
**Report to
The Vermont Legislature**

**Proposed use of remaining Child Care Development Block
Grant American Rescue Plan Act Discretionary Funds**

Submitted to: Joint Fiscal Committee Senate Committee
House Committee on Human Services
Senate Committee on Health and Welfare

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Report Date: August 23, 2022



AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES
Department for Children and Families

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Part I: Summary

The remaining American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Child Care Development Fund Discretionary funds (\$2.5M) must be obligated by September 30, 2022. This report serves as the department's plan for review and acceptance at the Joint Fiscal Committee September 2022 meeting.

As required, the plan must be provided to the Chair of the House Committee on Human Services and of the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare for input prior to action by the Joint Fiscal Committee.

Part II: Child Care Development Block Grant (ARPA Discretionary)

Of the \$18.3 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Discretionary funds received by Vermont, \$15.26 million has been awarded through competitive procurement as identified below:

State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2022 and SFY 2023 – Total \$10.86M

- a. \$2.6M for workforce supports. As appropriated, Act 45 (H.171) directs the Child Development Division (CDD) to direct ARPA Discretionary funds towards scholarships for current early childhood providers and towards scholarships for prospective early childhood workforce. Discretionary funds will be used to support two new workforce programs as established in Sec. 6 33 V.S.A. chapter 35 §3542 and §3543.
- b. \$500,000 for one-time supplemental Special Accommodation Grants to support specialized needs of children in child care settings and maintain childcare placements.
- c. \$500,000 for business training support for child care. This need was particularly highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic and identified as part of the child care stabilization efforts.
- d. \$1.8M child care and after school capacity building activities in forms of grants and activities to support additional slots and hours for Vermont's children in regulated settings.

SFY 2024 – Total \$4.4M

- e. \$2.6M to continue workforce supports as identified above.
- f. \$1.8M child care and after school capacity building activities in forms of grants and activities to support additional slots and hours for Vermont's children in regulated settings.

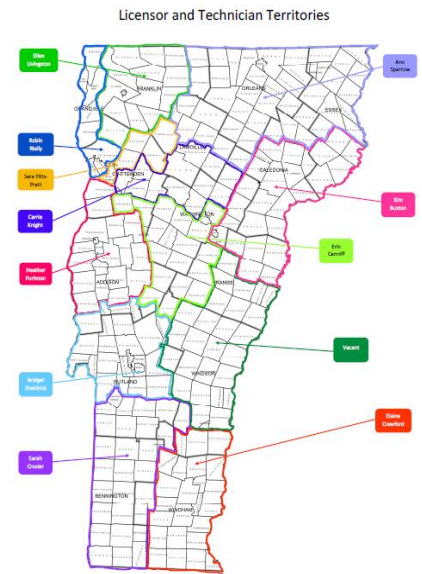
Part III: Proposal for Remaining Funds

Additionally, CDD proposes allocating \$2.5 million for competitively procured regional Quality Coach positions that will support the quality and sustainability of the early childhood system in Vermont and \$639,732 for internal administrative costs associated with this program, including staff time, allocated costs as permissible, and other operational expenses necessary to run these various grant programs.

The proposed plan was created based on insights gathered from the field, federal technical assistance, national case studies (linked below), and our internal subject matter experts who convened for 8 individual sessions to identify needs and gaps in the early childhood system. Stakeholder engagement identified that system supports are a top priority in Vermont. The field highlighted the need for coaching and technical assistance as well as the desire to develop/enhance the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) and to develop/enhance statewide child care resource and referral services. Currently, Vermont does not have regional technical assistance supports for overall quality improvement for child care programs/providers.

Part IV: Quality Coaches

The regional quality coaches will be located in each of the 12 child care licensing regions (see map for reference). Their main focus will be to support the early childhood system by providing coaching and other on-site, individualized professional development strategies including consultation, mentoring, and technical assistance to support application of teaching practices and overall quality improvement. Additionally, they will provide professional development activities such as classroom training or workshops and collaboratively develop continuous quality improvement (CQI) plans for approaching and completing goals in Vermont's QRIS known as STARS (STep Ahead Recognition System). They will also act as a support for the Early Childhood Networks. These positions will be local and able to visit programs in person when needed and be adaptable based on the needs of the program, provider, and region.



Part V: Conclusion

The American Rescue Plan Act Child Care Development Fund Discretionary funds (\$2.5M) must be obligated by September 30, 2022. Stakeholder feedback has made it clear that the Child Development Division needs to strengthen the overall structure of supports for the early childhood system. The Child Development Division is confident that the best way to strengthen structure currently is to create Quality Coach positions around the state to fill a critical gap in Vermont's early childhood system. This proposal will meet the needs of providers and will have extensive impacts for Vermont families as well.

Part VI: Links

- [Driving Quality Early Learning Through Coaching and Leadership - New Teacher Center](#)
- [Webinar: Coaching in Early Care and Education and Quality Improvement: ACF's National Research Conference on Early Childhood 2020 | The Administration for Children and Families \(hhs.gov\)](#)