



Stay Informed on the SPARK Process

The four SPARK Advisory Panels (Connectivity, Economic Revitalization, Efficiency and Modernization, and Health and Education) spent several months assembling recommendations for the distribution of discretionary American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. All four Advisory Panels presented their investment recommendations to the SPARK Executive Committee during meetings on [April 15](#) and [April 18](#).

The Executive Committee will consider these panel recommendations before finalizing its own recommendations and presenting them to the State Finance Council, which has final authority on investment decisions. The committee has not yet met to finalize its recommendations. The Executive Committee's next meeting will be available to livestream on the [Kansas Legislature YouTube Page](#) once scheduled.

All previous Advisory Panel meeting materials and recordings can be found on our website: [Advisory Panels Materials](#). SPARK Executive Committee meeting

recordings and materials, including the recommendation materials presented by the Advisory Panels, are available at: [SPARK Materials](#).

Contact the RO

The Office of Recovery is here to offer support and coordination. Questions and inquiries may be submitted via the [Contact Us](#) form. Please visit covid.ks.gov for up-to-date information and resources on recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic for Kansas residents, businesses, and communities.

Question/Request Form

DeAngela Burns-Wallace, Ed.D.

Secretary, Kansas Department of Administration

On behalf of the Office of Recovery,

Kansas Governor Laura Kelly

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