
INTERNET FOR ALL

Kansas Digital Equity Plan Crosswalk



Internet for All

U.S. Department of Commerce

National Telecommunications and Information Administration

Crosswalk of Digital Equity Plans and NOFO Requirements

The crosswalk below reflects the alignment between the Kansas Digital Equity Plan and the NOFO requirements.

#	NOFO Requirement	Eligible Entity Plan – Reference Location (i.e., page number)	Notes
Statutory Requirements			
1	Identification of barriers to digital equity faced by covered populations in the State.	Section 3.2 Current State of Digital Equity: Barriers and Assets; <i>Covered Population Needs Assessment (pages 55-66)</i>	Barriers are identified by strategic objectives, covered populations and demography
2	Measurable objectives for documenting and promoting, among each Covered Population located in that State — <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The availability of, and affordability of access to, fixed and wireless broadband technology; b. The online accessibility and inclusivity of public resources and services; c. Digital literacy; d. Awareness of, and the use of, measures to secure the online privacy of, and cybersecurity with respect to, an individual; and e. The availability and affordability of consumer devices and technical support for those devices. 	Section 2.3 Introduction; <i>Strategy and Objectives (pages 21 – 27)</i> ; Detailed Measurable Objectives with KPI by covered population: Table 3 (pages 28-30)	Measurable objectives are identified for each covered population along with key performance indicators by population along with baselines and targets
3	An assessment of how the measurable objectives identified in item 2 of this Section IV.C.1.b.i will impact and interact with the State’s: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Economic and workforce development goals, plans, and outcomes; b. Educational outcomes; c. Health outcomes; d. Civic and social engagement; and e. Delivery of other essential services. 	Section 2.2 Introduction; <i>Alignment with Existing Efforts to Improve Outcomes (pages 10 – 21)</i> ; Table 2: Alignment Of State Agency Plans With Objectives	Alignment is identified for each item along with a table including the agency/plan, state goals, related components and the KOBD DEA Plan Objectives
4	In order to achieve the measurable objectives identified in item 2 of this Section IV.C.1.b.i, a description of how the State plans to collaborate with key	Introduction: <i>Implementation</i> page 7; Section 4 Stakeholder Engagement (<i>pages 72 – 81</i>);	Collaborations with key stakeholders are identified as well as plans for future collaborative activities and

	<p>stakeholders in the State, which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Community anchor institutions; b. County and municipal governments; c. Local educational agencies; d. Where applicable, Indian Tribes, Alaska Native entities, or Native Hawaiian organizations; e. Nonprofit organizations; f. Organizations that represent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Individuals with disabilities, including organizations that represent children with disabilities; ii. Aging Individuals; iii. Individuals with language barriers, including: (1) Individuals who are English learners; and (2) Individuals who have low levels of literacy; iv. Veterans; and v. Individuals in that State who are incarcerated in facilities other than Federal correctional facilities; g. Civil rights organizations; h. Entities that carry out workforce development programs; i. Agencies of the State that are responsible for administering or supervising adult education and literacy activities in the State; j. Public housing authorities in the State; and k. A partnership between any of the entities described in clauses (a) through (l) 	<p>5.1 Implementation Strategy and Key Activities</p>	<p>new collaborative engagements</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>A list of organizations the Administering Entity for the State worked with in developing the Plan.</p>	<p>Mentioned in 3.1.1-3.1.3 Statewide Digital Equity Assets <i>pages 32-48</i></p>	<p>Full list of organizations in Appendix 2</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>A stated vision for digital equity.</p>	<p>Section 2.1 Introduction; Vision</p>	

7	A digital equity needs assessment, including a comprehensive assessment of the baseline from which the State is working and the State’s identification of the barriers to digital equity faced generally and by each of the covered populations in the State.	Section 3.2 Current State of Digital Equity: Barriers and Assets; <i>Needs Assessment (pages 57)</i>	
8	An asset inventory, including current resources, programs, and strategies that promote digital equity for each of the covered populations, whether publicly or privately funded, as well as existing digital equity plans and programs already in place among municipal, regional, and Tribal governments.	Municipal, Regional, and Sovereign Tribal Nations Digital Equity Plans Section 3.1 Current State of Digital Equity: Barriers and Assets; <i>Asset Inventory (pages 32 – 53 and Appendices 2 – 5)</i>	Tribal statement mention in 2.2.8 Description of asset inventory as well as referenced appendices
9	To the extent not addressed in connection with item 4 of Section IV.C.1.b.i, a coordination and outreach strategy, including opportunities for public comment by, collaboration with, and ongoing engagement with representatives of each category of covered populations within the State and with the full range of stakeholders within the State.	Section 4.1 Stakeholder Engagement; <i>Coordination and Outreach Strategy (pages 72 – 78)</i>	Description of coordinated outreach strategies inclusive of public comment for covered populations Public Tracker attached “Written Responses and Actions Taken by State in Response” in Column J indicates where exactly added to the plan
10	A description of how municipal, regional, and/or Tribal digital equity plans will be incorporated into the State Digital Equity Plan.	Section 2 Introduction; 2.2.8 <i>Municipal, Regional, and Sovereign Tribal Nations Digital Equity Plans (page 19 – 20)</i> Section 3 Current State of Digital Equity: Barriers and Assets; 3.1.2 <i>Existing Digital Equity Plans (page 45)</i> Section 4 Stakeholder Engagement; <i>Digital Equity Advisory Council (page 74)</i>	Ongoing efforts for collaboration is described. No tribal DE plans are available as of this writing
11	An implementation strategy that is holistic and addresses the barriers to participation in the digital world, including affordability, devices, digital skills, technical support, and digital navigation. The strategy should (a) establish measurable goals, objectives,	Section 4 Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement; 4.3 <i>Future Plan for Stakeholder Engagement (pages 78 – 81)</i> Section 5 Implementation Strategy and Key Activities <i>(pages 82 – 91)</i>	

	and proposed core activities to address the needs of covered populations, (b) set out measures ensuring the plan’s sustainability and effectiveness across State communities, and (c) adopt mechanisms to ensure that the plan is regularly evaluated and updated.		
12	An explanation of how the implementation strategy addresses gaps in existing state, local, and private efforts to address the barriers identified pursuant to Section IV.C.1.b.i, item 1, of this NOFO.	Section 5 Implementation Strategy and Key Activities (pages 84 – 89) Table 22-26 Strategy Activities addresses the gaps by activity	Addressing Gaps highlight 5.1.5 – page 88 – 89
13	A description of how the State intends to accomplish the implementation strategy described above by engaging or partnering with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Workforce agencies such as state workforce agencies and state/local workforce boards and workforce organizations; b. Labor organizations and community-based organizations; and c. Institutions of higher learning, including but not limited to four-year colleges and universities, community colleges, education and training providers, and educational service agencies; 	Section 2 Alignment with Existing Efforts to Improve Outcomes (pages 13 – 16, 20 – 21 and 25) Section 5 Implementation Strategy and Key Activities (pages 89 – 90)	Description of engagement plans and the intended stakeholders
14	A timeline for implementation of the plan.	Section 5 Implementation; 5.2 Timeline (page 90)	Timeline of activities and phases included in implementation and objectives addressed
15	A description of how the State will coordinate its use of State Digital Equity Capacity Grant funding and its use of any funds it receives in connection with the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program, other federal or private digital equity funding.	Section 4.3.2 Regional Broadband Planning Strategy for BEAD/DEA alignment (pages 78 – 80)	Collaborative plans are described as the various funding becomes available; this will be an ongoing effort

2023

**DIGITAL
EQUITY**

Strategic Plan

**FINAL
SUBMISSION**

January 22, 2024



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Note: Please see the Glossary to quickly confirm any abbreviations or acronyms in this document.

1. Executive Summary

“If we are serious about competing in today’s global economy and recruiting the best talent to come to our state, and keeping our children where they grew up, then we must do everything in our power to end the digital divide.”

— Governor Laura Kelly

“Broadband equity starts with access, but also includes adoption and application. [Kansas] is committed to providing capacity and resources to ensure everyone has the access and skills needed to benefit from digital technologies in their lives.”

— Lieutenant Governor and Secretary of Commerce David Toland

“Kansans use the internet to work, learn, keep in touch with family, grow a business, get health care, and more. While access to high-speed internet is a gateway to opportunity, that opportunity is not distributed equally in our state. I’m proud to have voted for this new federal funding from the bipartisan infrastructure law that will help every Kansan thrive in the digital age.”

— Rep. Sharice Davids (KS-03)

Ensuring every Kansan has access to reliable and affordable broadband service and the digital literacy skills necessary to live, learn, work, play, and compete equitably in an increasingly technology-driven society is a priority of the Kelly administration. In 2020, Governor Kelly established the Kansas Office of Broadband Development (KOBD), housed within the Kansas Department of Commerce, to lead the state’s broadband deployment, affordability, and digital equity efforts.

Kansas Office of Broadband Development

KOBD believes in taking a comprehensive approach to federal and state funding opportunities to close the digital divide, which has made Kansas a national leader in applying for and using a wide range of opportunities to benefit our residents. Kansas is poised to leverage the historic federal infrastructure investment made to ensure all Kansans have access to affordable broadband and the necessary devices, training, and technical support to participate in our digital economy.

KOBD has already secured significant funding to date:

- \$15.5 million from the U.S. Treasury's Capital Projects Fund-Digital Connectivity Technology (CPF-DCT). This was the first award in the nation made under this program by the Treasury Department.
- \$42.5 million from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration’s (NTIA) Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Program (EMMBI) in collaboration with the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT).
- \$83 million from the Capital Projects Fund (CPF) for infrastructure projects.
- \$451.7 million to support universal broadband service through the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program.

These funds will support a wide range of programs, including support for community anchor institutions (CAI), internet-enabled devices for unserved and underserved Kansans, a 682-mile open-access, middle-mile fiber optic network, along with fast and reliable internet service to nearly 30,000 homes, businesses, schools, healthcare facilities, and other public institutions. In support of the universal broadband coverage goal, KOBD ensures all

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Kansans have access to the training affordable devices, and technical skills needed to fully participate in the digital economy.

Understanding Digital Equity in Kansas

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, over 153,000 Kansans statewide lack subscriptions to high-speed internet due to infrastructure availability, affordability, or access to devices, digital literacy skills knowledge, and support. The connectivity gap is particularly noticeable within covered populations who have historically experienced lower rates of computer and internet use. Covered populations as defined by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration are:

- individuals who live in covered households (referred to throughout the rest of this plan as “low-income households”)
- aging individuals who are 60 years of age and older
- incarcerated individuals (KOBBD definition updated to include individuals on probation or parole and referred to throughout the rest of this plan as “justice-involved”)
- veterans
- individuals with disabilities
- people with language barriers
- members of racial or ethnic minority groups

- individuals who reside in rural areas (KOBBD definition updated to use National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) data and delineations)

To better understand these digital equity gaps, KOBBD conducted a statewide “Broadband Roadshow” in the spring of 2023. Staff traveled over 50,000 miles, presenting and leading discussions in more than 28 events. These meetings served as the initial introduction of KOBBD to the residents, businesses, local officials, nonprofits, CAIs, and associations of Kansas, with a goal to meet Kansans “where they live.” This comprehensive and collaborative approach helped KOBBD better identify the needs and barriers of those populations experiencing gaps in broadband adoption, affordability, device and technical support availability, and digital literacy skills and knowledge. These communities helped KOBBD understand the impact digital equity issues have on economic opportunities, healthcare, education, workforce development, and civic engagement, helping shape KOBBD’s digital equity vision and this digital equity plan.

Moreover, KOBBD enlisted the expertise and support of the University of Kansas (KU) and Wichita State University (WSU) to help draw a clearer picture of the needs, assets, and opportunities for digital equity in Kansas.

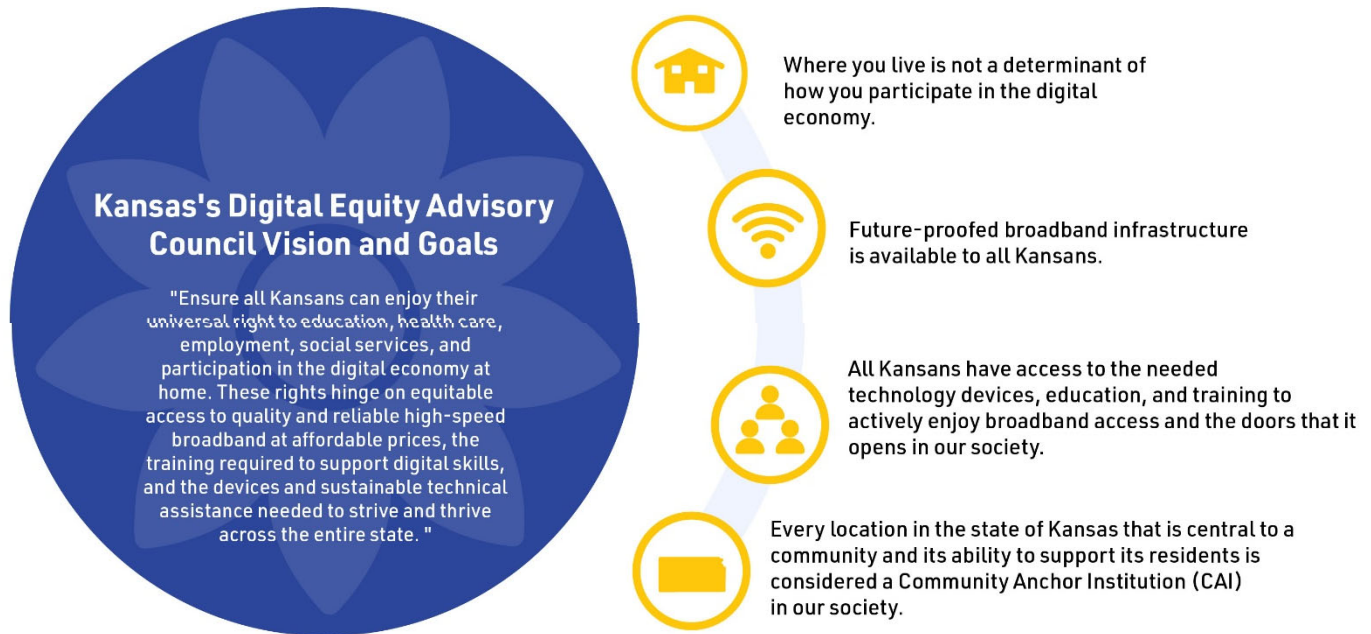
Digital Equity – Definition

Digital equity is the condition in which all individuals have the information technology capacity needed to fully participate in society, democracy, and the economy.¹

See other key digital equity terms defined in Appendix 1.

The Goals and Vision for Digital Equity in Kansas

KOBD's Digital Equity Advisory Council is a group of respected leaders who represent Kansans from all covered populations in every part of the state. The Advisory Council authored the vision for digital equity and this plan:



Lessons Learned

Financial Resources and Partnerships

In addition to the funding detailed earlier, KOBD has used and is pursuing specific funding (see 2.2.1) to address digital equity in Kansas. KOBD also recognizes the road to close the digital divide requires strong partnerships and financial resources. Partnerships with communities and organizations across the state are foundational to the role of KOBD in unifying, amplifying, and expanding the important work of those entities. KOBD's investment in productive partnerships with all types of organizations and communities includes state agencies, municipalities, counties, Sovereign Tribal Nations, schools, foundations and other philanthropic entities, libraries, public-private partners, nonprofit organizations, labor unions, associations, and other non-traditional entities.

Common Themes

Consistent themes around digital equity KOBD heard in outreach efforts are that broadband access, affordability, knowledge, and support improve lives and communities. Participants shared stories about how equitable broadband access and adoption relieved isolation, provided a level playing field for employment searches, advanced education, attracted business, and opened telehealth opportunities. Demand for broadband is universal.

Even with the hurdles of connectivity issues, nearly 95% of WSU survey respondents reported working at least in part from home or relying on the internet for email, shopping, news and entertainment, healthcare appointments, or education.

The needs assessment conducted by KU identified barriers for members of covered populations. Individuals in low-income households tend to prioritize funds for other expenses beyond broadband, while those living in rural areas may not

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live near broadband infrastructure. For some veterans, affordability and lack of awareness of the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) are clear obstacles to access. Individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority frequently face issues related to affordability or language barriers, while people with disabilities may encounter a barrier in the cost of special technology.

KOBD and KU surveyed Kansas digital equity leaders and advocates to identify partners providing services that support digital equity work. Library access, job training programs, digital literacy skills training, accessing government benefits, providing technology equipment, and workforce development training were identified as activities where partnerships are needed.

Strategies and Objectives

This plan was built on key strategies and measurable objectives that will guide KOBD's efforts to close the digital equity gap in Kansas.

Strategies

1. Leverage the work of existing partners to enhance the number of digital equity resources throughout the state
2. Create sustainable affordability options building on the success of current partners and programs
3. Establish KOBD's digital equity division as a repository of information and connections
4. Engage and educate partners and donors to cultivate long-term investment in digital equity
5. Empower Kansans with in-demand workforce skills so they can thrive wherever they live

Objectives

- **Availability:** Improve availability of broadband across Kansas
- **Affordability:** Increase access to and adoption of affordable broadband service
- **Digital Literacy Skills:** Focus on the growth of digital literacy skills, education, and knowledge
- **Cybersecurity:** Increase awareness of and proficiency in dealing with online privacy and cybersecurity issues
- **Devices:** Expand access to affordable devices with accommodating technical support
- **Public Services:** Promote the online accessibility and inclusivity of public resources and services

Aligning Efforts to Improve Outcomes

As mentioned earlier, the creation and nurturing of partnerships is a key contributor to the success of digital equity efforts. Beyond merely establishing these relationships, KOBD will work to ensure collaboration and alignment among those partner plans and activities. To maximize the impact of the state's digital equity efforts, KOBD must coordinate local, regional, and Sovereign Tribal Nation activities. Collaborative effort to plan and invest in reliable broadband access, affordability, skills, and support can increase reach and efficiency while reducing duplication of effort and competition for scarce resources. KOBD understands that the alignment of these efforts to increase workforce development, health access, educational attainment, and more is vital to secure digital equity for

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Kansas. Sections 3 through 5 of this plan provide more detailed information about potential partners and strategies for alignment.

The Digital Equity Plan – Development and Implementation

Development of the Plan

The timing of Governor Kelly’s foresight in calling for action on broadband access in Kansas and in creating KOBD aligned perfectly with the unprecedented BEAD and DEA funding opportunities created by Congress. The foundational work conducted by KOBD — the Roadshow, needs assessment, asset inventory, and partner conversations — has laid the foundation for Kansas’ digital equity vision, a set of strategies and objectives, and this plan to close the digital divide. Thanks to the involvement of committed partners, Advisory Council Members, and Kansans statewide, we now have a plan to achieve true digital equity.

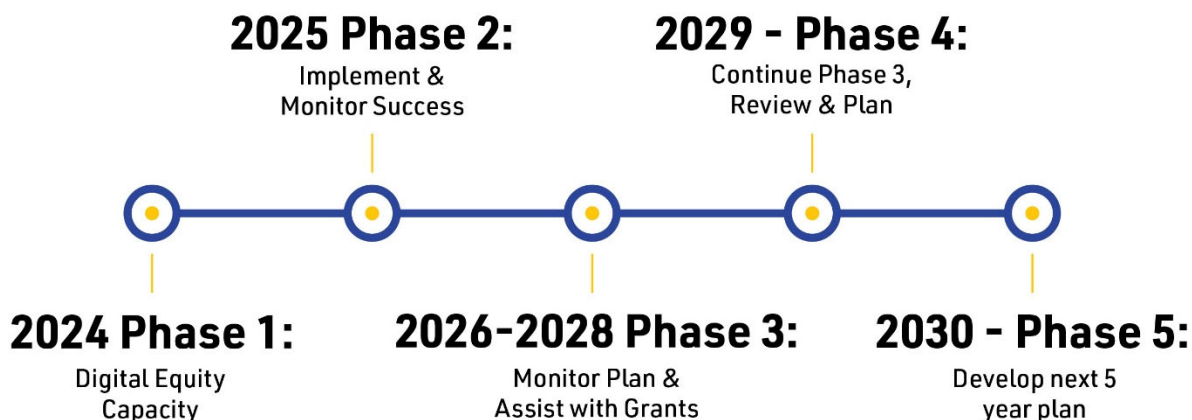
Implementation

Kansas will continue implementation of this Digital Equity Plan. After the initial planning phase, the first implementation phase will begin in 2024 with continued work in broadband ready communities, convening the Advisory Council, building the digital equity asset mapping tool, and applications for the next round of federal funding. The next three phases will involve the distribution of funds, implementation of plan activities, outreach to the philanthropic sector, and continued work on asset mapping. During the last phase, KOBD and its partners will begin planning to ensure sustainability of the initial Digital Equity Plan.

Like this Digital Equity Plan itself, the implementation phase will continue to evolve, change, and strengthen as KOBD develops a stronger rapport with local stakeholders, state agencies, and Advisory Council members to make implementation activities and tasks more sustainable and applicable toward all covered populations. These activities include convening with state agencies, nonprofit, municipalities, libraries and organizations like the Department of Aging, Board of Regents, Children and Family Services, Office of Rural Prosperity, Kansas Native American Affairs Office, International Rescue Committee, NCircle, AARP, and PCs for People.

Advisory Council members who represent all covered populations have selected implementation roles including the Outreach and Engagement role, which promotes Digital Equity by convening statewide partners to inform and execute ongoing activities and events; the Advocacy role, which provides public support for or recommendations on a particular state cause or policy; and the Digital Equity Ambassador role, which is a promoter or representative of specific activities to close the digital divide. KOBD believes these roles will help drive purpose and participation of not only the continued monthly Council meetings, but also the implementation of activities statewide — therefore increasing awareness and opportunity for KOBD to meet the covered populations where they are, and highlight programs that support them.

2023 – 2030 Digital Equity Plan Timeline



Measuring Success

While each of these objectives is important, KOBD recognizes Kansas stakeholders require greater specificity and clarity. Therefore, each objective contains refined Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) related to each covered population. These KPIs are derived from various sources for different populations where meaningful distinctions and specific data exist. Some measures apply across multiple populations, as well. Those KPIs, along with baseline measurements, near-term targets, and long-term targets, are in section 2.3.2 Objectives below.

In addition, KOBD recognizes that different regions of the state will feel each objective’s impact differently and have different priorities. The key to effectively measuring success is working with regional and local leaders and advocates to identify the specific impact on each area and each covered population within that area. KOBD will support this work with statewide data tools and resources, including sophisticated GIS mapping platforms.

Moving Forward

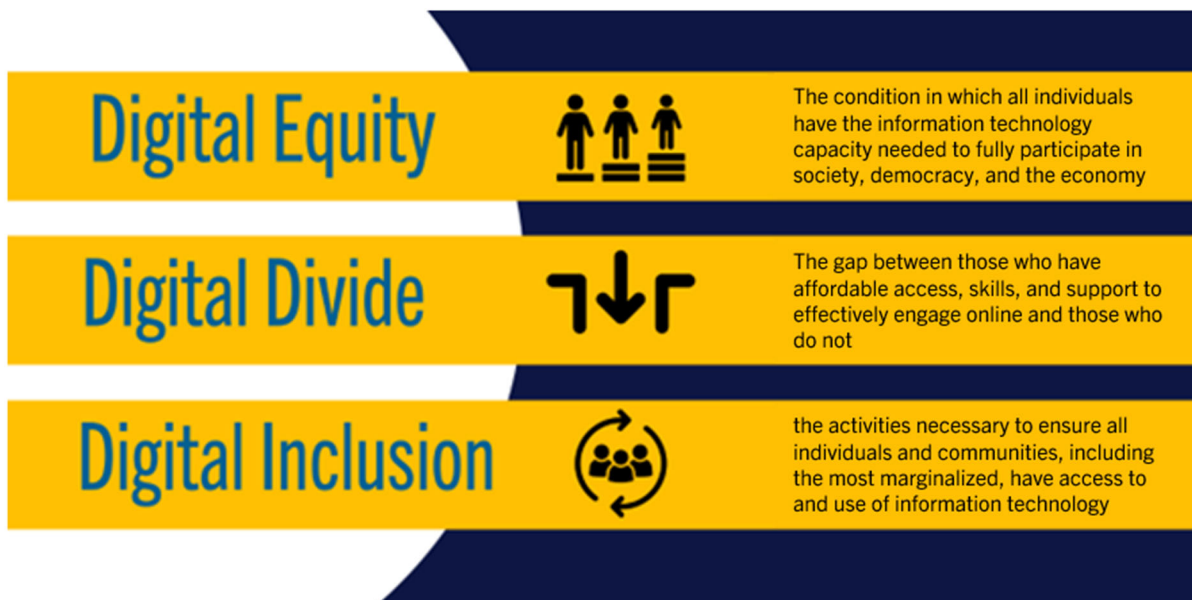
KOBD and its partners believe the success of this plan means greater success for Kansas and all its residents. Creating opportunities for access to the digital world for those who do not currently have it means creating opportunities for economic development, education, jobs, healthcare, and more. The Digital Equity Plan says to all Kansans that everyone has an equal right to access opportunity and thrive in our state.



2. Introduction

We live in challenging times, but Kansans are born to meet challenges. Today, Kansas faces obstacles in health outcomes, education, employment, and civic engagement that impact different Kansans in unique ways. These obstacles have complicated roots and create many obstacles that can frustrate progress. However, technology and our digital reality can reshape problems to make and create the solutions of tomorrow, today. For example, healthcare enabled by telemedicine can improve health outcomes in every corner of the state. Education augmented by online and around-the-clock resources can help build the skills and knowledge base of every Kansan. In fact, technology is the key to unlocking progress in most sectors.

However, the digital divide stands in the way of that progress. To close that divide, every Kansan requires the information technology capacity needed for full participation in our society, democracy, and economy. Moreover, it is necessary for civic and cultural participation, employment, lifelong learning, and access to essential services. Digital inclusion is the work required to close the digital divide, beyond access and our state's infrastructure needs. The National Digital Inclusion Alliance suggests the following DE-related definitions.¹



This digital equity plan, developed by Kansans for Kansas, outlines how our state intends to realize the goal of digital inclusion and close the digital divide. That achievement will make real impacts and improvements in employment, health, and beyond.

2.1 Vision

From its inception, KOBD partnered with leaders and community representatives to understand the lived experiences of Kansans, especially as they face barriers to accessing and adopting broadband services. During the height of the COVID pandemic, KOBD programs such as the Broadband Partnership Adoption Grant (BPAG) program supported digital inclusion efforts. KOBD also formed the Digital Equity Advisory Council (Advisory Council) to represent Kansans from all covered populations from around the state.

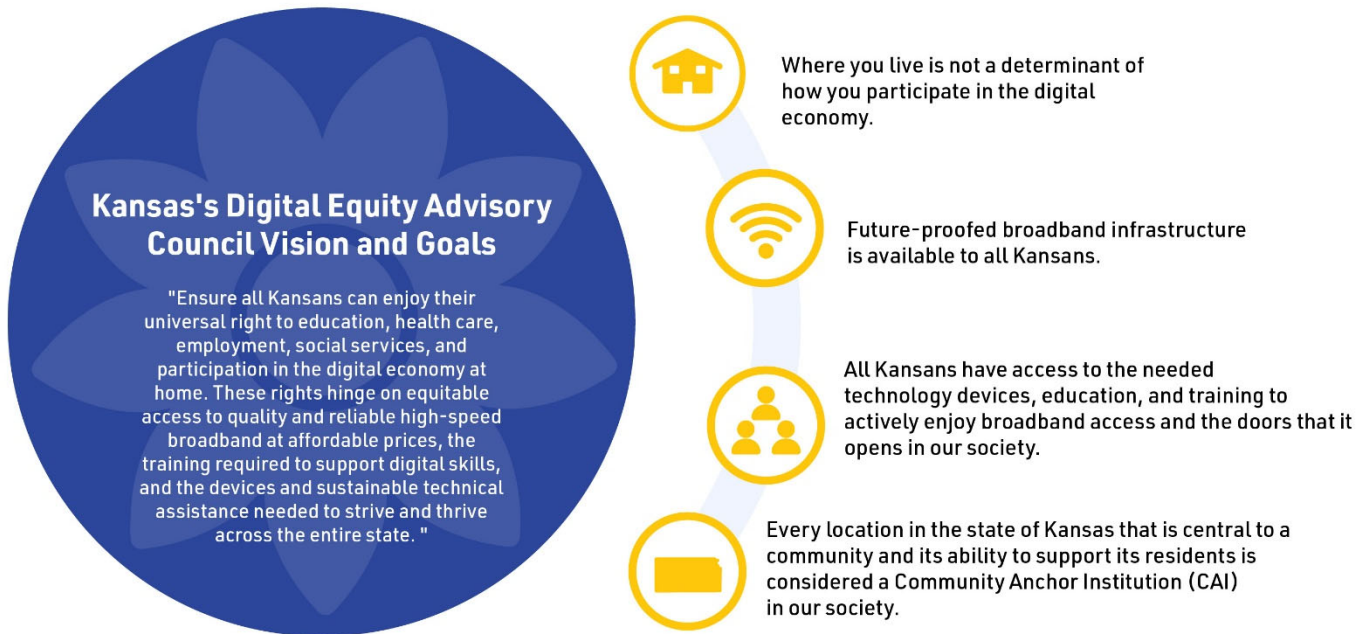
The Advisory Council, with membership intended to represent every covered population, plays a critical role in the

¹ National Digital Inclusion Alliance. "Definitions". <https://www.digitalinclusion.org/definitions/>. (Accessed 9/1/2023)

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digital inclusion and equity space. The expertise found on the Advisory Council, along with the invaluable assistance of KU and WSU, provides KOBD with perspective, research, successful models, and data. Beyond the numbers, however, these partners act as the primary resource guiding this work, and as an effective conduit to the lived experience of Kansans in their own words.

KOBD, along with the Advisory Council, defined the vision for digital equity, and set four high-level goals to measure our progress. The vision and goals are as follows:



The vision laid out for digital equity will require the collaboration of the Advisory Council and various partners, thoughtful and effective planning, and responsiveness to change. Moreover, digital inclusion ensures all Kansans will have access to one of the most important tools for individual, economic, and community success: the internet.

2.2 Alignment with Existing Efforts to Improve Outcomes

Aligning existing efforts to overcome the challenges of digital equity helps produce the best possible outcomes. KOBD will use existing funding opportunities and partnerships to maximize available resources to address the digital divide. To close the digital gap requires coordination among the many perspectives of Kansas. Thus, the plan must be collaborative, constant, and inclusive.

2.2.1 Funding Partners and Recipients

KOBD's work of funding digital equity and broadband related efforts will continue through several funding streams. Programs to fund broadband deployment in unserved and underserved communities is essential to close the digital divide. Yet funding critical digital inclusion programs, like distribution of devices, digital navigators, and outreach on affordability and adoption, is an appropriate concurrent step.

KOBD will collaborate with funding partners and recipients to support the state's digital equity efforts. Among the current and near-term sources of funding support are the following programs:

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TABLE 1: FUNDING PARTNERS AND RECIPIENTS

Source	Funding Source
Capital Project Fund Digital Connectivity Technology	Federal (Treasury)
<p>In February 2023, Kansas was the first state to receive DCT funds (\$15.5 million). The CPF-DCT program will support equal access to high-speed internet and provide devices to unserved and underserved Kansans. The program will be competitively allocated to eligible entities to bring free devices to income-qualifying households, free Wi-Fi to CAIs, and free Wi-Fi to low-income multi-dwelling units (MDU).</p>	
Enabling Middle-Mile Broadband Infrastructure	Federal
<p>KOBD partnered with the Kansas Department of Transportation, the Kansas Research and Education Network (KanREN), and private providers, with input from the Kansas Department of Agriculture and the Kansas Division of Emergency Management, to submit a middle-mile application in September 2022.</p> <p>On June 16, 2023, KOBD and our partners were awarded \$42.5 million.</p> <p>The awarded project plan is designed to create a 682-mile open-access, middle-mile fiber optic network to create connection to new internet exchange points throughout the state. Together with private and nonprofit partners, this open-access network will reduce the total cost of buildout to rural communities, which will enable and encourage last-mile providers to connect to this network and serve Kansas residents, farms, businesses, CAIs, and communities surrounding this network. Benefits of providing connectivity between local internet networks and to rural communities include increasing the capabilities of CAIs, enabling connections to unserved and underserved households, and increasing competition within local markets by creating more affordable service options.</p> <p>The 682-mile, middle-mile network passes through 28 counties: Allen, Anderson, Bourbon, Butler, Cherokee, Clark, Coffey, Crawford, Finney, Franklin, Greenwood, Haskell, Jackson, Johnson, Kingman, Labette, Linn, Lyon, Meade, Miami, Montgomery, Neosho, Osage, Pratt, Sedgwick, Seward, Wilson, and Wyandotte.</p>	
Connectivity Emergency Response Grant (CERG) and Broadband Partnership Adoption Grant	Federal (Treasury)
<p>In 2020, the Strengthening People and Revitalizing Kansas (SPARK) committee allocated \$60 million in Coronavirus Relief Funding (CRF) to KOBD to increase connectivity in Kansas in response to needs precipitated by the COVID-19 pandemic that forced many to stay at home. As a result, KOBD launched two pandemic response programs: The Connectivity Emergency Response Grant program and the Broadband Partnership Adoption Grant (BPAG) program were created to drive immediate access and long-term impact.</p>	
Broadband Acceleration Grant Program (BAG)	State (KDOT)
<p>In 2020, KDOT, through its Eisenhower Legacy Transportation Program (IKE), partnered with KOBD to fund BAG. The program will invest \$85 million over 10 years toward bridging the digital divide in Kansas. BAG will invest \$5 million per year in grant awards for years one through three, and \$10 million per year in grant awards for years four through 10. BAG prioritizes access to unserved and underserved areas through the construction of broadband infrastructure across Kansas. Total investment, including matching funds, over the first two years exceeds \$20 million and delivered broadband access to more than 5,700 locations. The third funding year process launched July 2023.</p>	
Capital Project Fund (CPF) Program – ARPA	Federal (Treasury)
<p>The CPF program provided funding to deploy broadband infrastructure that delivers 100/100 Mbps to unserved and critical areas of the state that lacked access. CPF is intended to address the following priorities: 1) broadband infrastructure deployment designed to directly enable work, education, and healthcare monitoring; 2) critical connectivity needs that resulted from or was made apparent or exacerbated by the COVID-19 public health emergency; and 3) a critical need of the community to be served.</p>	

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Source	Funding Source
Lasting Infrastructure and Network Connectivity Program (LINC)	State/Federal (Kansas Department of Commerce / ARPA)
<p>Kansas allocated \$30 million in ARPA State Fiscal Recovery Funds (SFRF) to LINC for broadband infrastructure expansion. LINC is a multifaceted effort to improve broadband infrastructure, middle-mile connectivity, and Internet Exchange Point capabilities throughout Kansas.</p>	
Affordable Connectivity Program	Federal (FCC)
<p>ACP is a federal affordability program for broadband subscription. For eligible households, ACP provides a discount of up to \$30 per month toward internet service and up to \$75 per month for households on qualifying Sovereign Tribal Nation lands. Eligible households can also receive a one-time discount of up to \$100 for the purchase of a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet.</p> <p>KOBD partners with Education Superhighway to promote ACP. Education Superhighway provided training and resources to community partners, local governments, and ISPs. As a result, 69 organizations and four representatives have signed up to provide training on how to enroll interested households. As of March 2024, Kansas has 133,746 ACP subscribers in Kansas.</p>	
Affordable Connectivity Outreach Grant Program	Federal (FCC)
<p>The ACP Outreach Grant Program provides funding and resources to promote ACP and increase enrollment. Activities to promote ACP include a robust marketing and advertising campaign, social media, traditional media, flyers, infographics, standing banners, mailers, a video, and community education events in partnership with the FCC.</p> <p>Three organizations/municipal entities will be participating in this program, offering ACP outreach services throughout Kansas: KC Digital Drive (KCDD), Wichita State University (WSU), and the City of Topeka. The Roadshow revealed that ACP awareness among covered populations is low, demonstrating the importance of this outreach.</p>	
Broadband Technical Assistance (BTA) Grant	Federal (USDA)
<p>BTA provides funds to receive or provide broadband technical assistance and training, while also supporting the development and expansion of broadband cooperatives. On June 20, 2023, Kansas submitted a BTA application to provide broadband technical assistance to six of the most rural and economically distressed counties in the state. If received, the counties covered are Linn, Kiowa, Gove, Wilson, Kearny, and Rawlins.</p>	
Digital Equity for Connecting Kansans (DECK)	Federal (Treasury)
<p>Kansas allocated \$5 Million to facilitate the development of digital literacy skills and adoption of broadband service in historically disconnected communities and programs with a goal to increase the rate of adoption in Kansas for the federal ACP. This program is currently under development with plans to launch in late 2023 or early 2024.</p>	
Universal Service Fund (USF) Program for Schools and Libraries (E-rate)	Federal (FCC)
<p>The E-rate program helps over 1,500 schools and over 370 libraries obtain affordable broadband service. The E-rate program in Kansas is managed by the Kansas Corporation Commission, which distributed \$30.6 million in FY 2022.</p>	

2. Introduction

In addition to existing funding programs that support and enhance KOBD's digital equity efforts, KOBD recognizes the critical role the private and nonprofit sectors will play in achieving digital equity goals. Facilitating sustainable, productive partnerships with all types of organizations from schools, foundations, libraries, and public-private partners to labor unions, associations, and other non-traditional entities is a key function KOBD will perform.

2.2.2 Economic Development

In the state's strategic economic development plan, the Kansas Framework for Growth (Framework), the state's



projected growth relies on four key areas: talent, innovation, community assets, and policy.² The success of every Kansan, collaboration with community assets, and the respect for regional interests align with the overall goals of KOBD's broadband efforts.

The Framework's initiatives and investments, particularly in the talent portion, dovetail nicely with our digital

inclusion efforts. Many of the elements of the "Potential and Future Initiatives and Investments" section mirror key workforce development initiatives by KOBD that will support members of the covered population. Additionally, KOBD partners with the Department of Commerce (KDC), the Kansas Board of Regents' community colleges and other higher education institutions, K-12, broadband providers, and industry partners to build workforce development programs. KOBD will focus on ensuring members of the covered populations are aware of opportunities such as scholarships, employer match participation, stipends for childcare and transportation, and others.

The Framework highlights the importance of community assets and critical organizations within our local communities. Often these organizations perform digital equity work in both rural communities and urban neighborhoods. KOBD supports local leaders and advocates who are actively addressing digital equity issues due to the importance of these organizations in the local ecosystem. The support presented by federal BEAD and DEA funding represents an opportunity for these organizations to scale their programs and combine forces with other practitioners to create a statewide, sustainable, self-reinforcing network of DE assets and resources.

Given the expansive agricultural footprint across Kansas, its role as a major economic driver for the state is obvious. Corn, wheat, and soybean wholesaling is the No. 2 economic impact category, with \$17.6 billion in revenue. Meat, beef, and poultry is No. 7, with \$8.9 billion in revenue. Combined, they surpass the top industry



Broadband Promotes Growth

From three original founders to 125 employees, Surepoint Ag has grown very quickly in their 16-year span. Part of their growth is due to their early selection of fiber broadband services from a startup ISP.

With 90% of their employees working remotely, Surepoint Ag relies on broadband to support new VOIP phone systems, customer service tickets, and more.

Surepoint Ag's CEO has now partnered with 14 other investors to support the growing population of their town by building quality workforce housing for new professionals moving to the area and building out fiber connectivity to support those residents.



² Kansas Department of Commerce. (February 2021). Kansas Framework for Growth. pp. 22-28.

https://issuu.com/kdcmarketing/docs/framework_report-pageview?fr=sNjcyNDI5NDgzODM

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of Kansas, aircraft engines and parts, which brought in \$23.1 billion in revenue. Thus, it is critical for KOBD to align digital equity efforts with the needs of the farming and ranching communities. This group is represented by the Kansas Farm Bureau (KFB), whose “Resolutions for 2023” states:

[W]e support every home, business and agricultural operation in Kansas having access to a high-speed communication infrastructure at a reasonable cost. We support a vibrant high-speed broadband network that delivers telemedicine applications, distance learning applications for K-12, higher education and continuing education, emergency services, employment opportunities, and entrepreneurship endeavors, and gives broadband champions, community anchor institutions, and libraries the ability to provide interactive content for rural citizens.

This issue is critical to the agricultural sector in Kansas and is reflected in the national policy of the American Farm Bureau Federation. KOBD understands how the economic stability and growth offered by our agricultural sector are critical to the Kansas economy.

KOBD will need the assistance of workforce development experts across the state to meet its digital equity goals. Alignment between KOBD’s digital equity objectives and these organizations is obvious. For example, the Workforce Alliance of South Central Kansas’ mission is to grow “the regional economy through a skilled workforce.” Their 2022 Strategic Plan focused on equity, inclusion, and diversity to increase awareness of workforce programs and services throughout south central Kansas, including Wichita, the largest city in the state.

The third strategic goal of the KANSASWORKS State Board’s 2021-2023 Strategic Plan aligns with KOBD’s broadband workforce needs by establishing coordinated workforce planning, investments, and operations, aligned to build relevant knowledge, skills, and abilities to meet industry needs in order to attract and retain people in our state.

2.2.3 Higher Education

For higher education, the Kansas Board of Regents developed the Kansas Science + Technology Plan (S&T plan), which includes all six state universities, 19 community colleges, six technical colleges, and Washburn University, and aligns the entities’ other related strategic plans, including KDC’s Framework for Growth and the KBOR “Building a Future” plan.

The S&T plan clarified the need for economic investments, grant and research support, and the alignment between initiatives to achieve the following outcomes³:

1. Elevating the role of science and technology in improving the lives of Kansans and their communities
2. Stimulating discovery and innovation through education, partnerships, and infrastructure investments
3. Growing the economy by applying new technologies and expanding access to IT
4. Translating research results to address societal challenges

The S&T plan acknowledged the need for rural connectivity and digital upskilling to effectively build the research and development capacity of the state. Moreover, it highlighted how basic education of broadband users leads into the capacity growth needed for the cybersecurity sector.

³ Kansas Board of Regents. (August 1, 2021). *Kansas Science + Technology Plan*. pp. 7-8. www.kansasregents.org/resources/PDF/Kansas_Science_Technology_Plan_2021_Effective.pdf. (15,085 MB).

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KOBD recognizes the need as well for middle skills training to enable remote work at higher paying jobs, especially in rural Kansas, and make work more accessible for Kansans with disabilities.

Additional workforce and higher education considerations center around apprenticeships. Established by Governor Kelly on September 6, 2022, the Office of Registered Apprenticeship (ORA) developed a six-year Strategic Plan with a vision to move Kansas into the top 25 ranked State Registered Apprenticeship Programs by 2025⁴. Their stated goals include:

- Increase collaborative partnerships with stakeholders, sponsors, and intermediaries to align apprenticeship programs, training, and education with occupational demand and career opportunities
- Strengthen recruitment of a diverse and inclusive pipeline of apprentices to address equity and access barriers to career opportunities
- Increase use of various communication approaches, marketing, and outreach efforts to build a robust system of awareness and understanding of apprenticeships by all stakeholders
- Support alignment with state and local entities, employers, intermediaries, and education organizations working on apprenticeships and other state workforce efforts
- Empower stakeholders through assistance for rapid development of new apprenticeship programs and/or the expansion of existing programs
- Incorporate Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) measures and data management technologies to enhance the state apprenticeship office services and document accountability

The ORA's dedication to diversifying the apprenticeship pipeline is an important element in ensuring members of covered populations (especially low-income individuals, those from racial and ethnic minorities, and those who are justice-involved) will have opportunities to gain skills for employment. In addition to the DE-related benefits for these populations, this pipeline is essential for developing a robust broadband workforce initiative as the BEAD deployment will need full participation from the registered apprenticeship program.

The ORA also administers the State Equity, Expansion, and Innovation Grant (SAEEI) and reports that "SAEEI Intermediaries are working diligently to create pre-apprenticeship, youth apprenticeship and opportunities for justice-involved individuals in Kansas."⁵ KOBD views this program as one that can help Kansas meet measurable objectives related especially to digital skills literacy training and education. K-12, higher education, and workforce development programs deliver classes and coursework to students online. At a time when elementary and high school students participate in virtual schools and programs under



⁴ Kansas Apprenticeship Advisory Council. "Strategic Plan." <https://ksapprenticeship.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/KAC-Strategic-Goals-Approved-Sept-2022.pdf> (203 KB).

⁵ Kansas Office of Registered Apprenticeship. "2023 Annual Review." <https://ksapprenticeship.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/2023-RA-Annual-Review-Final-Product.pdf> (18.547 MB).

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the oversight of the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE), efforts to improve the level of digital literacy and competency in all populations is critical. In many cases, K-12 institutions are the first resource addressing affordability for covered population members. As schools continue to expand hybrid and complete virtual learning through K12-Powered Learning, offering these personalized educational approaches require reliable, affordable broadband access and devices.⁶ With KSDE's presence on the Digital Equity Advisory Board, KOBD will align its efforts with this important statewide resource.

Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR) oversees the state universities, community colleges, and technical colleges. These higher education institutions play a key role in KOBD's work, from WSU's digital equity survey and Roadshow efforts to Kansas State University's (KSU) research and extension offerings in all 105 Kansas counties. In 2020, KBOR developed clear targets for individual and community success in their strategic plan named "Building a Future." This plan highlights the economic prosperity of individuals by preparing students for career pathways that lead to a livable wage. It also calls out the deepening of partnerships with local and state leaders to understand the high-demand job opportunities to fulfill needs of the business sector.⁷ As KOBD focuses on the growth of digital literacy skills, education partners like KBOR who are already invested in this work will play a significant role. KOBD will concentrate on these opportunities for members of the covered populations, especially for those careers that are adjacent to the needs of the rapidly expanding broadband field. Especially important in this arena is the Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, which has a representative on the Digital Equity Advisory Council, and where a partnership may afford unique perspectives and opportunity in both higher education and with members of covered populations.

The Kansas Library Association (KLA) is a large provider of digital inclusion activities across the state. Libraries offer public access to computers, the internet, Wi-Fi, and printing. Furthermore, libraries offer digital training and workshops, as well as other online services and resources to community members, generally free of charge.

In their strategic plan, KLA's top goal is to continue to address diversity, equity, and inclusion needs through local libraries and provide more services for community members with special needs. KOBD will coordinate efforts with KLA as they address this goal. As an immensely important anchor institution for so many communities, libraries are central to KOBD's coordination and alignment efforts.

Another goal from the KLA's strategic plan is to bring continued technological enhancements to communities. Libraries are often the primary technology gateway for community members, which makes KOBD's relationship and alignment with KLA and its member libraries a key part of KOBD's strategy to leverage the work of existing partners to work efficiently and effectively.

The work of nonprofit organizations and informal education institutions, such as museums and after-school programs, provides an added opportunity to reach members of covered populations with information about digital equity resources and support. For example, the Kansas Health Foundation is in year two of a three-year plan with \$1.1 million awarded to support multi-sector community collaboratives that develop and advocate for policies, programs, and services. This plan promotes greater digital access, adoption, literacy, and inclusion among families of color, low-wage workers, and others experiencing systemic barriers. Awardees and their missions are as follows:

⁶ K12. *K12-Powered Online Schools in Kansas*. K12: Online Public School Programs. www.k12.com/kansas-online-schools.html?st=ks&grades=ALL.

⁷ Kansas Board of Regents. (June 2020). *Building a Future Strategic Plan for Kansas*. www.kansasregents.org/resources/Building_a_Future/Building_a_Future.pdf. (10,553 MB).

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- The City of Topeka Digital Equity Inclusion Partnership Program for its plan to create part-time technical and digital navigator positions to collect and share community-based resources and supply digital literacy skills training, equipment, and basic technical support for minority and low-to-moderate income communities.
- Groundwork Northeast Revitalization Group, for an effort to launch a hotspot library and digital equity taskforce, supported by a coordinator, to create a channel for grassroots advocacy and co-learning around digital inclusion.
- KC Digital Drive, for a collaborative network of community-based organizations and other stakeholders to develop projects, programs, and advocacy efforts in partnership with Kansans from low-income households, distressed neighborhoods, disproportionately underserved racial and ethnic minority groups.
- KU Center for Research for collaborative, evidence-based technology education to women transitioning from justice involvement in support of their reintegration into society.

Another powerful example of a rich ecosystem encouraging education and collaboration is the KC STEM Alliance. Their vision is to create a vibrant "STEM-literate" community that understands and uses science, technology, engineering, and math in meaningful ways to improve lives. STEM learning ecosystems shift the focus to the learner and places where learning happens, like museums, libraries, afterschool programs, and at home.

2.2.4 Health Outcomes

Access to broadband resources is a cornerstone of health equity, better known as a social determinant of health (SDOH). SDOHs refer to the conditions and factors in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age that significantly influence their overall health and well-being.

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment's (KDHE) 2021-2023 strategic plan identifies three priority areas impacted by broadband access.⁹

1. Improve the health status of Kansans through innovative public health practice
2. Optimize Medicaid
3. Achieve organizational excellence

"Internet access is increasingly recognized as a 'super determinant' of health. It plays a role in health care outcomes and influences more traditionally recognized social determinants of health, such as education, employment, and healthcare access."⁸

*Yosselin Turcios, M.P.H.,
Office of Behavioral Health Equity Fellow*

These goals align well with KOBD's identified objectives to improve affordable access to devices and expansion of digital literacy skills training, which is crucial to the state's ongoing digital equity work.

KDHE also mentions their need for alignment with other state agencies, including the Department for Children and Families and Kansas Department of Aging and Disabilities.¹⁰ Efforts to align communication among state agencies

⁸ U.S Department of Health and Human Services. (March 22, 2023) "Digital Access - A Super Determinant of Health". www.samhsa.gov/blog/digital-access-super-determinant-health#1. (Accessed July 29, 2023).

⁹ Kansas Department of Health and Environment Strategic Plan. (2021- 2023). www.kdhe.ks.gov/DocumentCenter/View/347/KDHE-Strategic-Plan-2021-to-2023-PDF (6,567 MB)

¹⁰ Kansas Department of Health and Environment Strategic Plan. (2021- 2023). www.kdhe.ks.gov/DocumentCenter/View/347/KDHE-Strategic-Plan-2021-to-2023-PDF (6,567 MB)

reinforces KOBD’s strategy to work across multiple agencies to effectively serve our covered populations. Additionally, facilitating communication between state agencies and DE assets can increase the number of people referred to programs and services offered by nonprofits and institutions. With KDHE, DCF, and other state agencies participating in the Advisory Council and other ongoing efforts, KOBD is tightly aligned with their work.

In the Governor’s Commission on Racial Equity & Justice’s Social Determinants of Health-First Report (2021)¹¹, recommendations to improve SDOHs specifically recommended legislative, policy, and state agency changes in early childhood and childcare, federal funding maximization, post-secondary education, maternal and child health, universal equity policies, housing and the unhoused, workforce, access to healthcare, and behavioral health — all of which are influenced by access to and adoption of broadband as a resource.

In Kansas, multiple funders lead investments to support health equity, including the Health Forward Foundation, REACH Healthcare Foundation, United Methodist Health Ministry Fund, Prime Health Foundation, Kansas Health Foundation (KHF), and others. Likewise, local and regional providers of telehealth services help level the playing field for rural populations, and KOBD will continue to recognize and support their efforts. For example, the Community Care Network of Kansas focuses on achieving equitable access to high-quality healthcare for all Kansans. Similarly, the United Methodist Health Ministry Fund supports research and advocacy for telehealth within Kansas.

Kansas Department of Aging and Disability Services (KDADS) serves the public by prioritizing the health and wellness of older Kansans and those with different ability levels. The Kansas State Plan on Aging says the mission of KDADS has “evolved to protect Kansans, promote recovery, and support self-sufficiency.”¹² Digital Equity efforts align with this plan closely, fitting perfectly with four of the five stated goals:

1. Coordinate efforts to support older Kansans
2. Inform aging Kansans of systems and supports that encourage self-sufficiency, with emphasis on those with the greatest economic or social need
3. Engage with the aging network and community partners to advance Older Americans Act programs
4. Ensure maximum service utilization for home and community-based services, as well as Medicare

KDADS is an important partner in coordinating state agency efforts and leveraging these existing programs for the good of their constituents. They will be partners in achieving multiple objectives in digital equity work, including increasing access to affordable broadband services, the growth of digital education and knowledge, and expanded access to devices with the importance of technical support.

2.2.5 Delivery of Other Essential Services

Poor broadband access often hampers emergency services for rural residents disproportionately and for members of additional covered populations who lack access to basic resources. The Adjutant General’s five-year departmental plan calls for better coordination and synchronization of emergency services. The plan’s goals focus on community readiness, supported by KOBD’s broadband and digital equity efforts.

As an example, Adjutant General’s Goal 3.4 to “[d]evelop and maintain Incident Management Support

¹¹ Governor’s Commission on Racial Equity and Justice. (2021). *Social Determinants of Health –First Report*. <https://governor.kansas.gov/governors-commission-on-racial-equity-and-justice/>

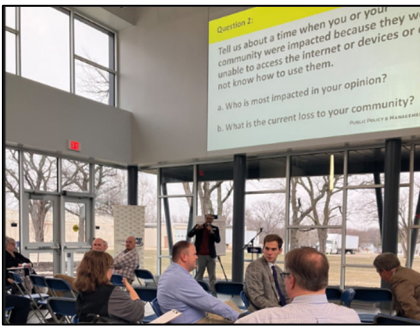
¹² Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services. (2022 – 2025). *State Plan on Aging*. https://kdads.ks.gov/docs/librariesprovider17/commissions/oa/state-plan-on-aging-2022-2025/kansas-state-plan-on-aging-2022-2025.pdf?sfvrsn=d2e84690_0 (3,970 MB)

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Capabilities” mandates better coordination of mutual-aid services. Thus, critical CAIs that conduct digital equity work and expand broadband directly enhance the capability of incident management teams across the state. KOBD’s efforts support Goal 3.5 as well, which focuses on “achieving timely two-way information flow and processing” and seeks identification of community resources and a stronger network of organizations to ensure prompt responses and resources that keep more individuals safe across our state.¹³

2.2.6 Cybersecurity

The Kansas Office of Information Technology Services (OITS) is currently writing its own Cybersecurity Plan related to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). The State of Kansas is committed to the online security and privacy of an individual and their information. OITS will continue to enhance their cybersecurity posture as well as partner with local communities to bolster their cybersecurity and privacy protections. OITS is working with the university system to bring digital life skills curriculum to our various school districts to raise awareness for the next generation. OITS is also building partnerships with the various internet service providers to create common privacy objectives to ensure safe and secure access to critical and personal information. KOBD notes that artificial intelligence (AI) provides both risk and promise from both cybersecurity and equity perspectives. It will be important to follow developments in this emerging field to monitor the types of digital literacy skills AI may introduce, to meet the security challenges it may present, and to ensure that the bias inherent in the enormous datasets AI learning models are trained on is addressed fully.



2.2.7 Civic and Social Engagement

Important applications and processes are moving online. The Advisory Council stressed that many state and local government resources have moved online with fewer printed options. This is a barrier to those without reliable broadband access or devices who need to access important resources like applying for unemployment, paying taxes, receiving monthly benefits, registering to vote, requesting an absentee ballot, receiving important weather emergency updates, or communicating with local municipalities about local initiatives.

2.2.8 Municipal, Regional, and Sovereign Tribal Nations Digital Equity Plans

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to digital equity work. While every region and community share the common goal of digital equity and inclusion, local approaches will vary depending on local, cultural, and environmental factors. As Kansas communities begin to tackle their broadband accessibility, affordability, and adoption issues, many have already begun digital equity planning, including:

- Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) created a “Kansas City Regional Digital Equity Plan” for the Kansas City metropolitan area.¹⁴ MARC completed the plan in May of 2023.
- The City of Topeka began a two-year digital equity planning process, with completion expected by 2024.
- Wyandotte and Johnson counties are working to develop Digital Equity plans, as well. The work in progress represents some of the first digital equity planning efforts in Kansas.

¹³ Kansas Adjutant Generals Department TAG Strategic Plan. (2019-2024). www.kansastag.gov/405/TAG-Strategic-Plan-2019-2024

¹⁴ Mid-America Regional Council (MARC). (May 2023). *Kansas City Regional Digital Equity Action Plan*. <https://www.marc.org/document/kansas-city-regional-digital-equity-plan>. (8,860 MB).

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KOBD has conducted formal consultations with all four Kansas Tribal Nations and continues to work with tribal representatives and relevant Kansas state government agencies including Governor Kelly’s office and the state tribal liaison. As the Tribal Nations begin to develop digital equity plans, KOBD will work with them in the manner each tribe finds most helpful. This unified effort will continue with Tribal Nations and will extend to DE plans throughout the state.

KOBD intends to support development of digital equity plans throughout Kansas to avoid duplicating efforts, to identify opportunities for consultation and networking, and to incorporate activities and goals in a two-way effort to reduce conflict with other state or practitioner priorities and to freely share best practices, resources, and opportunities.

KOBD will continue its strategy of direct engagement with local communities, consulting with Sovereign Tribal Nations, and serving as a hub for digital equity planning and implementation. Through these partnerships, KOBD will collaborate with local planning teams to identify and support programs unique to those areas, while also sharing best practices from across the state.

TABLE 2: ALIGNMENT OF STATE AGENCY PLANS WITH OBJECTIVES

Agency/Plan	State Goals	Related Components	Aligned KOBD Objectives
Kansas Department of Commerce Kansas Framework for Growth (2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic Development Civic Engagement Cybersecurity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As the Framework notes, KOBD is an important investment target for Commerce. The “Amplify Apprenticeships” initiative considered in the Framework aligns with KOBD efforts to increase workforce training and opportunities that lead to more widely available and affordable broadband. The "Enabling Infrastructure" initiative of "Community Assets" pillar complements KOBD’s planned BEAD and DE work. 	For all covered populations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability Affordability
Kansas Department of Corrections Kansas Department of Corrections Pathways to Success Action Plan 2022-2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic Development Civic Engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The DOC plan envisions additional training and devices within facilities 	For Justice-involved individuals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Literacy Skills Device Availability
Kansas Board of Regents Building a Future Strategic Plan (2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic Development Higher Education Cybersecurity Civic Engagement Delivery of Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The plan focuses enrollment efforts on specific covered populations, improving outcomes across the board for those populations. Fort Hays State’s proposal to build a cybersecurity innovation center will improve cybersecurity outcomes. WSU's National Institute for Digital Transformation will focus on digital skills and cybersecurity, improving outcomes in both those areas as well as device availability and affordability. 	For all covered populations, with emphasis on racial/ethnic minorities, low-income households, and rural residents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability Affordability Digital Literacy Skills Cybersecurity Device Availability and Affordability
Kansas Board of Regents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The S&T plan makes explicit connections to the KBOR strategic plan and the Commerce Framework for Growth. 	For all covered populations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability

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Agency/Plan	State Goals	Related Components	Aligned KOBD Objectives
Kansas Science + Technology Plan (2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Higher Education •Cybersecurity •Civic Engagement •Delivery of Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •This plan supports equitable access to broadband as a foundational need for science and technology. •Additionally, the plan emphasizes the need for rural broadband and business development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Literacy Skills For rural residents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability
Kansas Office of Information Technology <i>Cybersecurity Plan in IJA</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Cybersecurity •Delivery of Services 	The KOIT plan has not been published as of this writing, but KOBD understands it will focus on digital literacy skills and the security of public services as key items.	For all covered populations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cybersecurity • Digital Literacy Skills • Public Services
Kansas Department of Health and Environment KDHE 2021-2023 strategic plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Health Outcomes •Cybersecurity •Delivery of Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The plan recognizes a need to close technology and digital skills gaps across Kansas. •It also addresses the need to improve external facing online systems 	For all covered populations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Literacy Skills • Public Services
Kansas Department of Aging and Disabilities Services ¹⁵ State Plan on Aging 2022-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Health Outcomes •Cybersecurity •Delivery of Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The State Plan on Aging identifies affordable internet and digital skills training as items among the top three barriers to service for aging Kansans. •The plan also identifies a need to use technology to address social isolation, especially with digital skills training, device availability, and broadband availability. •The plan notes that it is difficult for aging Kansans to find affordable internet access. •The plan also notes the importance of assistance in helping older Kansans use public services. 	For aging individuals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability • Affordability • Digital Literacy Skills • Cybersecurity • Public Services • Device Availability • Device Affordability
Kansas Adjutant General's Department ¹⁶ Strategic Plan 2019-2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Economic Dev •Cybersecurity •Civic Engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The plan identifies the importance of internet access and training to maintain preparedness •It also notes the need for cross-agency partnerships to maximize effectiveness and build a modern, qualified workforce 	For all covered populations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability • Digital Literacy Skills

2.3 Strategy and Objectives

KOBD recognizes intentional planning, collaboration, and evaluation are keys to achieving digital equity throughout Kansas. While informed by the vision, KOBD must ground its work in clearly defined achievement and in strategic action that yields the greatest impact for Kansas.

This plan addresses that reality by identifying key strategies designed to support the long-term development and impact of digital equity. These strategies drive tactical work toward measurable objectives. Measuring Key Performance Indicators will provide transparency and data-driven decision-making to ensure the plan adjusts appropriately to reality while remaining aligned to the vision.



¹⁵ Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services. (2022 – 2025). *State Plan on Aging*. https://kdads.ks.gov/docs/librariesprovider17/commissions/oa/state-plan-on-aging-2022-2025/kansas-state-plan-on-aging-2022-2025.pdf?sfvrsn=d2e84690_0 (3,970 MB)

¹⁶ Kansas Adjutant General's Department TAG Strategic Plan. (2019-2024). www.kansastag.gov/405/TAG-Strategic-Plan-2019-2024

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Each strategy in this plan comprises multiple activities. Those tactical activities are presented in detail in section 5.1 of this document, along with a high-level implementation timeline in section 5.2.

2.3.1 Strategies

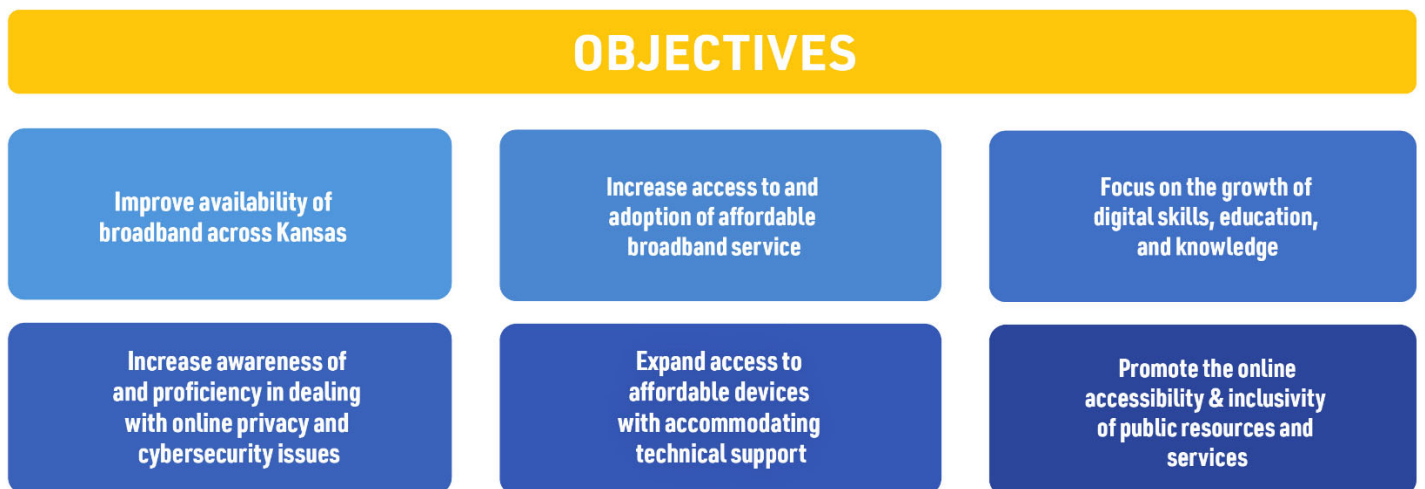
Deliberate strategies will focus our resources to achieve our goals. Thus, the five key strategies for KOBD are:



Expanded strategies are in Section 5 of this plan.

2.3.2 Objectives

To address Kansas' digital equity concerns, KOBD set out key objectives for the Digital Equity Plan, which are:



1. Availability: Improve availability of broadband across Kansas

More than 70,000 Kansas households lack broadband access and over 35,000 additional households' existing service options render them "underserved." In addition, many of Kansas' 8,500 CAIs lack gigabit-level broadband service that would better allow them to provide full levels of support to their communities. The Kansans impacted

by these service gaps are disproportionately members of covered populations. While the primary purpose of BEAD funds is to expand broadband access, KOBD's Digital Equity team must ensure the needs of covered populations are an integral part of BEAD planning, implementation, and follow-up. This approach will ensure all Kansans have broadband service and the accompanying tools, knowledge, service, and support to fully participate in today's increasingly technology-driven society. Progress and partnerships with ISPs will benefit all covered populations, including those in rural areas, those in mostly urban MDUs with inadequate service, and those served by CAIs with improved service.

KOBD will use the percentage of members within each covered population who have adopted broadband service as a key measure for this objective.

2. Affordability: Increase access to and adoption of affordable broadband service

While ACP is a key factor in subsidizing the bills of eligible Kansans, the FCC has not guaranteed the program's long-term funding. Kansas supports sustainable affordability options, which may be established by working with providers to encourage more options, continuing device and discount programs, supporting innovation, and identifying additional funding sources to incentivize affordability programs or supplement subsidy programs. KOBD will also foster partnerships and relationships to increase enrollment in ACP and other affordability programs by making them available, accessible, and inclusive to covered populations to maximize their effectiveness. Working with state agencies, ISPs, and DE partners, KOBD will increase awareness of ACP and other affordability programs to support all populations, especially those in lower-income households.

KOBD will measure success for this objective by enrollment in ACP or a subsequent affordability program by members of the covered populations.

3. Digital Literacy Skills: Focus on the growth of digital literacy skills, education, and knowledge

Full participation in healthcare, education, civic engagement, and public services requires basic digital literacy skills. In addition, many employers require more advanced skills for job applications, remote working, and in-office roles. On-ramps into high-demand technology-driven jobs, including jobs supporting the expansion of broadband services, also require these skills. A highly skilled population is a factor for new employers who may bring new jobs and opportunities to Kansas. Partnerships with entities like KLA, Kansas higher education institutions, DOC, and DE practitioners will help KOBD improve digital literacy skills and cybersecurity awareness among the most vulnerable populations, including aging Kansans, lower-income households with less access to devices and training, and justice-involved individuals re-entering society.

KOBD will track digital literacy skills growth by continuing to collect data on the availability of basic digital literacy skills training (including cybersecurity essentials) available to covered population members as well as supporting a repository of digital skills training at all levels to enable people to find training opportunities that allow them to meet their digital aspirations.

4. Cybersecurity: Increase awareness of and proficiency in dealing with online privacy and cybersecurity issues

Basic digital literacy skills must include essential cybersecurity topics like password management, fraud awareness, data privacy, malware, and misleading advertising to fully prepare Kansans for online participation. Cybersecurity is a major barrier to adoption with stakeholder groups, particularly among the aging, the justice-involved, and those with language barriers. Cybersecurity issues also threaten the hard work and proprietary data

of Kansas businesses, the state’s physical infrastructure, and the privacy and finances of individual Kansans. Necessary conditions for protecting our data include an increase in cybersecurity awareness among all populations, training programs across the state for vulnerable residents and covered populations, and a cybersecurity strategy coordinated with the Department of Commerce, OITS, and Kansas Information Security Office (KISO).

KOBD will use the same measure for cybersecurity as that proposed for “increase digital literacy skills, education, and knowledge” as it includes cybersecurity essentials as a critical component of basic digital literacy skills. As mentioned above, key partnerships in this area with entities like OITS, KLA, higher education, and others will provide benefits to all covered populations, including and especially aging Kansans, lower-income households with less access to devices and training, and justice-involved individuals re-entering society.

5. Devices: Expand access to affordable devices with accommodating technical support

Broadband-enabled devices are in far greater supply than they were a decade ago, yet a gap persists among covered population members who may not have access to a computer, tablet, or a smartphone. Some CAIs offer publicly available devices, but proximity, transportation, and operating hours can limit their effectiveness. While Kansas features many innovative device distribution programs, these are unevenly distributed across geographies and populations, with fewer options in rural areas and heavier demand in urban areas. Awareness also remains low. A coordinated network of device distribution organizations with free or low-cost technical support from trusted community organizations with specific training and support regarding device deployment is key to helping Kansans obtain and use devices. Working with diverse organizations such as KDCF’s Accelerating Opportunity programs, state workforce programs, and covered population organizations is a major step to equitably dispersed broadband-enabled devices throughout the state. In addition, the Kansas Advancing Digital Opportunities to Promote Technology program (ADOPT) provides \$14.7 million in grant awards to organizations providing devices and public Wi-Fi. This additional funding source will help seed and extend efforts to improve device availability and affordability.

Supply is a critical step to expand access for the device ecosystem, with refurbishing a key way to reduce the increasing gap of computing devices. This supply can be generated through donations from individuals, corporations, government, and other organizations. Refurbishing is a key part of a device ecosystem and necessitates a strong emphasis on technical skills and expertise, particularly to guarantee the secure handling of data. It also requires working with certified vendors to ensure that e-waste is responsibly handled and that the entire process is financially viable. Refurbishing computers is also a viable workforce development program with a low entry point for staff and a robust career ladder to family-sustaining wages. Training personnel in technical skills and refurbishment would not only increase the State's capacity but also create a pipeline of technology talent for future initiatives. The increased availability of devices through these programs will result in improved device affordability for all populations, as well.

The percentage of covered population members with access to broadband-enabled devices, and the percentage who report having an affordable device are the best measures for this objective. KOBD will note the availability of support for devices as the data and integrated systems are developed to support such tracking.

Partnerships with entities like KU TAP and similar programs, as well as partnerships with other entities like DOC, KSDE, ISPs, and others can provide targeted benefits to audiences like individuals with disabilities, justice-involved individuals, and low-income households while generally improving all Kansans’ access to devices.

6. Public Services: Promote the online accessibility and inclusivity of public resources and services

Improving and expanding Kansans' digital literacy skills through training and education programs is a key step, but the onus for skill development cannot rest solely on learners and educators. Agencies and organizations must meet our residents where they are when offering these digital upskilling services. Awareness campaigns, increased translation options, increased data portability, consideration for assistive technology, and accommodating technical support are tools to build digital literacy skills from the organization out.

KOBD will measure the availability of digital navigator services to members of covered populations for this objective. Partnerships with state agencies, organizations focused on accessibility, and entities supporting migrants and ESL Kansans can improve the availability and quality of online public services to all Kansans, especially those with disabilities or language barriers.

Key Measures Considerations

The key to effectively measuring success is working with regional and local leaders to identify the specific impact of each objective and KPI on each area as well as each covered population. KOBD will support this work with statewide data tools and resources including GIS mapping platforms. These resources may include a periodic statewide survey professionally designed to mirror Kansas' population demographics through stratified sampling to produce data specific to plan objectives. Where this data may impact covered population KPIs — if such a survey is established — it is noted below, referred to as the “statewide data survey.”

While each of the six objectives is important, KOBD recognizes Kansas stakeholders require greater specificity and clarity. Therefore, each of these objectives contains refined KPIs related to each covered population. These KPIs are derived from various sources for different populations where meaningful distinctions and specific data exist. Some measures apply across multiple populations, as well. Where baselines or targets below are “to be established in 2024,” potential methods for deriving that data are provided.

Note that while some KPIs in this plan are aspirational, none have a long-term (2030) target of 100%, per the direction of NTIA staff. KOBD generally calculated long-term targets instead as 80% of the gap between the current baseline and 100%. This is not to say that 100% is not achievable, but that conservative estimates may be preferable during initial planning. KPIs and measures can and should be modified as needed when circumstances change, new data becomes available, or new guidance is provided.

Another important note is that this plan addresses barriers and needs for justice-involved individuals using a broader definition than the NTIA's, which is “Incarcerated individuals, other than individuals who are incarcerated in a Federal correctional facility.” KOBD recognizes that the justice-involved population extends well beyond individuals housed in correctional facilities. In recognition of that fact, KOBD has expanded the definition of justice-involved to include people in correctional facilities, especially those nearing a release date, as well as Kansans on probation or parole. While data for KPIs related to this population is challenging, KOBD will explore potential sources such as the University of Michigan's Criminal Justice Administrative Records System (CJARS), which synthesizes Kansas incarceration and parole data with Census data for targeted research and reporting.

Additional considerations for each of the plan objectives follow.

Availability

Improved infrastructure throughout Kansas will no doubt reduce the number of unserved and underserved households. This is a critical measure for KOBD's BEAD planning. For the purposes of this plan, KOBD extends the success measure to the actual adoption of broadband. Access to high-speed services is a starting point, but statewide efforts to promote the benefits of broadband, strengthen device and support programs, build digital navigator capacity, and support affordability efforts are keys to the actual use of broadband and subsequent delivery of benefits to Kansans.

For most covered populations, KOBD will measure adoption of broadband as indicated by the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS). In the case of justice-involved individuals — a population not identified by the ACS — KOBD will evaluate the availability of Gigabit-level service for each state facility housing this population as well as potentially exploring cross-referenced CJARS data for parolees. For rural Kansans, KOBD will measure adoption by Broadband Serviceable Locations (BSLs), as rurality is not specified in the ACS.

Affordability

The most readily available data for tracking affordability is enrollment in ACP. This data is not available by covered population, so KOBD will use total population enrollment figures as a proxy for each covered population.

The general measure also anticipates that ACP may not receive funding on a long-term basis, so KOBD is conducting outreach to explore existing or subsequent state or federal affordability programs. As an alternative source of measurement, the statewide data survey may be used to evaluate prices for broadband paid by members of each covered population.

Digital Literacy Skills

Digital literacy skills training is a continuous need even for digital veterans. It should be available ubiquitously to ensure no Kansan is left behind simply because they do not have access to learn, sustain, or improve the digital literacy skills necessary to remain current. While digital literacy skills training is widely available online, this assumes individuals have the connectivity and the base level skills required to access and benefit from it. KOBD believes this training should be available in person to those who learn best in that manner, so training should be available within a reasonable commute or at least at the nearest CAI for extremely rural residents (e.g., at a nearby library or community college workforce program).

For these reasons, the proposed KPI for covered populations is a geographic measure of how far in-person digital literacy skills training programs are from every resident.

As KOBD adds mapping data and layers, including a comprehensive statewide inventory of digital equity assets, the baseline for this measure will be available, as will the ability to track this measure over time. As an alternative source of measurement, the statewide data survey may be used to evaluate confidence in digital skills as self-assessed by members of each covered population.

Cybersecurity

KOBD's position is that basic cybersecurity awareness is a required component of digital literacy skills. This includes personal digital security, identity protection, fraud awareness, and related topics. For this reason, the

2. Introduction

KPIs for this category mirror those of the digital literacy skills category. Like the digital literacy skills category, the statewide data survey may be used as an alternative source of measurement to evaluate confidence in digital skills as self-assessed by members of each covered population.

Devices

There are two KPIs for this category. The first relies on ACS data to identify the rate of device ownership for most populations. The second uses data from the statewide survey to determine whether respondents believe they own or have access to affordable devices. KOBD does not include tablets or smartphones in this measure because these mobile devices do not provide users with the full digital experience allowed by personal computing devices. It is significantly more challenging to, for example, develop a resumé in office software, interact with a fully featured website, or receive the full benefit from assistive web technology on a mobile device. Therefore, the measure KOBD has identified aspires to a future where these more robust broadband-ready devices are the expected norm for full participation in the digital world from the comfort of one's home.

Public Services

KOBD's research indicates Kansas currently has no statewide initiative to ensure public services are available online or that they are supported by translation, technical support, and subject matter support for individuals who require it. The exception here is the OITS directive and federal statutes that require all state web properties be accessible to individuals with disabilities. KOBD will work with state agencies to develop a comprehensive inventory of Kansas public services and their online presence and support characteristics. The selected KPI, however, seeks to measure the availability of support for users of these services.

Access is a starting point for broadband, but adoption and support are required for full effectiveness.

As with digital literacy skills and cybersecurity KPIs, baseline and continuing measures for this category will be in place as additional data, mapping layers, and asset inventories are developed. As an alternative source of measurement, the statewide data survey may be used to evaluate availability of resources and confidence in the use of public services as self-assessed by members of each covered population.

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Measurable Objectives: Key Performance Indicators by Population

TABLE 3: MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES, PERSONS IN LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS

	Availability	Affordability	Digital Literacy Skills & Cybersecurity	Device Availability & Affordability		Public Services
Definition	Percentage of covered population with broadband service, according to the ACS	Percentage of eligible covered population members enrolled in ACP or subsequent programs ¹⁷	Percentage of covered population with basic digital literacy skills training (including basic cybersecurity skills) available within a 30-minute commute as indicated by asset mapping and KOBD GIS cross-reference ¹⁸	Percentage of covered population with a broadband-enabled device (laptop or desktop computer), according to the ACS	Percentage of covered population statewide survey respondents reporting ownership of or access to affordable devices	Percentage of covered population with support from digital navigators trained in the use of online public services available within a 30-minute commute ¹⁹
Baseline	64.1%	25.3% (tot. avg.)	To be established in 2024	69.0%	To be established in 2024	To be established in 2024
2026 Target	71.3%	40.2%	To be established in 2024	75.2%	80.2%	To be established in 2024
2030 Target	100.0%	85.1%	80.0%	93.8%	96.8%	65.0%

TABLE 4: MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES, AGING INDIVIDUALS

	Availability	Affordability	Digital Literacy Skills & Cybersecurity	Device Availability & Affordability		Public Services
Definition	Percentage of covered population with broadband service, according to the ACS	Percentage of eligible covered population members enrolled in ACP or subsequent programs ¹⁷	Percentage of covered population with basic digital literacy skills training (including basic cybersecurity skills) available within a 30-minute commute as indicated by asset mapping and KOBD GIS cross-reference ¹⁸	Percentage of covered population with a broadband-enabled device (laptop or desktop computer), according to the ACS	Percentage of covered population statewide survey respondents reporting ownership of or access to affordable devices	Percentage of covered population with support from digital navigators trained in the use of online public services available within a 30-minute commute ¹⁹
Baseline	64.6%	25.3% (tot. avg.)	To be established in 2024	73.1%	To be established in 2024	To be established in 2024
2026 Target	71.7%	40.2%	To be established in 2024	78.5%	83.5%	To be established in 2024
2030 Target	100.0%	85.1%	80.0%	94.7%	97.7%	65.0%

¹⁷ Alternative: Percentage of statewide survey respondents from covered population who report paying affordable broadband prices

¹⁸ Alternative: Percentage of statewide survey respondents from covered population reporting confidence in digital skills and privacy/security

¹⁹ Alternative: Percentage of statewide survey respondents from covered population reporting confidence in use of online public services

2. Introduction

Measurable Objectives: Key Performance Indicators by Population

TABLE 5: MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES, JUSTICE-INVOLVED INDIVIDUALS

	Availability	Affordability	Digital Literacy Skills & Cybersecurity	Device Availability & Affordability		Public Services
Definition	Percentage of facilities with Gigabit-level broadband service per KDOC	Percentage of parolees enrolled in ACP or subsequent programs according to CJARS/ACP cross-referenced data	Percentage of facilities with formal basic digital literacy skills training (including basic cybersecurity skills) available for residents per the Kansas Department of Corrections	Percentage of parolees with a broadband-enabled device (laptop or desktop computer) according to CJARS/ACS cross-referenced data	Percentage of covered population statewide survey respondents reporting ownership of or access to affordable devices	Percentage of parolees with support from digital navigators trained in the use of online public services available within a 30-minute commute ²⁰
Baseline	0%	25.3% (tot. avg.)	To be established in 2024	To be established in 2024	To be established in 2024	To be established in 2024
2026 Target	50%	40.2%	To be established in 2024	To be established in 2024	To be established in 2024	To be established in 2024
2030 Target	100.0%	85.1%	80.0%	90.0%	93.0%	65.0%

TABLE 6: MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES, VETERANS

	Availability	Affordability	Digital Literacy Skills & Cybersecurity	Device Availability & Affordability		Public Services
Definition	Percentage of covered population with broadband service, according to the ACS survey	Percentage of eligible covered population members enrolled in ACP or subsequent programs ¹⁷	Percentage of covered population with basic digital literacy skills training (including basic cybersecurity skills) available within a 30-minute commute as indicated by asset mapping and KOBDD GIS cross-reference ¹⁸	Percentage of covered population with a broadband-enabled device (laptop or desktop computer), according to the ACS	Percentage of covered population statewide survey respondents reporting ownership of or access to affordable devices	Percentage of covered population with support from digital navigators trained in the use of online public services available within a 30-minute commute ¹⁹
Baseline	70.5%	25.3% (tot. avg.)	To be established in 2024	80.0%	To be established in 2024	To be established in 2024
2026 Target	76.4%	40.2%	To be established in 2024	84.0%	89.0%	To be established in 2024
2030 Target	100.0%	85.1%	80.0%	96.0%	99.0%	65.0%

²⁰ Derived from CJARS/KOBDD GIS cross-referenced data or from statewide survey response data extrapolated from stratified sample populations

2. Introduction

Measurable Objectives: Key Performance Indicators by Population

TABLE 7: MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES, INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

	Availability	Affordability	Digital Literacy Skills & Cybersecurity	Device Availability & Affordability		Public Services
Definition	Percentage of covered population with broadband service, according to the ACS survey	Percentage of eligible covered population members enrolled in ACP or subsequent programs ¹⁷	Percentage of covered population with basic digital literacy skills training (including basic cybersecurity skills) available within a 30-minute commute as indicated by asset mapping and KOBD GIS cross-reference ¹⁸	Percentage of covered population with a broadband-enabled device (laptop or desktop computer), according to the ACS survey	Percentage of covered population statewide survey respondents reporting ownership of or access to affordable devices	Percentage of covered population with support from digital navigators trained in the use of online public services available within a 30-minute commute ¹⁹
Baseline	59.8%	25.3% (tot. avg.)	To be established in 2024	67.2%	To be established in 2024	To be established in 2024
2026 Target	67.8%	40.2%	To be established in 2024	73.8%	78.8%	To be established in 2024
2030 Target	100.0%	85.1%	80.0%	93.4%	96.4%	65.0%

TABLE 8: MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES, INDIVIDUALS WITH A LANGUAGE BARRIER

	Availability	Affordability	Digital Literacy Skills & Cybersecurity	Device Availability & Affordability		Public Services
Definition	Percentage of people with a broadband connection who speak English "not well" or "not at all" on the ACS	Percentage of eligible covered population members enrolled in ACP or subsequent programs ¹⁷	Percentage of covered population with basic digital literacy skills training (including basic cybersecurity skills) available within a 30-minute commute as indicated by asset mapping and KOBD GIS cross-reference ¹⁸	Percentage of covered population with a broadband-enabled device (laptop or desktop computer), according to the ACS survey	Percentage of covered population statewide survey respondents reporting ownership of or access to affordable devices	Percentage of covered population with support from digital navigators trained in the use of online public services available within a 30-minute commute ¹⁹
Baseline	61.7%	25.3% (tot. avg.)	To be established in 2024	53.0%	To be established in 2024	To be established in 2024
2026 Target	69.4%	40.2%	To be established in 2024	62.4%	77.4%	To be established in 2024
2030 Target	100.0%	85.1%	80.0%	90.6%	93.6%	65.0%

2. Introduction

Measurable Objectives: Key Performance Indicators by Population

TABLE 9: MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES, MEMBERS OF A RACIAL OR ETHNIC MINORITY

	Availability	Affordability	Digital Literacy Skills & Cybersecurity	Device Availability & Affordability		Public Services
Definition	Percentage of covered population with broadband service, according to the ACS	Percentage of eligible covered population members enrolled in ACP or subsequent programs ¹⁷	Percentage of covered population with basic digital literacy skills training (including basic cybersecurity skills) available within a 30-minute commute as indicated by asset mapping and KOBD GIS cross-reference ¹⁸	Percentage of covered population with a broadband-enabled device (laptop or desktop computer), according to the ACS	Percentage of covered population statewide survey respondents reporting ownership of or access to affordable devices	Percentage of covered population with support from digital navigators trained in the use of online public services available within a 30-minute commute ¹⁹
Baseline	72.7%	25.3% (tot. avg.)	To be established in 2024	77.6%	To be established in 2024	To be established in 2024
2026 Target	78.2%	40.2%	To be established in 2024	82.1%	85.1%	To be established in 2024
2030 Target	100.0%	85.1%	80.0%	95.5%	98.5%	65.0%

TABLE 10: MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES, RURAL INHABITANTS

	Availability	Affordability	Digital Literacy Skills & Cybersecurity	Device Availability & Affordability		Public Services
Definition	Percentage of broadband serviceable locations (residential) with broadband service in areas defined as rural ²¹	Percentage of eligible covered population members enrolled in ACP or subsequent programs ¹⁷	Percentage of covered population with basic digital literacy skills training (including basic cybersecurity skills) available within a 30-minute commute as indicated by asset mapping and KOBD GIS cross-reference ¹⁸	Percentage of covered population with a broadband-enabled device (laptop or desktop computer)	Percentage of covered population statewide survey respondents reporting ownership of or access to affordable devices	Percentage of covered population with support from digital navigators trained in the use of online public services available within a 30-minute commute ¹⁹
Baseline	TBD	25.3% (tot. avg.)	To be established in 2024	To be established in 2024	To be established in 2024	To be established in 2024
2026 Target	TBD	40.2%	To be established in 2024	To be established in 2024	To be established in 2024	To be established in 2024
2030 Target	100.0%	85.1%	80.0%	90.0%	93.05	65.0%

Notes: These measures reflect available or potential data and are not intended to prescribe specific actions. Measures will be refined as additional tools and data are available.

²¹ Derived from BSL/KOBD GIS cross-referenced data based on NCES data and delineations

3. Current State of Digital Equity

Barriers and Assets

3.1 Asset Inventory

Closing the digital equity gap requires asset-rich partnerships that will provide resources to help bridge the digital divide. This asset inventory provides information on the partners that support digital equity efforts throughout Kansas. In addition to the assets, plans, and programs below, Appendices 2 and 3 contain a comprehensive inventory of assets and programs in the state.

3.1.1 Statewide Digital Equity Assets

KOBD used a variety of avenues of information to accomplish this asset inventory. KOBD partnered with KU to survey Kansas digital equity leaders, based on the National Digital Inclusion Alliance's (NDIA) asset map template (see Appendix 2 — Digital Equity Asset Inventory). The Advisory Council, with membership intended to represent every covered population, was an invaluable resource in that each member introduced more digital inclusion connections as our efforts progressed around the state. KOBD held dozens of conversations with state agencies to understand the state's network of existing digital equity programs. The local leaders and advocates who attended the Roadshow provided significant additional information. These efforts and various other informal discussions highlighted the following statewide digital equity assets for Kansas:

Kansas Department of Commerce

In addition to the leadership and support provided to KOBD, the eight Economic Development Districts (EDD) and their staff are important partners in local and regional broadband outreach and planning. Raising awareness about BEAD-related activities while educating local leadership on the importance of engaging their digital equity partners will be critical. As the digital equity asset mapping progresses, the EDDs can help identify partners who might be providing digital inclusion support but not necessarily as a core objective.

Kansas Library Association and the local library system

More than 350 libraries across the state, along with the support of the KLA, emerge as a critical resource. Continually responding to the needs of their communities, libraries are important CAIs with a long tradition of making computer access available to those without connectivity at home, training those who need to build digital literacy skills, and providing technical and content support to those learning to navigate these resources.

Kansas Board of Regents

The KBOR administers “Accelerating Opportunity: Kansas” in 17 community and technical colleges as part of their WIOA commitment to the Department of Commerce. This program offers access to job training for individuals who qualify for WIOA benefits.²² As part of their training and assessment of individuals in this program, Northstar, a digital literacy skills software that assesses individuals and their digital skill levels, is a tool worth exploring and expanding throughout the state.

Kansas State Department of Education and the local school districts

KSDE responds to the education needs of our K-12 student population. For many families, KSDE and their school-based educational partners are a primary resource in answering any device or affordability question. During the

²² Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) — Is the responsibility of the Kansas Board of Regents, which maintain 50 locations for Adult Education.

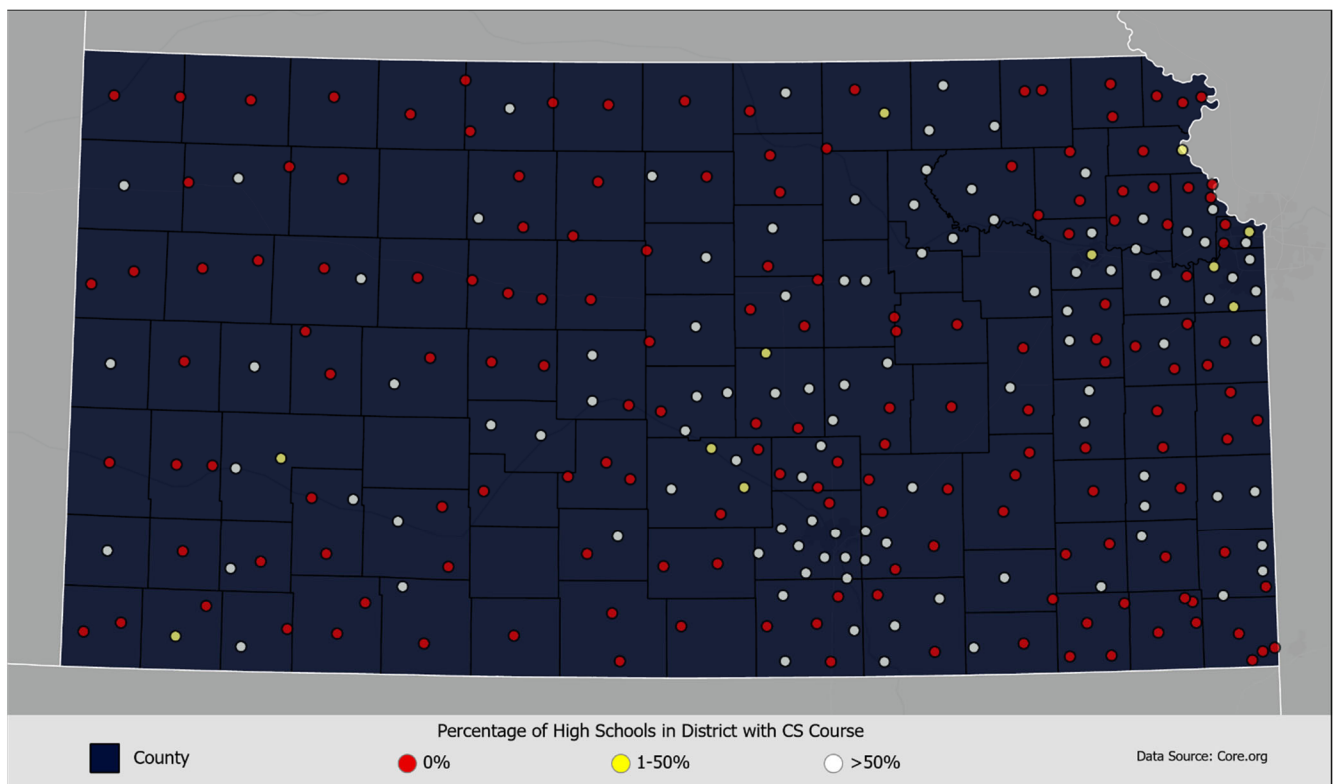
3. Current State of Digital Equity

Barriers and Assets

COVID pandemic, assessing and addressing students' broadband access became a critical focus of KSDE. Because the standard student curriculum includes literacy and skills development, schools are the central resource for career readiness. For instance, the state adopted Career Standards and Assessment Services (CSAS) to ensure students have access to career pathways that lead to meaningful employment with technology-centric jobs. Students may also participate in Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSO) that allow learning beyond a classroom by giving students the opportunity to expand their knowledge, skills, and overall development, specifically for students enrolled in Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses.

Moreover, the Kansas Legislature established a curriculum requirement mandating that all high schools offer at least one computer science course, starting in the 2023-24 school year. The map below from KOBD's geospatial mapping system details the rates at which high schools in each Kansas school district offer a foundational computer science class. Red indicates no schools in the district offer courses, with yellow and white indicating a higher proportion of schools offering the courses.

SECONDARY SCHOOL COMPUTER SCIENCE COURSES BY COUNTY



Kansas Health Funders and Kansas Association of Community Foundations

Kansas Health Foundation, Community Care Network of Kansas, Sunflower Foundation, Thrive Kansas, the United Methodist Health Ministry Fund, and Prime Health Foundation are some of the philanthropic partners who work to improve health outcomes, expand telehealth, and reduce inequity for individuals and organizations across the state.

Community foundations, supported by the Kansas Association of Community Foundations, work to address the growing need for digital equity in Kansas.

3. Current State of Digital Equity

Barriers and Assets

Kansas Farm Bureau

Acting as the voice of agriculture in the state, KFB is an important ally to advocate for broadband service in rural communities. KFB encouraged members to attend the Roadshow, participated in the Department of Agriculture’s survey, and has been a tireless resource on DE issues. KOBD will continue to work with KFB as efforts develop.

Kansas Department for Children and Families

Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) is a primary resource for families seeking supportive services. DCF helps families access Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicaid, Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs.²³ Enrollment in some of these programs qualifies residents for ACP, other affordability programs, and digital literacy skills trainings. Thus, continuous engagement with these organizations will be crucial to the state’s digital equity efforts, particularly with awareness and enrollment campaigns.

Collective Efforts by Dedicated State Departments

State departments and agencies serve the covered populations of Kansas. DCF, the Department of Aging and Disability Services, Department of Corrections (DOC), the Kansas Native American Affairs Office, the Kansas African American Affairs Commission, and the KDHE expand digital equity resources and address the digital equity needs of our communities, despite their varying missions and scopes.

Individual Programs Developed within Nonprofit, State, and Other Organizations

An existing network of services, organizations, and support for covered populations is starting to include digital equity offerings, while pointing to a need for improved coordination and support statewide.

Many digital inclusion activities like digital navigation, upskilling, and cybersecurity training were developed to address the needs of their service communities. For example, AARP offers programs to help members understand digital resources, cybercrime threats, and telehealth, while also learning new skills for employment opportunities.

Selected Assets and Programs in Support of Covered Populations

There are digital equity practitioners throughout Kansas who deliver vital services to their communities. Some organizations focus on specific covered populations. A sampling of those organizations is presented in the following pages. A more comprehensive list of organizations is in Appendix 3 — Existing Digital Equity Programs.

National Practitioners

In addition to the growing network of assets in Kansas, KOBD relies on and continues to learn from national digital equity organizations like NDIA. As previously noted, NDIA’s definitions and leadership provide a foundation for digital equity work.

²³ Title I, III and IV of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is the responsibility of Department for Children and Family Services.

3. Current State of Digital Equity

Barriers and Assets

Individuals Who Live in Low-income Households

Broadband Affordability	Digital Equity Program	Device Affordability	Digital Literacy Skills
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KC Digital Drive

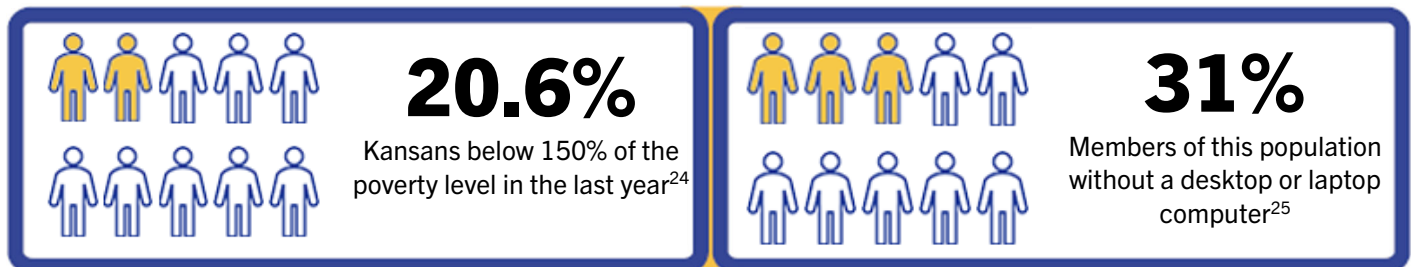
KC Digital Drive is a Kansas City nonprofit working to make Kansas City a digital leader and improve the quality of life for all people in the region.

KC Goes Tech		<i>Provides grants of \$2,000 to partner organizations to support trainers who can deliver digital literacy skills education to the organization's clients with no income requirements, support ACP and device programs, and support the organization's overall mission</i>
Internet Access Support Program		<i>Helps households at or below 200% of poverty level secure internet access and pay their internet bill through affordability plans while providing support for understanding internet service bills and cost-reduction ideas</i>
Digital Equity Planning		<i>Provides support for digital equity planning efforts around Kansas City and the surrounding area, including Wyandotte, Miami, and Johnson counties</i>
Digital Inclusion Fund		<i>Supports digital inclusion programs (access, skills, affordability, and adoption) to increase digital participation for the KC region's most underserved and/or disconnected residents</i>

City of Topeka and Shawnee County (TSC) – Get Digital Coalition

The City of Topeka supports a coalition of community members and stakeholders who want to close the digital divide in Topeka.

TSC - Get Digital		<i>Provides affordable and equitable access to computer and internet equipment and services, along with technical support, training opportunities, and digital literacy skills services for low- and moderate-income individuals, families, and aging individuals</i>
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NTIA Definition: A household, the income of which for the most recently completed year is not more than 150 percent of an amount equal to the poverty level, as determined by using criteria of poverty established by the Bureau of the Census

²⁴ U.S. Census Bureau. (2021). American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates — Public Use Microdata Sample. <https://data.census.gov/mdat/>

²⁵ Microsoft Airband (2021). Digital Equity Map. <https://aka.ms/DigitalEquityMaps>

3. Current State of Digital Equity

Barriers and Assets

Aging Individuals

Broadband Affordability	Digital Equity Program	Device Affordability	Digital Literacy Skills
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American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)

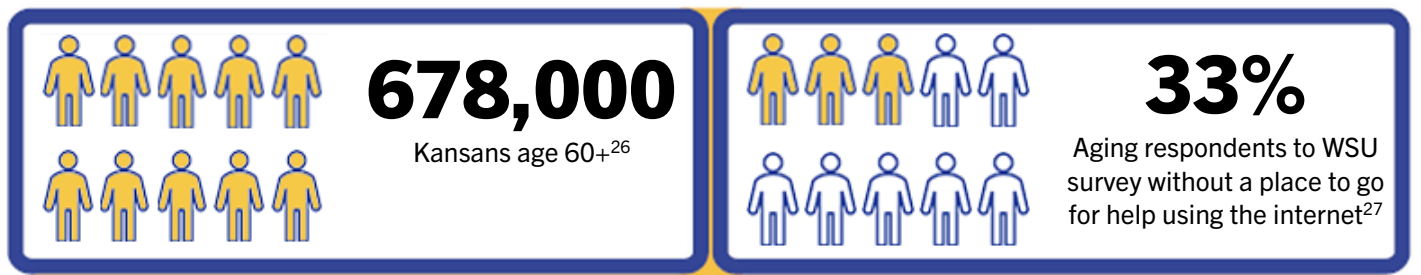
Available across the state of Kansas, AARP is the nation’s largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering Americans 50 and older to choose how they live as they age.

BACKTOWORK50		<i>Provides resources, training (including computer-based skills training), and information for adults 50 and over who are getting back into the workforce</i>
Older Adults Technology Services (OATS)		<i>Delivers free online courses through partner organization, OATS, and through AARP’s Virtual Learning Center to help older adults learn digital skills such as how to use food delivery apps, social media, and podcasts</i>
Fraud Watch Network		<i>Offers a hotline and online resources to seniors on how to spot scams, use online resources safely, sign up for free peer support groups, and more</i>

Kansas Area Agency on Aging

The Area Agencies on Aging in Kansas are located around Kansas and are part of a national network of organizations designated as the leaders on aging issues at the local level. AAAs are the “boots-on-the-ground” organizations charged with helping vulnerable older adults live with independence and dignity in their homes and communities.

OKEP		<i>The Older Kansans Employment Program serves the four trade areas of Manhattan, Junction City, Salina, and Emporia with employment-related services including digital literacy skills development for Kansans 55+</i>
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NTIA Definition: An individual who is 60 years of age or older

²⁶ U.S Census Bureau. (2021). American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates - Estimates – Public Use Microdata Sample. <https://data.census.gov/mdat/>

²⁷ Kansas Office of Broadband Development. (May 2023). *Digital Equity in Kansas – Kansas Broadband Roadshow.*(Wichita State University) www.kansascommerce.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/digital-equity-roadshow-report-06.09.23v14.pdf (1,777 MB)

3. Current State of Digital Equity

Barriers and Assets

Justice-Involved Individuals

Broadband Affordability	Digital Equity Program	Device Affordability	Digital Literacy Skills
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KU Center for Digital Inclusion

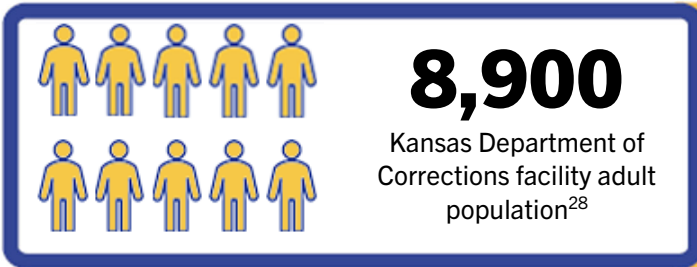
The Center for Digital Inclusion facilitates scholarship, education, and collaborative partnerships aimed at enhancing citizens' digital access and information literacy, especially among underserved populations.

The Technology Education Program		<i>Offers digital skills training for justice-involved women transitioning back to society to give these women an opportunity to contribute to society and participate in the economy</i>
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American Prison Data Systems (APDS)

APDS' mission is to prepare every justice-involved individual for a living wage job through its career readiness platform.

APDS		<i>Provides a virtual platform, tablets, and support for justice-involved individuals to offer career readiness education</i>
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NTIA Definition: Incarcerated individuals, other than individuals who are incarcerated in a Federal correctional facility

²⁸ Kansas Department of Corrections. (July 26, 2023). Population Report. www.doc.ks.gov/publications/pop/POP%2007-25-2023.pdf/view (53 MB)
²⁹ Kansas Department of Correction. (July 26, 2023). Juvenile Population Report. www.doc.ks.gov/publications/juvenile/population

3. Current State of Digital Equity

Barriers and Assets

Veterans

Broadband Affordability	Digital Equity Program	Device Affordability	Digital Literacy Skills
-------------------------	------------------------	----------------------	-------------------------

Veterans Affairs

The U.S Department of Veterans Affairs is a nationwide resource that provides assistance to active military, service members with disabilities, and veterans.

Readiness and Employment (VR&E)		<i>Offers services to help with job training, education, employment accommodations, resume development, and coaching for job seekers</i>
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Galvanize

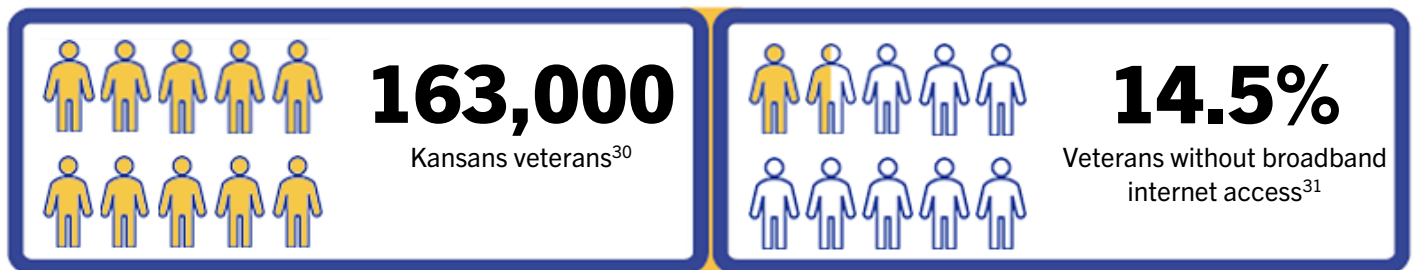
Galvanize transforms veterans, transitioning and active-duty service members into skilled software developers through technology training programs.

Coding Bootcamps for Veterans		<i>Conducts a coding bootcamp through the Veteran Employment Through Technology Education Courses (VET TEC) program for full-time, high-tech training</i>
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KANSASWORKS

Kansas Workforce centers provide a number of employment resources and services for job seekers, employers, and veterans.

VETS		<i>Offers a local Veterans Representative to assist in employment services, training and education, and referrals to other veteran services</i>
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NTIA Definition: A person who served in the active military, naval, air, or space service, and who was discharged or released therefrom under conditions other than dishonorable

³⁰ U.S Census Bureau. (2021). American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates - Estimates — Public Use Microdata Sample. <https://data.census.gov/mdat/>

³¹ Ibid

3. Current State of Digital Equity

Barriers and Assets

Individuals with Disabilities

Broadband Affordability	Digital Equity Program	Device Affordability	Digital Literacy Skills
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Cerebral Palsy Research Foundation (CPRF)

This foundation helps those who have disabilities with a number of services and programs to ensure employment and daily task are achieved.

School of Adaptive Computer Training (SACT)		<i>Offers in-person learning for adults and children with disabilities in Wichita or online for students located throughout Kansas covering basic employer-ready training skills</i>
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Goodwill Industries of Kansas

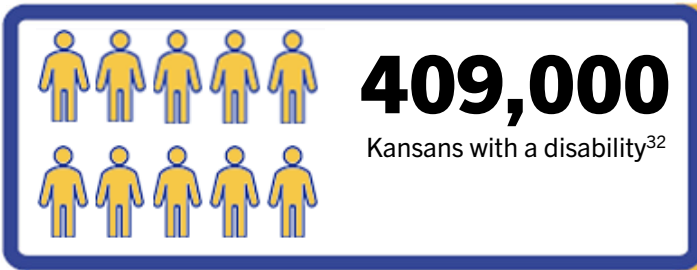
Goodwill provides job training and education programs for people with disabilities and other barriers to employment through a wide range of programs.

LearnIT Digital Skills Classroom		<i>Offers digital literacy skills training through virtual classrooms and training, including basic computer skills, computer support, programming, digital marketing, and cybersecurity</i>
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University of Kansas Assistive Technology for Kansans

Assistive Technology for Kansans (ATK) is the Kansas statewide program providing tools needed to learn, work, play and participate in community life, safely and independently.

Assistive Technology for Kansans (ATK)		<i>Connects people with disabilities to assistive technology</i>
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NTIA Definition: With respect to an individual, a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individual, a record of such an impairment, or being regarded as having such an impairment

³² U.S Census Bureau. (2021). American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates - Estimates — Public Use Microdata Sample. <https://data.census.gov/mdat/>

³³ Ibid

3. Current State of Digital Equity

Barriers and Assets

Individuals with a Language Barrier

Broadband Affordability	Digital Equity Program	Device Affordability	Digital Literacy Skills
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Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas

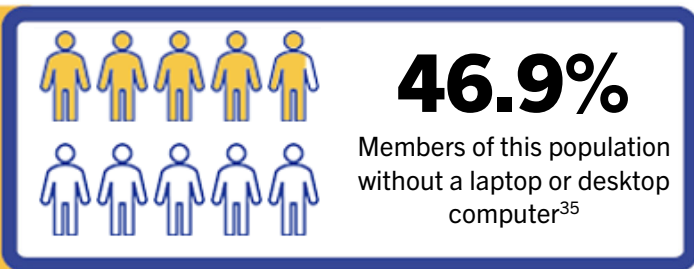
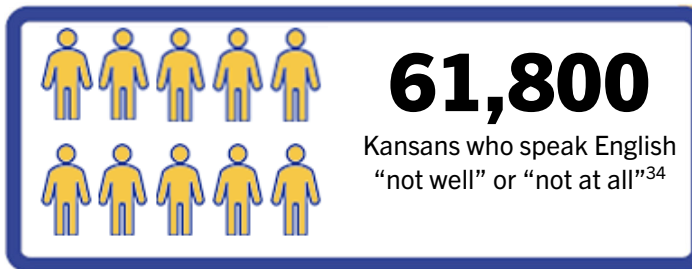
A ministry of the Archdiocese of Kansas City, KS, Catholic Charities offers a wide range of specialized programs, services, guidance, and resources that will result in long-term change.

Refugee Employment Services		<i>Provides services designed to help connect refugees with jobs and train them to be strong employees</i>
Refugee Learning Center		<i>Offers essential education and life skills to refugees of all ages, as well as ACP support and digital literacy skills training</i>

The International Rescue Committee (IRC)

The IRC in Wichita helps rebuild lives by working with government, organizations, and volunteers to help refugees, asylees, and survivors adapt their experience to their new communities.

Digital Navigators		<i>Offers Digital Navigators to assist with ACP enrollment, digital literacy skills classes, and assistance with device purchasing and troubleshooting</i>
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NTIA Definition: Individuals with a language barrier, including individuals who are English learners and have low levels of literacy

³⁴ U.S Census Bureau. (2021). American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates - Estimates — Public Use Microdata Sample. <https://data.census.gov/mdat/>

³⁵ Ibid

3. Current State of Digital Equity

Barriers and Assets

Individuals Who are Members of a Racial or Ethnic Minority Group

Broadband Affordability	Digital Equity Program	Device Affordability	Digital Literacy Skills
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Black or African American 5% Kansas Population: 146,900

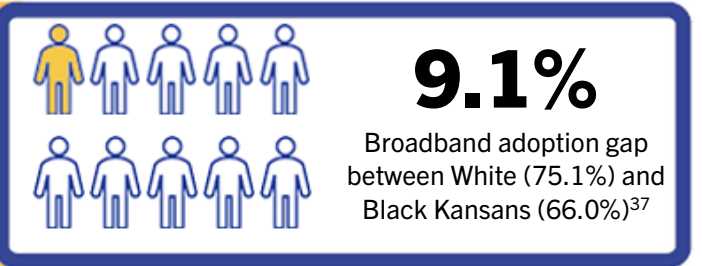
IBSA
IBSA is a Topeka-based 501c3 that assists low- and moderate-income individuals with self-sufficiency programs and services.

Streets University		<i>Partners with agencies to build the technological skills of young people, including the use of WordPress for website development</i>
Device Program		<i>Sells low-cost devices such as desktops, laptops, and internet hotspots in partnership with PCs for People</i>

NAACP Kansas Chapter

NAACP is a membership-based, volunteer advocacy organization committed to civil rights and social justice whose mission is to achieve equity, political rights, and social inclusion.

Empowerment Program		<i>Advances the NAACP's mission through high-impact programs and initiatives tackling complex challenges with community leaders and providing technical assistance to members</i>
Multiple Programs		<i>Supports students' education and skills development while advocating for African American entrepreneurs and workers and offering workshops and classes</i>





NTIA Definition: Members of a racial or ethnic minority; members of any Indian tribe — or other organized group — eligible for the special programs and services provided by the U.S. to Indians because of their status as Indians

³⁶ U.S Census Bureau. (2021). American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates - Estimates — Public Use Microdata Sample. <https://data.census.gov/mdat/>
³⁷ Ibid


3. Current State of Digital Equity

Barriers and Assets

Hispanic/Latino 12.7%		Kansas Population: 373,500
<u>El Centro Inc.</u>		
El Centro Inc. supports and empowers the lives of Hispanic and Latino communities by education, health, and economic possibilities.		
Enrichment Program		<i>Provides after-school and summer educational opportunities from Pre-K through sixth grade, including technology training and ACP support</i>

<u>Revolucion Educativa</u>		
Revolucion Educativa builds sustained collective power for the Latinx community by coming together to provide tools, resources and supports needed to build sustained collective power in KC and beyond.		
EducaTec		<i>Provides Spanish-language digital literacy skills training in partnership with Latinx Education Collaborative, along with child watch facilities and computers for participants without a device</i>

Asian & Pacific Islander 3.1%		Kansas Population: 90,164
<u>National Association of Asian American Professionals — Kansas City Chapter</u>		
NAAAP is a national organization advocating for leadership, education, accountability, and diversity for Asian American and Pacific Islanders.		
Chapter Events		<i>Holds events for members including workshops on leadership, professional development, and community outreach</i>

<u>Wichita Indochinese Center (WIC)</u>		
Originally founded in 1985 as a nonprofit corporation to assist refugees from the countries of Indochina, the Center serves people of all nationalities by assisting with the resettlement process.		
Multiple Programs		<i>Offers employment specialists, on-site ESL classes for employers, digital skills development, testing, and a computer lab for students</i>

3. Current State of Digital Equity

Barriers and Assets

Sovereign Tribal Nations 0.4% **Kansas Population: 11,800**

Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska

The Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska provides the Adult Education Program to assist unemployed and/or underemployed members through services to support, literacy, basic education, job training, and continuing education.

Adult Education Program



Provides members literacy skills, assistance with training programs, and support services for continuing education

Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation

The Prairie Band Potawatomi Education Department strives to achieve an increase in leadership qualities through supporting all students in grades K-12.

Education Department



Provides financial assistance and employment support, including the enhancement of job and technical skills through training

Sac & Fox Nation of Missouri in Kansas and Nebraska

The Sac & Fox nation provides a multitude of services to members, including education, housing, library services, and youth programs

Social Services/ICW



Provides computer access for job searches and staff assistance with resumes

Kickapoo Tribe in Kansas

The Kickapoo Tribe staff members manage operations including issues with environmental, health, road maintenance, compliance, financial, legal, gaming, and community planning.

Education Department



Aids members wanting to expand their education



3. Current State of Digital Equity


Barriers and Assets

Individuals Who Reside in a Rural Area

 Broadband Affordability	 Digital Equity Program	 Device Affordability	 Digital Literacy Skills
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South Central Kansas Library System

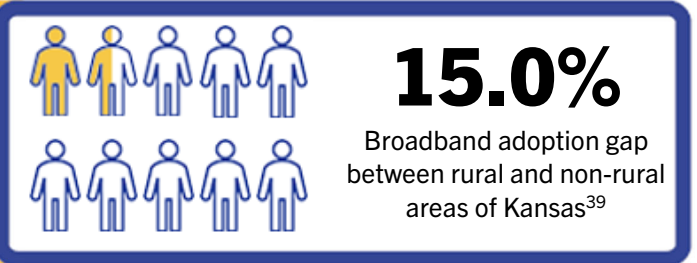
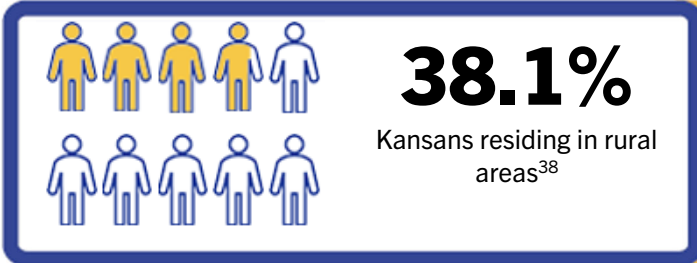
The mission of the South Central Kansas Library System is to help member libraries provide excellent service to their communities through grants, consulting, and continuing education.

Technology Consulting Services		<i>Provides support in the areas of automation, planning, policies, Internet, website development, digitization, basic computer and network troubleshooting, and electronic information services including e-readers, hardware, and software</i>
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K-State Research and Extension

K-State Research and Extension provides statewide information and services related to adult development and aging, community development, and crop production.

Community Development		<i>Provides technical assistance and evidence-based programs and acts as an important partner in addressing broadband infrastructure support and digital equity efforts</i>
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NTIA Definition: *Inhabitants of any area other than a city or town with a population of greater than 50,000, any urbanized area contiguous and adjacent to a population of greater than 50,000, or incorporated area of greater than 20,000.*

³⁸ U.S. Census Bureau. (2021) Digital Equity Act Population Viewer. www.census.gov/data/data-tools/digital-equity-act-population.html

³⁹ U.S. Census Bureau. QuickFacts — Kansas. www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/KS/PST045222 (accessed August 15, 2023).

3. Current State of Digital Equity

Barriers and Assets

3.1.2 Existing Digital Equity Plans

As Kansas communities begin to tackle their broadband accessibility, affordability, and adoption issues, many will begin their digital equity planning efforts now. Some entities are already actively developing digital equity plans. Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) created a “Kansas City Regional Digital Equity Plan” for the Kansas City metropolitan area in 2023.⁴⁰ The City of Topeka began a two-year process of creating a digital equity plan with completion expected by 2024. KC Digital Drive is working with Wyandotte, Miami, and Johnson counties to develop Digital Equity plans, as well. The work is in process and represents some of the first digital equity planning efforts in Kansas.

KOBD has conducted formal consultations with all four Kansas Tribal Nations and continues to work with tribal representatives and relevant Kansas state government agencies including Governor Kelly’s office and the state tribal liaison. As the Tribal Nations begin to develop digital equity plans, KOBD will work with them in the manner each tribe finds most helpful. This unified effort will continue with Tribal Nations and will extend to DE plans throughout the state.

As other Kansas communities further their digital equity work and others begin their own processes, KOBD will work alongside them to provide the support, resources, and coordination needed for comprehensive and sustainable community digital equity plans.

3.1.3 Existing Digital Equity Programs

The following is a sampling of additional Kansas organizations throughout the state offering digital equity programs. A complete list of organizations is in Appendix 3 — Existing Digital Equity Programs.

Kansas Digital Equity Programs			
	Broadband Affordability		Digital Equity Program
	Device Affordability		Digital Literacy Skills

Angels in the Attic, Inc.		
Angels in the Attic, Kansas serves the Arkansas City community by networking with other area groups, business, churches, and organizations to better assist struggling individuals.		
Computer Access Center		<i>Provides technical assistance and evidence-based programs and acts as an important partner in addressing broadband infrastructure support and digital equity efforts</i>

Groundwork Northeast Revitalization Group		
As a digital connector for its community, Groundwork Northeast Revitalization Group’s local mission is to revitalize northeast Kansas and Kansas City communities through forward-looking, inclusive action.		
Technology Library		<i>Provides a Wi-Fi hotspot and laptop lending library</i>
Learn to Earn Program		<i>Provides a means for young people ages 12-16 in the northeast and east-midtown areas of Kansas City to receive environmental and conservation training, workforce development, and career preparation</i>

⁴⁰ Mid-America Regional Council. (May 2023). Kansas City Regional Digital Equity Action Plan. www.marc.org/document/kansas-city-regional-digital-equity-plan. (8,860 MB)

3. Current State of Digital Equity

Barriers and Assets

Future Leaders Outreach Network (FLON)

Future Leaders Outreach Network helps youth and young adults set goals, become effective leaders, and pursue economic well-being by developing age-appropriate initiatives.

Educational Virtual Reality(E-VR) Technology		<i>Offers an E-VR headset program for students to complete a career exploration assessment or engage in real-life career pathway immersive learning modules such as cybersecurity or robotics</i>
Job Readiness & Career Exploration Simulation Trailer		<i>Offers VR learning in technology and digital skills via hands-on learning in the 48-foot Leaders and Entrepreneurs Academy of Dreamers Initiative's (YouLEAD) Job Readiness & Career Exploration Simulation Trailer</i>

Heartland Black Chamber of Commerce

Heartland Black Chamber of Commerce is committed to developing and strengthening African American entrepreneur-led businesses in Kansas.

Multiple Programs		<i>Provides support for launching, developing, promoting, sustaining, and growth of the African American community by advocating and lobbying on behalf of members through programs and partnership opportunities, including higher education scholarships</i>
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Innovation Center

Innovation Center is a private foundation offering economic and entrepreneurial assistance to businesses in rural NW Kansas.

Rural & Remote		<i>Intern and apprentice program helps people gain paid remote work experience, job research, resume coaching, and application support.</i>
Cybersecurity Program		<i>Offers no-cost cybersecurity training and services with certification paths and job placement for high-wage, high-demand careers.</i>

Kansas Department for Children and Families

The Kansas Department for Children and Families, established in 1973 as an umbrella agency to oversee the delivery of social services and the provision of care to the vulnerable, today serves more than 500,000 Kansans.

Work Program		<i>Offers a work program for families providing support for GED or ESL education and cash assistance, along with digital skills training, device procurement, and access to ACP</i>
Accelerating Opportunity Kansas Career Pathway Program		<i>Provides career training through nine technical and community colleges offering AO-K pathways such as Computer Support Technology, including digital literacy skills assessment and training via a partnership with Commerce and the Kansas Board of Regents</i>

3. Current State of Digital Equity

Barriers and Assets

NCircle

NCircle encircles families and individuals impacted by the criminal justice system by bringing together resources and offering certification opportunities and youth discovery programs.

Certification Training		<i>In partnership with Johnson County Community College and College of Trades, NCircle offers a 12-week program that includes up to 75 hours of essential skills training and trade certification, giving adults at the Johnson County Adult Residential Center an opportunity to learn essential professional, technical, and digital skills</i>
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Northeast Kansas Community Action Partnership

Community Action programs throughout Kansas change lives by helping people help themselves and each other. This is an example of one of the Community Action Partners throughout the state serving members of the covered populations in their areas.

Digital Literacy & Work Skills Summer Class		<i>Part of the Roadmap to Success Project classes will teach computer skills, online safety, and soft skills geared toward youth aged 16-19, and at no cost</i>
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Northwest Kansas Educational Service Center

The mission of the NKESC is to serve its member districts by working as a partner to develop, implement, and manage a wide range of services that will enable the districts to reach their educational objectives more efficiently and effectively.

A TECH		<i>Assistive Technology Educating Children with Handicaps provides on-site assessment and consultation services to students, staff, and parents within the NKESC districts, along with an assistive technology device loan program</i>
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Northwest Kansas Library System

NWKLS is one of seven regional library systems in Kansas that provide cooperative support to all types of libraries in a sparsely populated part of Kansas.

Continuing Education		<i>Offers community workshops on topics including cybersecurity, children's internet protection, software training and more.</i>
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PCs for People

PCs for People is a national nonprofit social enterprise working throughout Kansas to get low-cost quality computers, internet, and digital skills into the homes of low-income individuals and families.

Learning Center		<i>Provides free digital skills training through classes and workshops offered virtually, including essential computer skills, software skills, and technology tasks</i>
Device Program		<i>Offers eligible customers and nonprofits quality refurbished computers including desktops, laptops, and hotspots at a reduced rate</i>
Affordable Repair		<i>Provides a one-year hardware warranty along with basic repair services starting at \$25</i>

3. Current State of Digital Equity

Barriers and Assets

Smoky Hill Education Service Center

Smoky Hill Education Service Center serves nonprofit organizations and more than 50 school districts in 25 counties of north central Kansas in promoting success for learners

Digital Citizenship and Technology		<i>Offers a program for students, teachers, and community members focused on learning safety and vigilance related to scam awareness, spam, phishing, and predators</i>
Learn360		<i>Provides an educational platform for students, teachers, and parents with a wide variety of educational content correlated to Kansas College and Career Ready Standards</i>

United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW)

The United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW) is a labor union and nonprofit organization (501c3) located in Dodge City, Kansas, that believes in the power of ordinary people coming together to improve their lives and make a lasting difference for all working people.

Workforce Essential Courses		<i>Offers basic courses like Computer Essentials to build union members' expertise and increase their career options</i>
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University of Kansas Assistive Technology for Kansans

The Kansas Telecommunications Access Program (TAP) is an equipment distribution program providing specialized telephones and other telecommunications devices to Kansans with disabilities who cannot use traditional home telephones.

TAP		<i>Provides a free specialized device to Kansans with disabilities that cause physical impairment</i>
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Workforce Partnership (Johnson, Leavenworth, Wyandotte)

Workforce Partnership is committed to a system that serves job seekers and employers through a network of career centers, higher education institutions, and other quality training providers in Johnson, Leavenworth, and Wyandotte counties.

JOCO KS Works 3.0	 	<i>Helps with job search, placement, and training including skills assessments, agency referrals, tuition assistance, GED/ESL support, textbooks, computers, and internet access</i>
Skill Up WYCO		<i>Offers classroom and on-the-job training emphasizing credentials, certificate, certifications, or licensure prep, or upskilling for job seekers</i>

3. Current State of Digital Equity

Barriers and Assets

3.1.4 Broadband Adoption Assets

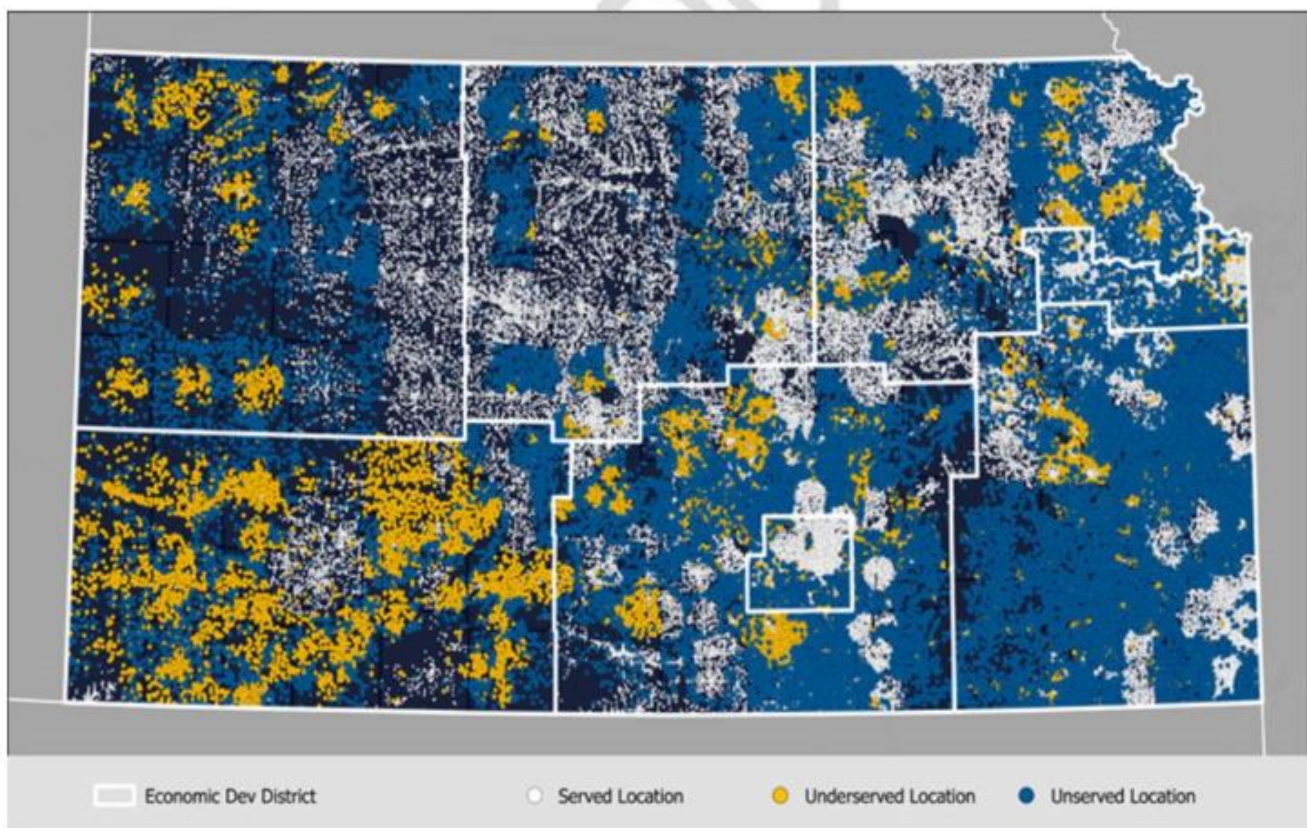
This section provides information about available assets for broadband adoption within Kansas. In addition to the assets below, Appendices 2 and 3 contain a comprehensive inventory of assets and programs throughout the state.

3.1.4.1 Percentage of Residents Within Kansas Who Have Adopted Broadband

The U.S. Census data states 95.2% (1,103,327) of Kansas households have one or more types of computing device at home, while 78.8% (912,773) have a laptop or desktop as the device. At the same time, 25.5% (300,261) of Kansas households do not have a fiber or similar broadband subscription.⁴¹

Adoption relies on the availability of infrastructure. Thus, KOBD identified locations across the state where broadband is not available. Determining the synergies between locations without infrastructure access and where members of the covered populations reside will pinpoint clear opportunities to develop regional partnerships for digital equity and broadband adoption.

SERVED, UNDERSERVED, AND UNSERVED LOCATIONS



⁴¹ U.S. Census Bureau. (2021). S2801 — Types of Computers and Internet Subscriptions. American Community Survey. <https://data.census.gov/table?q=broadband&g=040XX00US20>

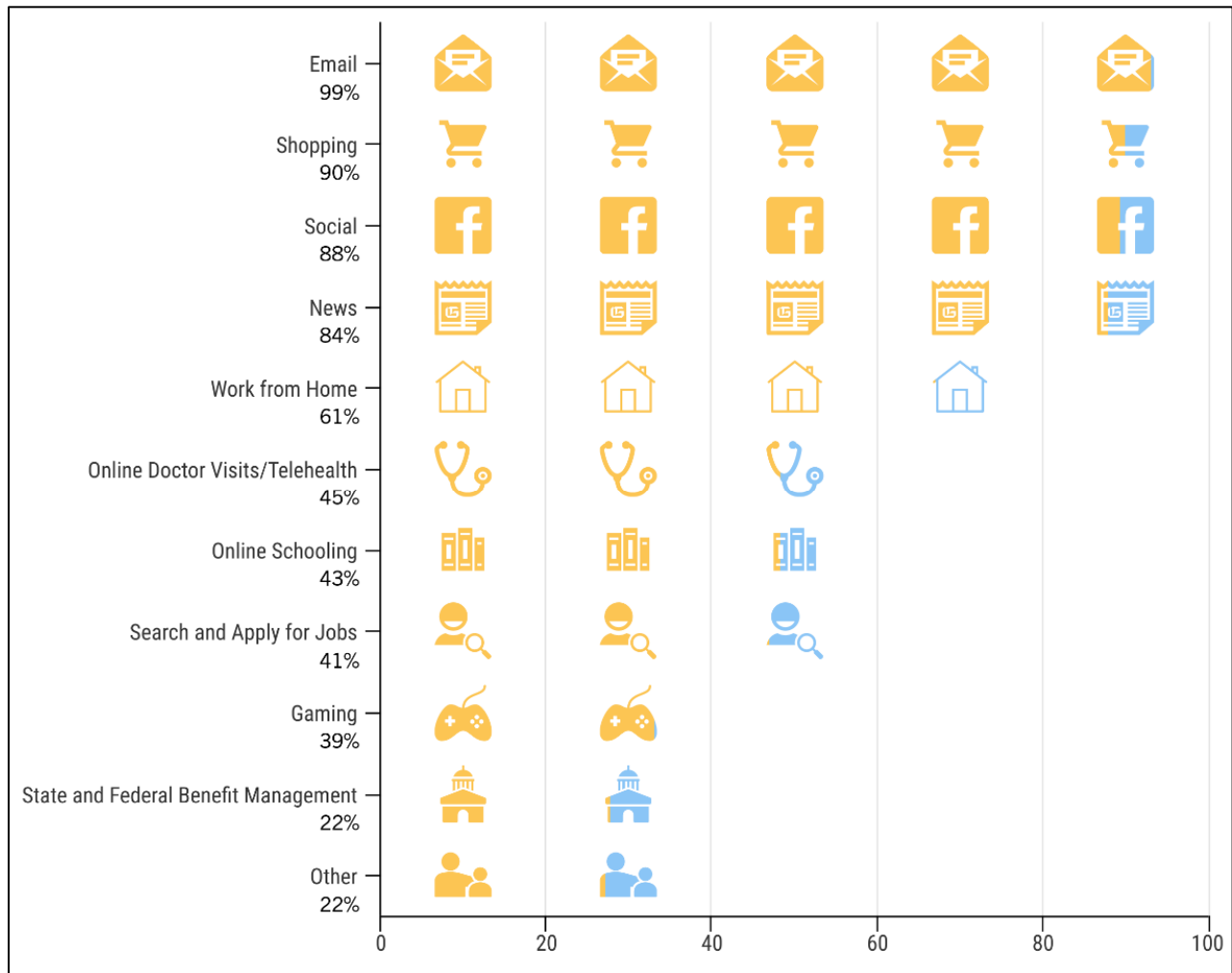
3. Current State of Digital Equity

Barriers and Assets

3.1.4.2 Meaningful Use

Results of the WSU survey show Kansans use broadband access to stay informed, work (or find work), obtain home deliveries, pay bills, manage finances, arrange transportation, manage benefits or healthcare, learn, and find entertainment. The internet became many Kansans' primary access point for work or school during the pandemic, and remains critical to participate in all aspects of the digital economy.

WSU SURVEY RESULTS: MEANINGFUL USE OF THE INTERNET



3.1.5 Broadband Affordability Assets

In addition to the assets below, Appendices 2 and 3 contain a comprehensive inventory of assets and programs throughout the state.

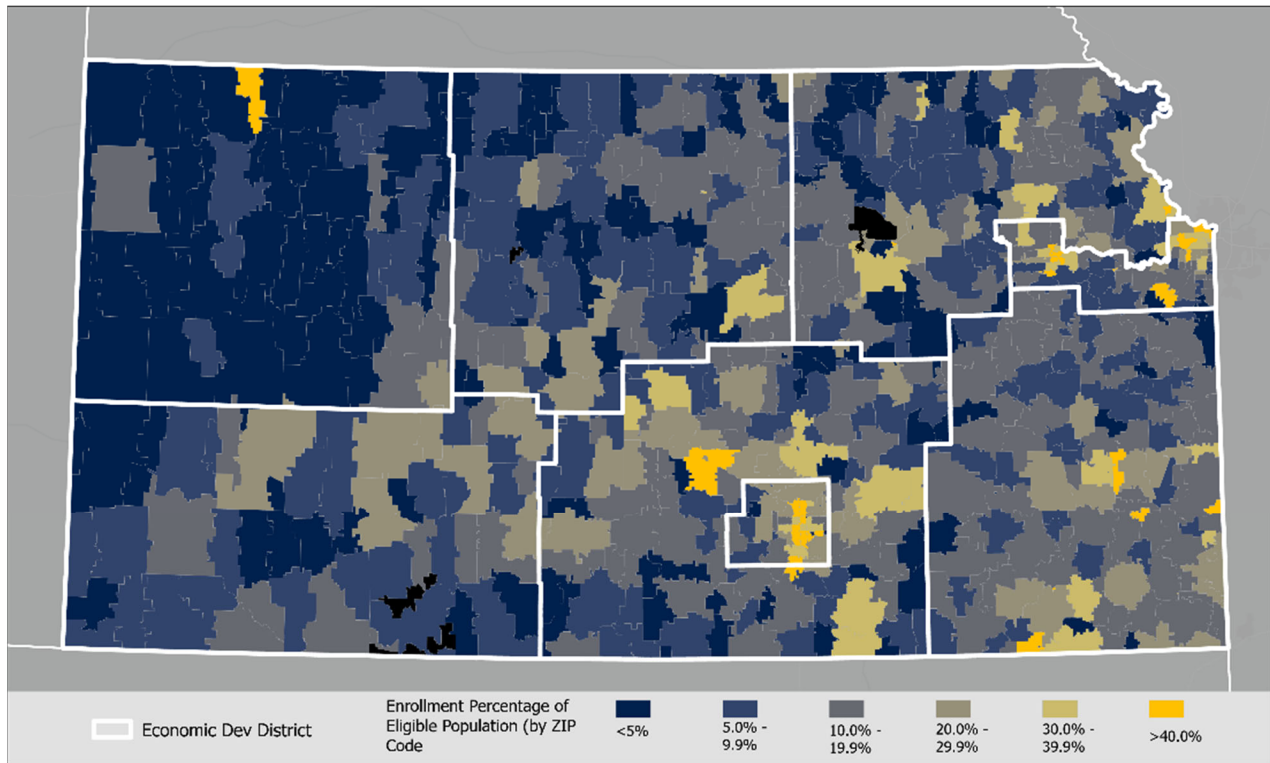
3. Current State of Digital Equity

Barriers and Assets

3.1.5.1 Affordable Connectivity Program

The ACP is the primary source for broadband subsidization. According to the March 2024 ACP report, March 133,746 enrolled households are in Kansas. This increase from 70,000 reported in the December 2022 report is the result of focused efforts by KOBD and nonprofit groups throughout the state. Still, the 133,746 households account for only 26.0% of total eligible households. While it's a great start, there is much more work to do.

KANSAS ACP ADOPTION RATES



The data indicates several counties have more than doubled their ACP enrollment month-over-month for several recent quarters. Outreach to understand how these counties created programs and processes to increase ACP enrollment is under way, and KOBD will continue to work with ACP grant recipients to improve awareness. Moreover, KOBD will map ACP adoption to monitor counties that are exhibiting growth in outreach efforts and identify the counties that may need additional support or resources to reach additional households eligible for ACP.

3.1.5.2 Kansas Lifeline

Kansas offers Lifeline to provide discounted phone service, residential or wireless. This state-managed program works with the FCC's Lifeline Support for Affordable Communications, allowing participants to combine discounts with ACP (Lifeline participants automatically qualify for ACP) for up to \$17.02 in monthly savings. Only 11% (29,675) of eligible households in Kansas participate in Lifeline.

3. Current State of Digital Equity

Barriers and Assets

3.1.5.3 Education SuperHighway

KOBD partners with Education SuperHighway to provide awareness and increased enrollment in the ACP program. Education Superhighway created a dashboard to assist with the ACP application process and developed resources to train community partners, local governments, and Internet Service Providers (ISP). As a result of this partnership, more than 60 organizations and 90 designated representatives are training on how to sign up customers for this subsidy.

EDUCATION SUPERHIGHWAY WEBSITE



3.1.5.4 FCC ACP Outreach Program

Kansas is fortunate to have three grantees selected to the FCC ACP Outreach grant funding program:

- The City of Topeka will provide ACP outreach support to its residents.
- Wichita State University will provide ACP outreach support to the Wichita area.
- KC Digital Drive will provide ACP outreach to the remaining footprint of Kansas.

KOBD will stay engaged as a partner to assist these organizations where possible.

3. Current State of Digital Equity

Barriers and Assets

3.1.5.5 ISP Support

TABLE 11: PROVIDERS THAT ACCEPT ACP

Several ISPs accept ACP, including:

Blackdragon Networks	Blue Valley Technologies	Cascade Communications
Clearwave Fiber	Consolidated Communications Enterprise Services	EARTHLINK
Frontier	Giant Communications	Google Fiber Kansas
H & B Communications	Kanokla Networks	Kansas Wireless
KwiKom Communications	Lingo	Mercury Broadband
Mutual Telephone Company	Nex-Tech	North Central Kansas Community Network
Pioneer Communications	Rainbow Communications	S&T Communications
The Junction Internet	TOAST.net Internet Service	Twin Valley Communications
ValuNet Fiber	Velocity	Vyve Broadband
Zito West Holdings		

TABLE 12: PROVIDERS THAT ACCEPT ACP AND HAVE \$0 PROGRAMS

Several ISPs offer plans that, when coupled with ACP benefits, cost consumers \$0 per month, including:

AT&T	Comcast Xfinity	Cox Communication
IdeaTek	Integrated Path Communications	Mediacom
Midcontinent Communications	Moundridge Telephone Company	Optimum
Spectrum Charter	T-Mobile	Twin Valley Communications
United Wireless Communications	Verizon	VOLT MOBILE
	WTC	

TABLE 13: PROVIDERS THAT OFFER DISCOUNTED DEVICE PROGRAMS

Many ISPs offer discounted devices programs, including:

Catnect Communications	Clear Wireless	Culture Wireless
Figgers Communication	Golden Belt Telephone Association	Human-I-T
Nextlink Internet	PCs for People	SWA Connect
Tone Communication Services	T-Mobile	Wisper ISP

3. Current State of Digital Equity

Barriers and Assets

3.2 Needs Assessment

To fully address digital equity needs in Kansas, KOBD used a needs assessment to understand the covered populations, the barriers to broadband adoption, and concerns surrounding broadband affordability. The Roadshow offered listening sessions with organizations serving at-risk populations and dedicated conversations with members of covered populations to help KOBD and its partners identify barriers to close the digital gap.

Covered populations are disproportionately impacted by the digital divide, and intersectionality among covered populations can increase and magnify barriers for many Kansans, which is why KOBD believes it is important to take a holistic view of the state to identify widespread or systemic barriers for Kansans as a whole.

Accessibility

Of the 1.1 million locations in Kansas, as of December 2023 our data shows 56,867 remain unserved and 39,993 remain underserved for a total of 96,860 without qualifying broadband service. These BSLs exist in all 105 counties, four Sovereign Tribal Nations, and every one of the 1,890 cities, towns, and villages that make up the state of Kansas. Complications with delivering broadband to the most rural parts of the state and with expected workforce shortages in broadband deployment roles in Kansas are additional challenges for the state. KOBD's BEAD plan details an approach for attaining universal service so that the first hurdle — accessibility — is cleared for all residents.

Affordability

As mentioned previously, the March 2024 ACP report indicates 133,746 Kansas households are enrolled. This is 26.0% of the estimated 464,000 eligible households. See the "Broadband Affordability" section of this plan for further discussion of affordability challenges and approaches.

Devices

American Community Survey data indicates that as many as 15.8% of Kansans lack a laptop or desktop computer, emphasizing the need for statewide device programs and support for CAIs who provide public computing access.

Digital Literacy Skills and Cybersecurity

There is no comprehensive inventory of digital literacy skill accessibility or participation yet available for Kansas, so an accurate baseline cannot be determined at this time. However, KOBD's geospatial mapping capabilities and planned development of a publicly accessible digital equity asset map will make it possible to identify the availability of digital literacy skills and cybersecurity support for all Kansans by geography. This approach will also make it possible to identify gaps in access to these services. As noted elsewhere, the mandatory availability of computer classes in all public high schools and coordination with OITS on their developing cybersecurity plan will add dimension and data to measurements in this area.

Public Services

While working with state agencies to develop this plan, KOBD learned of a need for a statewide inventory of online public services and a strategy for modernizing online services, providing translation and targeted accessibility resources, and delivering technical or navigator support for public services. In its planned role as a convener, KOBD will act as an advocate and resource within state government for improved accessibility and service for all Kansans. KOBD's goal is to inventory public resources to identify those with challenges moving online or meeting accessibility, resource, and support services as mentioned above.

3. Current State of Digital Equity

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3.2.1 Covered Population Needs Assessment

Members of covered populations helped KOBD identify their needs and barriers to participation in the digital economy. Specifically, people voiced how the internet helps achieve personal and community objectives:

- It relieves isolation due to lack of connectivity
- It provides an even playing field for small, local businesses to participate in the global economy, increasing retention and sustainability
- It provides a reduction in crime (i.e., security services, Ring, SMART equipment for video cameras)
- It allows access to advanced education through remote means
- It attracts business possibilities for small towns
- It allows younger generations to remain in communities with competitive employment opportunities
- It provides remote work opportunities across the state
- It is important for transmitting and downloading/uploading documents
- It creates telehealth opportunities that require reliable, suitable speeds to have video consultations and send large digital medical records
- It provides public safety and real-time alerts for emergencies and weather-related events
- It allows commerce, education, and emergency services to continue in the event of inclement weather, holidays, and unforeseeable circumstances

3.2.1.1 Individuals Who Live in Low-Income Households

In Kansas, 20.6% of residents are living below 150% of poverty level.⁴² Of this population, 31% do not have a desktop or laptop computer.⁴³ Broadband adoption rates for low-income households tend to be lower than that of the general population due to the prioritization of funds for other essential needs. KOBD heard repeatedly in Roadshow stops, Advisory Council Meetings, and Focus Group meetings that despite the availability of adoption and affordability programs like ACP, many individuals do not know about these programs or fully realize the benefits of having access to the internet.

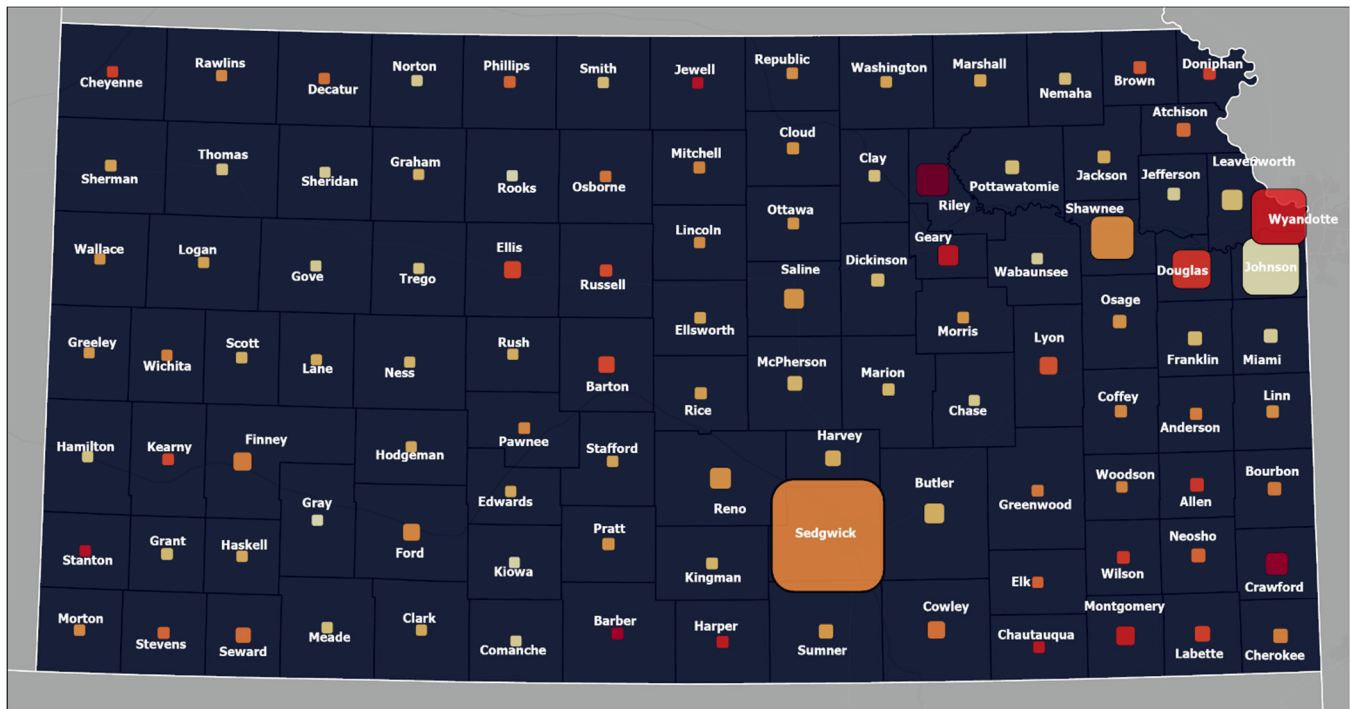
⁴² U.S. Census Bureau. (2021). American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates — Public Use Microdata Sample. <https://data.census.gov/mdat/>

⁴³ Microsoft Airband (2021). Digital Equity Map. <https://aka.ms/DigitalEquityMaps>

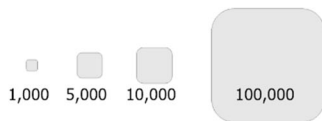
3. Current State of Digital Equity

Barriers and Assets

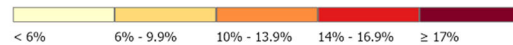
POPULATION WHOSE INCOME IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS IS BELOW THE FEDERAL POVERTY LEVEL



Population whose income in the past 12 months is below federal poverty level



Percent of Population whose income in the past 12 months is below poverty level



Data Source: 2020 U.S. Census

Members of this population and organizations serving them alike informed KOBD that major barriers for low-income households include affordability of broadband-capable devices, lack of digital literacy skills, and a cybersecurity gap that arises from the absence of using the internet and these devices. Members of the Advisory Council noted that even if a household qualifies for other supportive subsidies (e.g., WIC, SNAP, Lifeline), they may still be unaware of ACP or a local device purchasing program. The challenge is complicated by inconsistent support from county to county. For instance, some counties have higher rates in purchasing devices than others. This may be a function of low program awareness in some counties and could be due to the lack of retail outlets, libraries, or other support institutions in these locations. This varying level of awareness extends statewide, emphasizing the need for KOBD to coordinate with agencies like DCF and other client-facing entities to ensure equitable awareness of affordability and skills development programs.

See section 2.3.2, 'Key Performance Indicators by Population' for measurable objectives for this population.

3.2.1.2 Individuals who reside in a rural area

Like most states, Kansas has an increasingly urban population. However, over 800,000 Kansans (nearly 30%) live in rural areas⁴⁴ and face unique challenges related to broadband access. Multiple Roadshow conversations

⁴⁴ University of Kansas Institute of Policy & Social Research. Kansas Statistical Abstract 2022. <https://ipsr.ku.edu/ksdata/ksah/>

3. Current State of Digital Equity

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centered on the fact that regional ISPs and local cooperatives have historically led deployment of broadband infrastructure in rural areas. This has created areas of inconsistent and unreliable broadband service and inaccurate depictions of coverage in rural communities, and may in part explain the 15% difference in the broadband adoption gap between rural and non-rural areas of Kansas.⁴⁵ In the KFB survey, rural partners acknowledged public resources and services are miles away from many rural residents, especially in western Kansas. The University of Kansas Center for Telemedicine & Telehealth (KUCTT) noted that the importance of reliable broadband connectivity grows as telemedicine becomes a more accepted mode of healthcare delivery, especially for emotional wellbeing services, chronic health conditions, and overall emergency services. Their relationships with counties cover just 72 of the 105 counties in Kansas. This is only one example of need, but the same concept applies to education and employment opportunities. These gaps point to the need for expanded infrastructure in areas that are normally difficult to reach.

Agriculture is a predominant force in Kansas' rural communities and is a key industry for the state. Over 80% of all land in Kansas is farmland, producing crops worth over \$5.5 billion dollars annually.⁴⁴ Moreover, agriculture is becoming more technology dependent, making connectivity to farmland — which in some cases can be thousands of acres — more necessary than ever before. In WSU's report from the Roadshow, agricultural partners stressed the importance of broadband access through the last acre, not just the last mile. In addition, with agriculture upload speeds are just as critical as download speeds. Minimal upload speeds preclude working or learning from home but also may prevent farmers from transmitting performance data from their digitally connected equipment. While equipment innovations allow farmers to manage their crops more efficiently, poor connectivity can hamper these efforts. Another concern for the agricultural community is the need for reliable, safe, and robust infrastructure that is secure. From WSU's report, rural partners stated "everything from livestock auctions, sales, marketing, market trading, invoicing, and other basic business activities rely on a secure network. Business financials should not become prey for cybersecurity threats."⁴⁶

Rural Roadshow attendees also stated that satellite service has been one of the only options for some highly rural areas. Satellite upload speeds are insufficient and may be susceptible to interference from weather and seasonal foliage, given Kansas' landscape. The FCC does not recognize this service as reliable broadband for the purposes of universal service. Federal BSL data identifies structures that are unserved or underserved, but it excludes farmland. Extending broadband access beyond physical structures must also be part of the planning process.

See section 2.3.2, 'Key Performance Indicators by Population' for measurable objectives for this population.

3.2.1.3 Veterans

There are 163,000 veterans, or 5.5% of the population, residing in Kansas today. The Census shows that 14.5% of veterans are without broadband access. The Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs identified two common barriers for veterans: affordability of broadband connectivity and awareness of ACP or device programs. First, there is evidence to suggest not all veteran service points of contact are familiar with or adequately trained in these affordability and device programs. Second, access to employment training and opportunities often relies on digital literacy skills, which presents a significant barrier for many veterans, and especially those who are unhoused.

⁴⁵ U.S. Census Bureau. QuickFacts — Kansas. www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/KS/PST045222 (accessed August 15, 2023).

⁴⁶ Kansas Department of Commerce, Office of Broadband Development. (May 2023). *Digital Equity in Kansas – Kansas Broadband Roadshow*. www.kansascommerce.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/digital-equity-roadshow-report-06.09.23v14.pdf (1,777 MB)

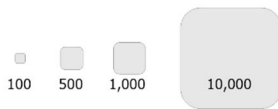
3. Current State of Digital Equity

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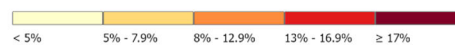
TOTAL VETERANS 18 YEARS AND OVER



Total Veterans 18 Years and Over



Percent of Civilian Population 18 Years and Over who are Veterans



Data Source:
2020 U.S. Census

Older veterans have specific barriers to using technology because of a lack of digital education, training, and adoption. They tend to be on limited or fixed income with little computer knowledge and limited access to technology.

The health of veterans and the need to access telehealth was of specific concern and highlighted often in focused conversations. In WSU’s survey, of those who identified themselves as a veteran, 26.1% believed training would help them access online doctor visits, while 29.8% said they did not know where to go for help with digital literacy skills.⁴⁷

Western Kansas lacks a veterans’ affairs location, which increases the importance of online access for veterans in this part of the state. Without broadband infrastructure, critical services become non-existent, and veterans may not receive needed services. To fill this need, Kansas Workforce centers offer a Local Veteran Representative who can offer referrals to other veteran programs and assist with employment services, training, and education.

See section 2.3.2, 'Key Performance Indicators by Population' for measurable objectives for this population.

3.2.1.4 Individuals Who are Members of a Racial or Ethnic Minority

Broadband disparities impact racial and ethnic minority populations disproportionately, and Kansas must address

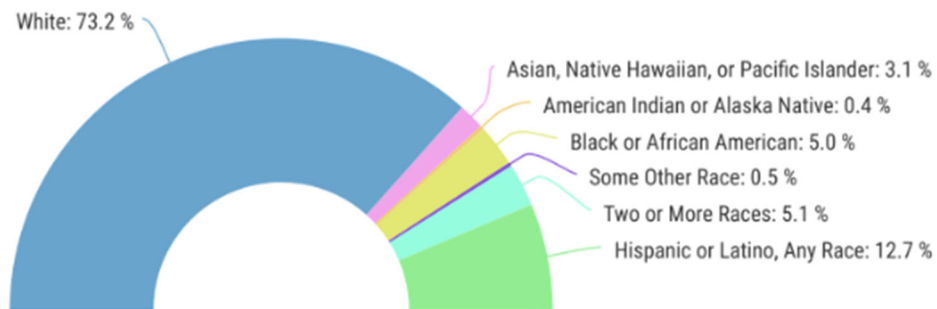
⁴⁷ Kansas Department of Commerce, Office of Broadband Development. (May 2023). *Digital Equity in Kansas – Kansas Broadband Roadshow*. www.kansascommerce.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/digital-equity-roadshow-report-06.09.23v14.pdf (1,777 MB)

3. Current State of Digital Equity

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their needs during this moment of opportunity. In Kansas 24% of the overall population, or 382,603 individuals, identify as a racial or ethnic minority. To better understand their unique needs, KOBD worked with members of African American, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Sovereign Tribal Nation communities to identify barriers and specific needs of each population.

KANSAS POPULATION BY RACE AND ETHNICITY



Wichita, Kansas City, and Garden City are all home to refugee communities. Dodge City, Liberal, and Great Bend are also highly diverse communities (though many consider them homogeneous) with migrant labor for meat packing, farming, the dairy industry, and other endeavors that impact the state’s agriculturally-driven economy. Liberal has the highest free/reduced-price lunch population in the state. Kansas City, Wichita, and Garden City are communities where residents speak 40 to 80 languages. Highlighting these diverse needs will help draw a clearer picture of the challenges especially related to digital equity, where education and foundational literacy are at issue.

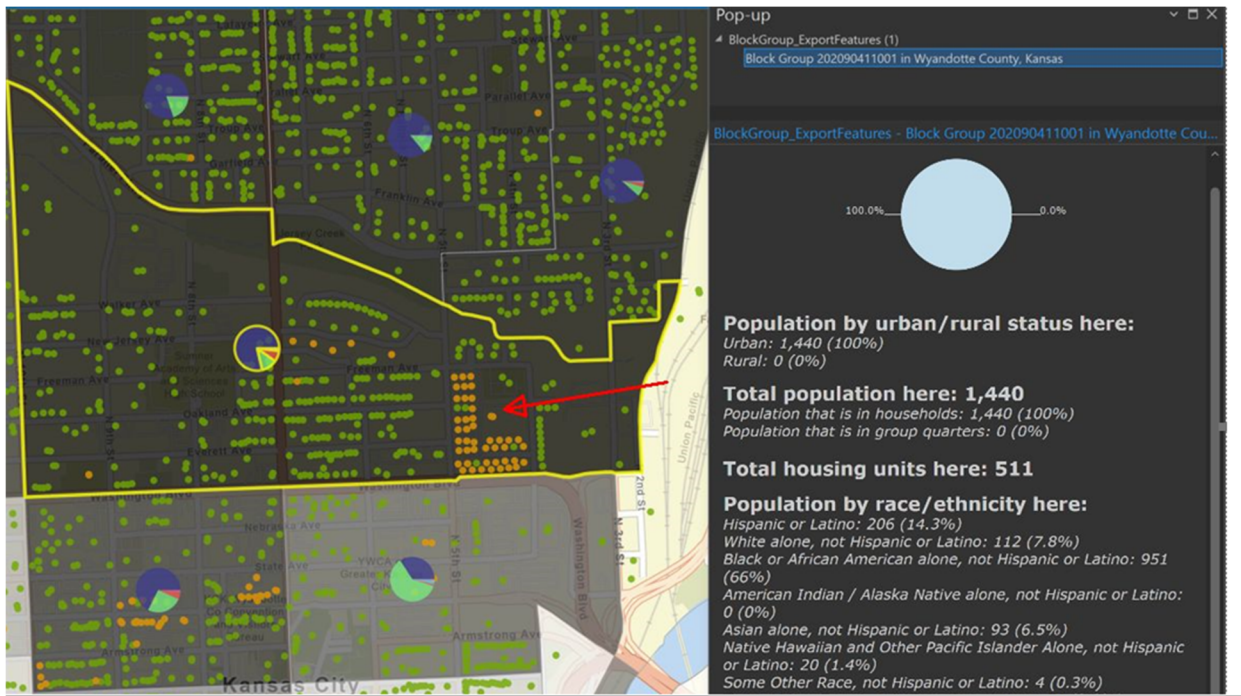
Looking at minority populations with more specificity, 5% of Kansans are African American, with most living in or near densely populated urban locations. Affordability is notable, but not the only significant barrier. A review of the BSL data and conversations with Advisory Council members and key community leaders revealed that another key barrier is the presence of unserved areas despite their proximity to densely populated areas with broadband service. This is particularly true for those who live in multi-dwelling units and encounter accessibility issues when the building needs equipment upgrades to improve unit access. KOBD found evidence of this when layering speed test data with demographic information. As a result, KOBD is working with ISPs to develop solutions like discounted rates and shared access points for MDU residents.

In some cases, neighborhoods with higher percentages of African American residents had speeds that registered as underserved in the speed test data, compared to neighborhoods with a different demographic makeup. The Census block group highlighted below, which includes 66% African American residents, depicts one block as underserved despite proximity to served areas. KOBD validated these observations by investigating urban BSL locations like the one below using KOBD GIS and mapping platforms.

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UNDERSERVED CENSUS BLOCK NEAR SERVED AREAS



Furthermore, a visual check of the block via Google Map Street View shows this block comprises MDUs to consider for equipment upgrades, potentially through BEAD funding.



KOBD heard from Roadshow stakeholders who mentioned affordability of broadband services and the devices needed to participate in virtual services as issues, along with a need to increase digital literacy skills training. African American leaders and advocates stressed the need to make programs similar to nonprofits that specialize in

3. Current State of Digital Equity

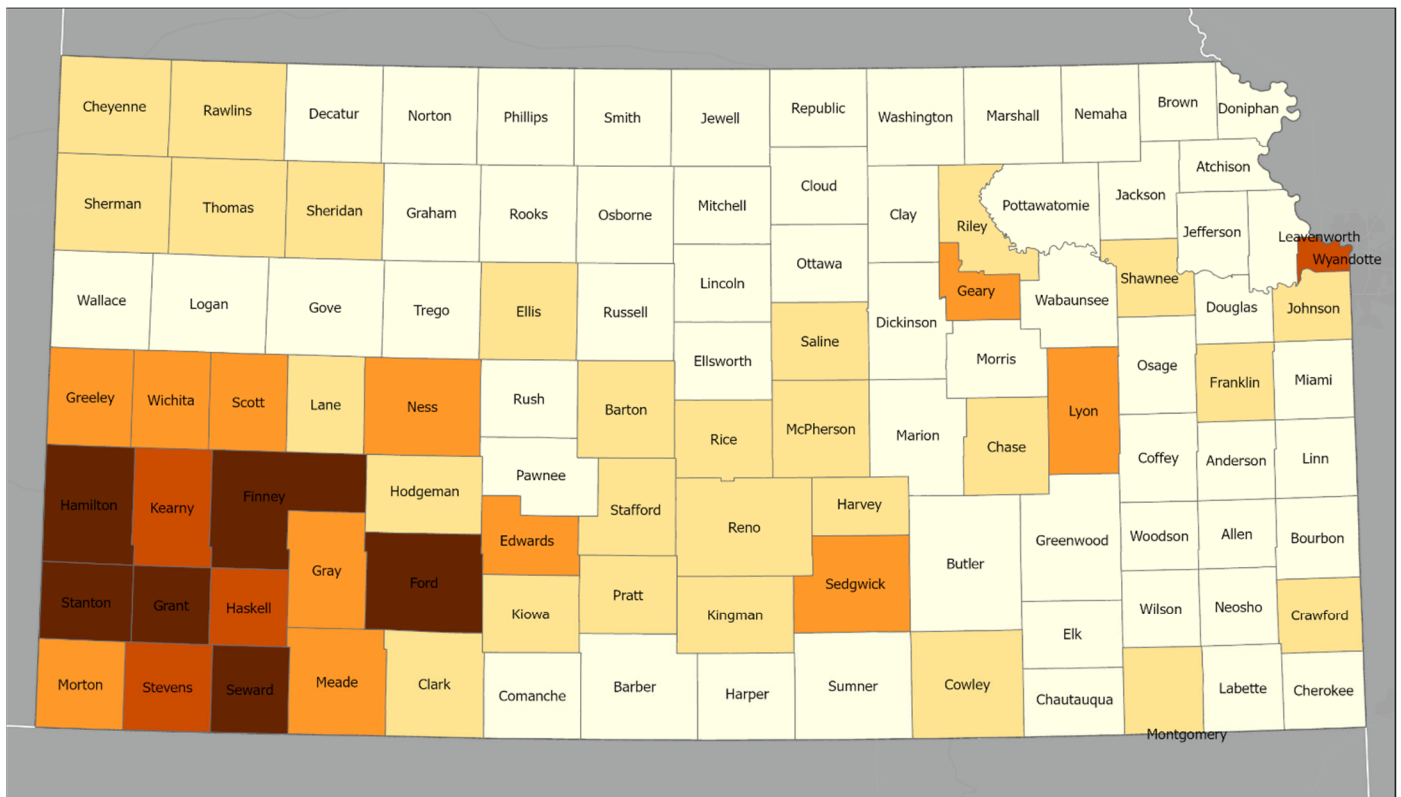
Barriers and Assets

Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Manufacturing (STEAM) training available to members of these communities. These organizations find it difficult to source funding despite being dependent on grants. In addition, some of these programs are small and serve their populations well, but they struggle to scale up resources. Larger collaborations and coalitions to expand the reach across the entire state are necessary.

Members of the Hispanic (12% of Kansans), Asian/Pacific Islander (3%), and other ethnic minority populations (including 0.5% identifying as “other” and 5.1% as “two or more races”) may have issues accessing resources due to language barriers. There are also inter-generational needs related to family communication and connections that are part of their native cultures.

For instance, in a specific focus group conversation with the Hispanic population located in Ford County, many in attendance held jobs at the local meatpacking facility. The lack of a reliable and quality internet connection was a critical point, as participants noted this can limit communications with family members, especially children, during emergencies. Focus group attendees mentioned they would welcome digital literacy skills training and find it helpful as part of the onboarding or continuing education of their jobs. Moreover, important work-related documents are online, such as paystubs, benefits or payroll forms, and access codes. Thus, training in digital literacy skills would be beneficial, but it must be the right amount of training at a rate learners can absorb.

PERCENT OF POPULATION AGE 5+ WHO SPEAK SPANISH AT HOME



Percent of Population Age 5+ Who Speak Spanish at Home



Data Source:
American Community Survey

3. Current State of Digital Equity

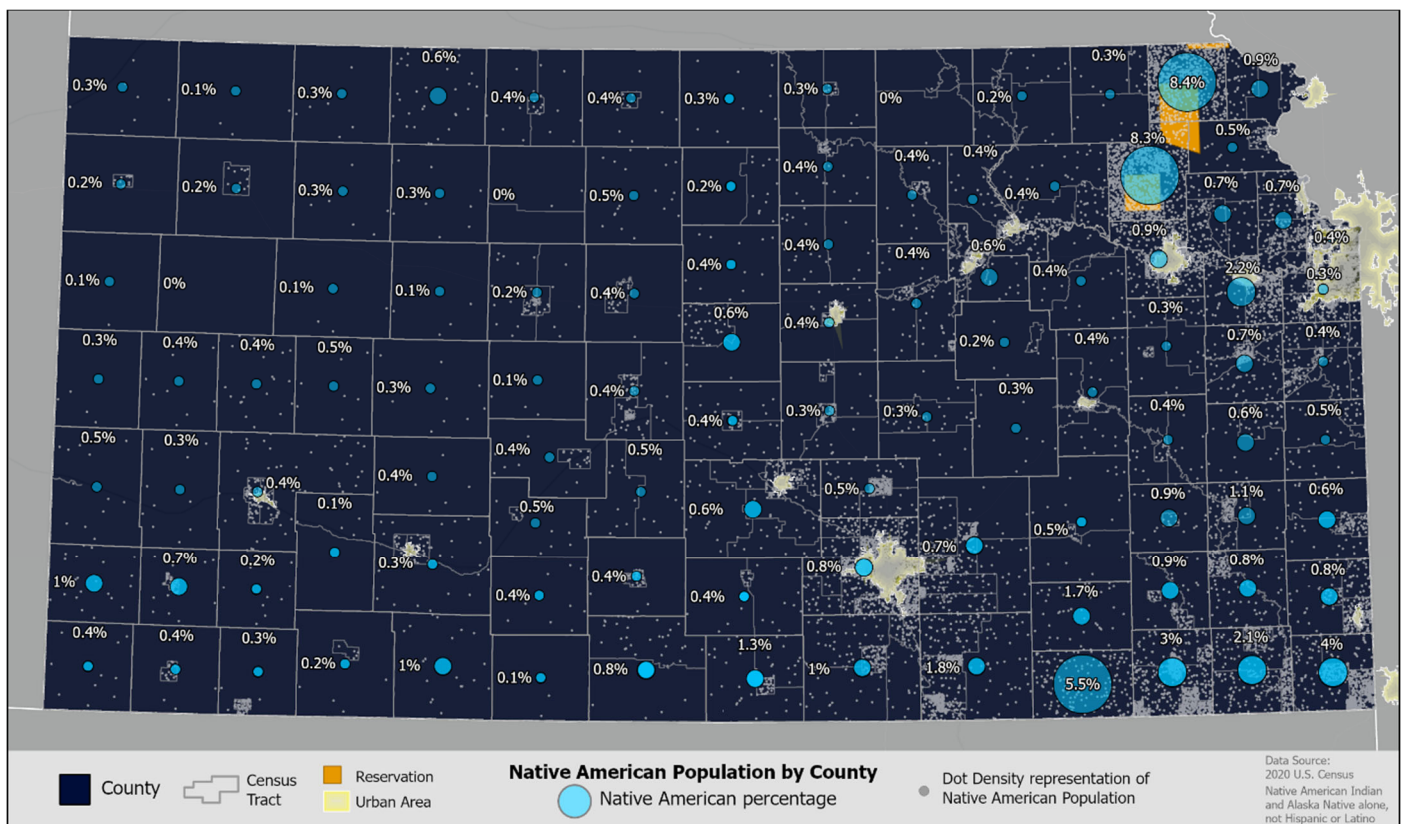
Barriers and Assets

The state’s Hispanic population has a high density in southwestern Kansas. As digital equity facing resources are expanded across the state, it will be important to match resource development and distribution. For example, Spanish-speaking resources appropriate for population density and need will be crucial to efforts with this population.

Individuals who identify as American Indian or Alaskan Native count for 0.4% of Kansas’ population. In dedicated consultations with the Sovereign Tribal Nations, KOBD learned that members find barriers as they tackle affordability and adoption of broadband connectivity. Furthermore, there is often a struggle to get Sovereign Tribal Nation members to sign up for ACP even if there is connectivity, due to the universally cumbersome process. While slightly different approaches exist, each of the Sovereign Tribal Nations seeks to solve their affordability and digital equity problems.

While residents of Tribal lands face significant challenges with broadband access and digital literacy skill training availability, the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis’ Center of Indian Country Development points out the majority of indigenous individuals live in urban centers rather than Sovereign Tribal Nation lands. Thus, a Sovereign Tribal Nation’s strategy must be inclusive of all members of Indigenous populations who reside in Kansas.

NATIVE AMERICAN POPULATION BY COUNTY⁴⁸



⁴⁸ U.S. Census Bureau. (2020). Kansas Population Change — Race and Ethnicity by County.

www.census.gov/library/stories/state-by-state/kansas-population-change-between-census-decade.html

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3.2.1.6 Justice-Involved Individuals

This plan defines justice-involved individuals as people who are incarcerated, especially those who are nearing release, along with people on probation or on parole. Kansas has approximately 8,900 individuals (0.03% of the population) serving in the DOC system, including nearly 140 juveniles. Another 5,310 individuals are in the parole system. The DOC works to support the needs of justice-involved populations despite some of the connectivity firewalls necessary while one serves a sentence. Appropriately restricted devices are available in some cases, though more robust device programs coupled with digital literacy skills training would represent even greater progress. Direct conversations with DOC, corrections officers, and justice-involved individuals focused on those people nearing the end of a sentence and about to re-enter society. The conversation revealed that not all corrections facilities have access to robust broadband services, which hinders digital literacy skills and creates security risks during outages. Redundant, robust broadband access is a security need.

This focus group related how unstable, unreliable broadband access affects their daily life. When service goes down, the lack of reliable broadband prevents connection with loved ones who act as a source of emotional support, and hampers access to resources. One focus group member explained how the inability can increase stress on facilities.

Probation officers for the DOC explained that many of those re-entering society start their post-incarceration cycle with a government-issued cell phone. This limited-in-utility cell phone does not allow for two-factor authentication, which is often needed to access governmental assistance programs and job application sites. The affordability of broadband service is the next barrier, as many recently released individuals are financially constrained when re-entering society. Deciding between core necessities and a broadband connection is difficult when starting a new life in the digital economy.

This population also mentioned applying online for jobs and social services as issues, with training and support in these areas as points of emphasis. For many who are re-entering society, ongoing technical support and training are necessary. Continuity of job training and skills training also relates to recidivism, and DOC pointed toward a need to build more programs that develop job certification prior to re-entry.

See section 2.3.2, 'Key Performance Indicators by Population' for measurable objectives for this population.

3.2.1.7 Aging Individuals

There are 382,603 people (23% of the population) over 60 residing in Kansas. Roadshow participants explained that “aging in place” is a major concern for older adults who live in areas that currently do not have reliable or quality internet service. In counties with higher populations of citizens aged 60 and older, the ability to access online telehealth and medical services such as telemedicine visits and long-term care monitoring is critical. Conversations with medical professionals revealed that medical device monitoring is a critical component in



Devices and Training Contribute to Employment

New to Wichita, Roger was re-entering society. Looking for a fresh start, he was quickly faced with the need for broadband to access online services.

While trying to apply for jobs from his residence, Roger missed several opportunities due to a lack of broadband access.

With help from the Wichita Work Release Facility, Roger accessed internet and a computer, plus referrals to community resources. He learned how to research jobs, create a resume, and apply for work, which helped him adjust.



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seniors' ability to age in place. Devices that monitor vital information and deliver it to care providers in real-time require affordable, reliable broadband. Disruptions in connectivity due to slow and unreliable internet can jeopardize aging individuals' independence and health outcomes.

From WSU's broadband survey, 44.7% of older adults in Kansas use the internet for online doctor visits and 74.5% spend more than four hours a day online. Yet 28.9% do not know where to go for internet help and 10% disagree or strongly disagree they know how to use the internet (compared to 5% of the general population).

In KOBD's digital equity surveys and listening sessions across the state, older adults stressed the importance of connecting with loved ones through broadband connections. Those who live in rural areas with little to no broadband infrastructure experience periods of isolation when video chats with loved ones are not an option. In addition, many aging Kansans without broadband are unable to obtain critical information or deliveries when needed. This leaves them disconnected from society and what is happening in their community and world.

Organizations like the Kansas Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC) explained in conversations with KOBD that digital literacy skills such as understanding how to use the internet also present a barrier for older Kansans. With the speed of devices changing, upgrading is a challenge for individuals who are not familiar with or native to technology. Organizations like ADRC address these issues with programs and would benefit from expanded funds for digital training resources. Another important concern is safety when using devices and technology. Security precautions, criminal activity, scams, and misleading advertising are concerns and present ongoing risks for the older population, especially for those on fixed incomes who may be targets of cybercrime or phone scams.

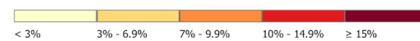
SENIOR POPULATION (60+) WHOSE INCOME IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS WAS BELOW THE POVERTY LEVEL



Senior Population (60+) whose income in the past 12 months is below poverty level



Percent of Seniors (60+) whose income in the past 12 months is below poverty level



Data Source: 2020 U.S. Census

See section 2.3.2, 'Key Performance Indicators by Population' for measurable objectives for this population.

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3.2.1.8 Individuals with a Language Barrier

In the Census, 61,800 individuals (2.1% of the population) said they speak English “not well” or “not at all.” 46.9% of this population does not own a desktop or laptop computer. Affordability is a major barrier.

Access to resources without translation or effective guidance creates an insurmountable challenge for members of this covered population. During a WSU listening session with organizations supporting refugees, staff explained the importance of a digital navigator. Without one, a simple application can become an impossible task. Moreover, this obstacle can arise at any stage of the process. If there are issues during equipment installation at the home of a person with a language barrier, the installer may not be able to successfully complete the installation. Thus, providing digital navigation assistance is immensely important to this covered population.

Not all ISPs offer support in signing up for ACP or other affordability programs in languages other than English. This barrier is especially prevalent in refugee populations navigating resettlement. The WSU report states the International Rescue Commission (IRC) explains there are significant barriers because most job applications are only in English or Spanish, whereas IRC’s Wichita service center serves those who speak Swahili, Pashto, Dari, Arabic, and Ukrainian.

The language barrier is not the only barrier for this covered population. IRC also mentioned concerns over proper documentation. For instance, information about what identification is required to access ACP can be confusing. The program is flexible and requires various forms of identification. A digital navigator can support these applicants and eliminate that confusion.

The DCF representative on the Advisory Council shared that for parents, guardians, school-aged children, and independent youth who speak other languages, navigating online education can be frustrating and harmful to students if not effectively managed. During the COVID pandemic, families participating in school from home without the expertise to troubleshoot online software or equipment had additional hurdles to equitable schooling.

See section 2.3.2, 'Key Performance Indicators by Population' for measurable objectives for this population.

3.2.2 Broadband Adoption

The barriers that affect broadband adoption for all Kansans amplify the issues for covered populations. The stacking of barriers creates substantial roadblocks to the use of broadband resources. The Advisory Council mentioned that intersectionality can compound the negative impact of these issues.

3.2.2.1 Telehealth and Telemedicine

Telemedicine and telehealth are important components of modern medical care. The lack of reliable, affordable, and quality broadband service was a key issue in every Roadshow around the state. Knowing that telehealth is a growing resource requirement for the state, the United Methodist Health Ministry



Digital Literacy Skills Build Confidence

Many adults lack basic computer skills, experience, or devices. This is the case for many Johnson County Adult Education students, including Pilar, an English learner in her 50s, who had never used a computer and was fearful of using a laptop in class.

A JCAE volunteer taught Pilar basics like turning on the computer and using the mouse and keyboard. The first time Pilar logged in by herself, she was so excited, she jumped out of her chair!

Pilar’s new digital literacy skills have opened up a new world for her, and she looks forward to learning even more.



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Fund and REACH Healthcare Foundation, in collaboration with KU’s Medical Center, interviewed providers, administrators, and the public to identify their needs in the growing sector. Both patients and providers believed there is benefit in telehealth, as it allows access to care which would otherwise be difficult to access, particularly in a rural state such as Kansas. The state must encourage standardization of telehealth care to ensure public confidence in how to use the resource effectively and without security concerns.⁴⁹

Kansas will need to establish public policy and statewide resources as telehealth becomes a more trusted option. Currently, the leading resource is the KU Center for Telemedicine & Telehealth (KUCCT). It is an excellent partner to guide member healthcare facilities through the process of establishing telehealth and telemedicine programs. KUCCT serves 72 of 105 counties in the state but lacks the appropriate resources to expand. With funding, KUCCT could develop the staff and program implementation for necessary outreach, implementation, and administrative support to establish a full statewide initiative.

3.2.2.2 Housing Authorities and Broadband Adoption

Housing authorities act as a first line of support for many of the individuals in covered populations. Many housing authorities understand the programs their residents can access, including ACP or other affordability programs. MDUs also exist on the property of housing authorities, thus making them necessary partners in addressing the need to upgrade the wiring of MDUs without adequate and reliable broadband to each unit.

The Kansas Housing Authority, Topeka Housing Authority, and others have begun discussing the topic of internet access on housing properties. As ACP outreach coordination becomes a larger focus, bringing the housing authorities on board will be beneficial. To make this a statewide effort, KOBD will invite the member organizations of the Kansas Community Action Agencies Association to become part of the affordable housing and broadband conversation. Where there is not a defined housing authority, Community Action Agencies are supporting individuals and families in their housing needs.

As the network of digital equity deepens across the state, and more federal programs and resources such as Connect Home USA for housing via HUD come on line, KOBD will work to align efforts with these organizations.

3.2.2.3 Digital Navigation

Digital navigation and navigators are key pieces to the puzzle as Kansas works to close the digital divide. A Boston Consulting Group study shows digital navigators can increase the effectiveness of digital equity programs. With support from a digital navigator, over 65% of survey respondents in the study were able to obtain internet access and a computer or tablet at home, and over 85% reported using the internet more.⁵⁰ This illustrates the crucial role of digital navigators, and KOBD will continue to support these roles across Kansas.

Most rural communities have few or no organizations offering digital navigation support, and distance to resources limits participation. Rural organizations also have limited computer stations open to the public, and many lack rental device programs to develop skills and learn at home.

⁴⁹ United Methodist Health Ministry Fund, REACH Healthcare Foundation, and in collaboration with University of Kansas Medical Center. (May 25, 2022). *Telehealth in Kansas During COVID-19: A Status Report*. <https://healthfund.org/wp-content/uploads/09-08-22-UMHMF-Cross-Study-Report.pdf> (231 MB)

⁵⁰ Boston Consulting Group. “A Human Approach to Closing the Digital Divide”. <https://www.bcg.com/publications/2022/how-to-close-digital-divide-with-human-approach>. (Accessed November 9, 2023)

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Digital navigation programs grow organically from the need of a localized population and a committed organization that gathers the resources and community to support them, but their growth and success are not accessible through a centralized service. This leads to uneven access to digital literacy skills training and digital navigation throughout the state.

Organizations such as the United Food and Commercial Workers Union that serve much of the Hispanic population in Dodge City and Liberal have successfully built digital navigation programs as an extension of their core services. With funding, this program could develop the staff and programs to do the necessary outreach, implementation, and administrative support to establish a full statewide initiative.

Digital navigation is essential for adoption, with many organizations in the start-up phase of their organizational life. As this resource matures, Kansas can develop career pathways within digital navigation. Currently, the state's librarians are the pinnacle of digital navigation along with a few nonprofits and some local service providers.

KOBD will build digital navigator career tools and help grow the resources needed to adequately support these statewide programs and a community of digital navigators who can learn from one another. Leveraging the curriculum development resources of Kansas higher education institutions is one way to build a digital navigator pipeline and ensure it provides the training, multilingual support, and service to communities that would most benefit from digital navigator support.

3.2.2.4 Digital Literacy Skills Education, Knowledge, and Skills Training

Strong digital literacy skills partners operate in Kansas, including K-State Research and Extension. K-State Research and Extension has a presence in every Kansas county and throughout the K-12 school system, acting as a resource for its students and guardians. In many cases, school-aged children may be bilingual and may have more digital literacy skills as a “digital native.” During COVID, schools provided digital navigation resources to families as they had to troubleshoot technology problems for students. Schools are a front-line partner in ensuring students and families have affordable access to broadband.

Workforce Centers and Goodwill locations also incorporated digital literacy skills training into their program design. Digital literacy skills training partners offer resources alongside workforce development and job readiness programs. The National Skills Coalition’s 2023 report, *Closing the Digital Skill Divide*, finds 92% of jobs require some level of digital literacy skills, including minimum wage positions.⁵¹ Thus, there is an economic benefit to develop digital literacy skills both as the individual worker (i.e., ability to earn on average 23% more than a job requiring no digital literacy skills) and as the business owner (i.e., retaining workers and reducing turnover from mismatched skills).

Members of the Advisory Council, key nonprofits, and state agencies offer digital literacy skills training to their constituencies but have expressed a need for a “basket of tools.” Understanding and addressing the barriers of broadband access and adoption is complex and requires various tools like Northstar, DigitalLearn.org, and Human-I-T Selecting tools. These tools should include robust reporting features that track and help achieve milestones needed to meet the objectives.

The ability of digital literacy skills organizations to scale statewide would increase if resources and tools were subsidized or provided at no cost to organizations. The Kansas City Federal Reserve Bank’s report, “Disconnected:

⁵¹ Bergson-Shilcock, A., & Taylor, R. (2023). *Closing the Digital Skill Divide*. National Skills Coalition. https://nationalskillscoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/NSC-DigitalDivide_report_Feb2023.pdf (2,054 MB).

3. Current State of Digital Equity

Barriers and Assets

Seven Lessons on Fixing the Digital Divide,” found in their survey of nonprofit organizations offering digital literacy skills that 47% use funding for more skills training offerings. Stipends are important to ensure participation. Stipends could compensate volunteers or support low-income participants as they pursue digital literacy skills training. As with digital navigators, ensuring enough instructors are available to meet the need will be important. Both digital navigation and digital literacy skills training need resources dedicated to train-the-trainer programs.

3.2.2.5 Philanthropic Support

A common concern shared by the Advisory Council is that federal funds remain insufficient to satisfy the digital equity needs of Kansas, signaling a need for state or philanthropic investments and support.

Community, family, and corporate foundations, along with other established philanthropies, support programs with digital inclusion efforts built into their offerings. The Health Forward Foundation participates on the advisory board for the Kansas City Regional COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund, which awarded \$850,000 for digital equity initiatives aimed at closing digital equipment, accessibility, and literacy gaps in the Kansas City region.

The importance of this unprecedented federal funding for digital equity efforts can amplify the giving potential of philanthropic organizations and calls for extraordinary alignment of efforts.

3.2.2.6 Local and Regional Broadband and Digital Equity Planning

Local and regional participation in digital equity programs is necessary for the continued success of Kansas’ digital equity mission. Many local and regional leaders are new to broadband infrastructure and the digital equity needs of their communities. By creating a “Broadband Ready Communities” (BRC) program, KOBD will engage local and regional leadership on broadband-facing topics, including digital equity. The aim of the BRC program is to increase community participation, technical assistance, and awareness of broadband access and adoption in preparation for the upcoming investment over the next few years. For instance, KOBD will encourage interested communities to adopt favorable permitting and fee ordinances for efficient and effective buildouts. Communities that successfully implement these changes will more quickly implement grant-funded programs in support of this work.

When discussing the interplay between BEAD and DEA, the Advisory Council suggested digital equity resources such as a toolkit or training module for local and regional broadband education and support.



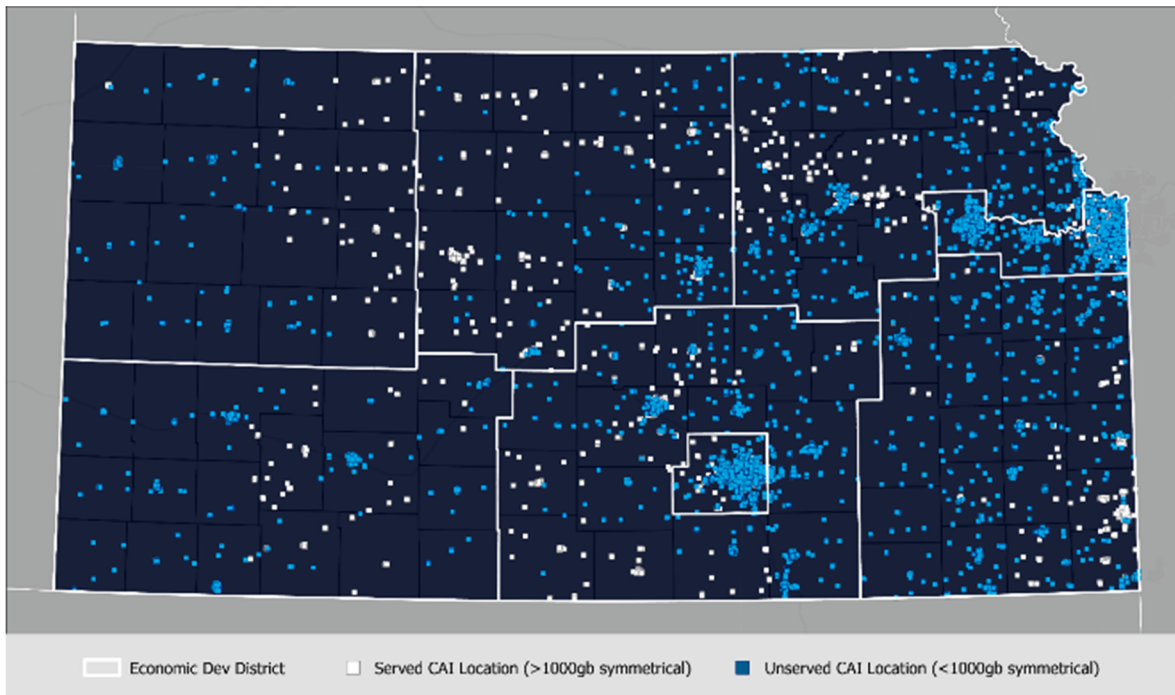
3. Current State of Digital Equity

Barriers and Assets

3.2.2.7 Community Anchor Institutions

Prior to BEAD and Digital Equity Act funding, Kansas had 1,626 identified CAIs. Applying the NTIA’s definition of CAI (i.e., a school, library, health clinic, health center, hospital or other medical provider, public safety entity, institution of higher education, public housing organization, or community support organization that facilitates greater use of broadband connection), the number of CAIs in Kansas shot to over 8,500.

CAI MAP FROM KOBD MAPPING SYSTEM



KOBD plans to regularly review the CAI list alongside community partners and providers to help identify community locations that should qualify for inclusion. The goal is to make sure every community has community anchors identified that provide access to public Wi-Fi in support of their residents.

The provision of 1 Gbps symmetrical broadband will be dependent upon the CAIs themselves verifying the need for such a service in support of their communities. KOBD will conduct a survey of all CAIs after the Volume 1 public comment period to verify demand at each location.

3.2.3 Broadband Affordability

3.2.3.1 Lower Costs

The cost of monthly broadband subscriptions remains a barrier to universal service in Kansas. In WSU’s survey, KOBD found:

- Sixty-two percent of respondents paid between \$50 and \$99.99 per month for a broadband subscription.
- Eight percent paid between \$0 to 49.99 per month for a broadband subscription.
- Those who reported earning between \$20,000 and \$99,000 per year reported paying an average of \$86 per month for a broadband subscription.

3. Current State of Digital Equity

Barriers and Assets

- Those who reported earning over \$100,000 per year reported paying an average of \$132 per month for a broadband subscription.

KOBD meets with the ISP community in bi-weekly roundtable sessions. KOBD uses these opportunities and additional outreach to ISPs to encourage the creation and promotion of discount plans to maintain affordable prices for broadband service across all covered populations and Kansas as a whole.

3.2.3.2 Unbundled Services

The inconvenience of “bundling” of services (i.e., when providers offer discounts for subscribing to multiple services like cable, wireless connections, cell phones, and internet-of-things (IOT) home offerings) is an issue. Households that wish to pay for a broadband subscription face a different cost than someone who “bundles.” This disincentivizes those with financial constraints from subscribing to an internet service.

3.2.3.3 ACP Awareness, Enrollment, and Recertification

For those who qualify, ACP is the primary resource Kansans use for an affordable broadband connection. The current ACP enrollment rate for Kansas is 26.0% (37th in the country). Increasing communication and awareness to qualifying families is a priority of KOBD. Working with ISPs and others to increase visibility of affordability options is critical.

Specifically, KOBD will support three ACP Outreach grant recipients: the City of Topeka, Wichita State University, and KC Digital Drive. ISPs, with their own programs, can help by maintaining those programs, defining equitable eligibility thresholds, and collaborating on programs and standards to advance affordability and access.

While KOBD will focus on increased participation for ACP and other broadband benefit programs (including any subsequent programs that may replace or supplement ACP), it is equally important to nurture those who have taken advantage of these programs so they continue to benefit.



4. Stakeholder Engagement

This section identifies digital equity stakeholders and their contributions, as well as KOB D’s strategies to engage current and future stakeholders.

4.1 Coordination and Outreach Strategy

Connecting with Kansans about their broadband access, affordability, and adoption issues was an important and invaluable exercise for KOB D to develop this Digital Equity Plan. Starting in January 2023, KOB D conducted listening sessions, hosted focus groups, gave presentations, and listened directly to community leaders and advocates. Conversation and targeted outreach will continue, and KOB D offers a snapshot of that work below.

4.1.1 KOB D Roadshow

KOB D collaborated with the WSU Public Policy and Management Center (PPMC) to facilitate a series of community meetings, lead listening sessions, and conduct a survey of Kansans to learn about their “lived experience” in the digital divide. As part of their efforts, WSU PPMC completed:

- **Facilitation of community listening sessions:** KOB D conducted a statewide “Broadband Roadshow” in the spring of 2023, with staff traveling over 50,000 miles and presenting events in more than 26 locations across the state. These meetings served as the initial introduction of KOB D to the residents, businesses, local officials, nonprofits, CAIs, and associations of Kansas with a goal to meet Kansans “where they live.” To collect as many voices as possible, PPMC provided translation services for eight events, identified for the density of primarily Spanish-speaking populations. These events also involved targeted outreach (i.e., radio ads, flyers, and video for social media) in Spanish. KOB D partnered with local leaders and advocates to advertise the events locally and employed local and grassroots marketing channels (i.e., press releases, local newspaper articles, and social media groups). For instance, KOB D interacted with local Facebook buy-sell-trade groups, local Vietnamese groups, and other locally suggested groups.
- **Statewide digital connectivity survey:** The survey, offered in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese, gathered 680 responses.
- **Virtual listening sessions with organizations representing covered populations:** PPMC conducted five virtual listening sessions with leaders from agencies who support aging individuals, individuals with disabilities, individuals who live in low-income households, justice-involved individuals, individuals with a language barrier, and veterans.



The full report is in Appendix 4 — Kansas Office of Broadband Development and Wichita State University Roadshow Report — “Digital Equity in Kansas.”

4. Stakeholder Engagement

4.1.3 Additional Surveys

KOBD will continue to conduct surveys to measure progress on closing the digital divide. Inspired by their attendance at the Roadshow, the Kansas Department of Agriculture circulated a broadband survey based on questions asked at the Roadshow. The 179 responses added personal perspectives from rural inhabitants. The details of the survey are in Appendix 6 — Agriculture Bureau Survey of Constituents.

4.1.4 Digital Equity Advisory Council

KOBD established a Digital Equity Advisory Council to support the development of a State Digital Equity Plan. The Advisory Council, with membership intended to represent every covered population, provided crucial input from practitioners of various backgrounds, experience, careers, and commitment to this work. The Advisory Council meets monthly with exercises, homework, and discussions, providing information for every element of this Digital Equity Plan.



TABLE 21: MEMBERS OF THE DIGITAL EQUITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

Name	Title/Organization
Barbara Bichelmeyer	Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor, University of Kansas
Chan Brown	Program Officer, Kansas Health Foundation
Kenya Cox (With TJ Ingram)	President, Kansas State Conference of NAACP (State Legal Redress Chair, Kansas State Conference of NAACP)
Aaron Deacon (With Leslie Scott)	Managing Director, Kansas City Digital Drive (Program Manager, Kansas City Digital Drive)
Glenda DuBoise	State Director, AARP Kansas
William Duncan	Assist Research Professor of Data Science, Kansas Data Science Consortium
Cris Fanning	Executive Director, Programs and Risk Reduction, Kansas Department of Corrections
Jennifer Findley	Vice President Education and Special Projects, Kansas Hospital Association
Scott Gowan	Chief Information Officer, School District 501, Topeka Public Schools
Lazone Grays	President/CEO, IBSA
Kathi Grossenbacher	Director, Information Technology, Kansas State Department of Education
Nathan Harjo	Supervisory I.T., Haskell Indian Nations University
Jeremy Hegle	Assistant Vice President and Community Affairs Officer, Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City
Amy Huffman	Policy Director, National Digital Inclusion Alliance
David Jordan	President and CEO, United Methodist Health Ministry Fund
Stacey Knoell	Executive Director, Kansas African American Affairs Commission
Dana Ladner	Compliance, Education and Agency Support Program Manager, Kansas Department of Agriculture
Bryan Seamans	Chief of Telecommunications, Kansas Corporation Commission

4. Stakeholder Engagement

Name	Title/Organization
Scott Smathers (With Hector Martinez)	VP for Workforce Development, Kansas Board of Regents (Director, Adult Education, Kansas Board of Regents)
Shanna Smith-Ritterhouse (With Tabitha Hogan)	President, Kansas Library Association (Director, Winfield Public Library)
Wendi Stack	Research Associate, League of Kansas Municipalities
Melinda Stanley	Federal Program Officer, National Telecommunications and Information Administration
Monica Vargas-Huertas (With Carla Rivas-D'Amico)	Political and Community Outreach Director, UFCW2 (Executive Director, Kansas Hispanic and Latino American Affairs Commission)
Jancita Warrington	Executive Director/Tribal Liaison, Kansas Native American Affairs
Felicia Welch	Employment Services Program Administrator, Department for Children and Families

KOBD consulted with all four of the federally recognized Sovereign Tribal Nations in Kansas: The Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation, the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska, the Sac and Fox Tribe of Missouri, and the Kickapoo Tribe in Kansas. Meetings focused on the broadband access, affordability, and adoption needs of each tribe’s members.

KOBD will continue outreach efforts to each tribal nation to establish trust and a true working relationship with regularly scheduled consultations.

4.1.6 Additional Covered Population Focus Groups

After analyzing information gathered by WSU and the Roadshow, KOBD assessed gaps in populations present and arranged for additional focus groups to target those missed by initial outreach activity, including:

- Dodge City to engage with individuals who are members of racial or ethnic minority groups, specifically the Hispanic population
- DOC facilities to engage with justice-involved individuals
- NAACP facilities to engage with individuals who are members of racial or ethnic minority groups, specifically the African American population
- The Kansas Silver Haired Legislature (KSHL) to explore issues that Kansans 60+ experience and to discuss the group’s priorities in the coming years

4.1.7 State Agency Information Sessions and Listening Sessions

KOBD held dozens of informational sessions with state department and agency leadership to detail the opportunities for digital equity work and BEAD programs. The sessions led to direct conversations with state agencies that serve all the covered populations regarding current agency efforts' alignment

Slow Internet Hurts Small Businesses

Gina is a 35-year professional career coach and folk artist who loves living and working remotely in rural Kansas. When she moved closer to family, she needed broadband to support her two online businesses. Available maps showed her new home had broadband options from multiple providers. But she soon learned that instead of five ISP options, none offered adequate broadband speeds.

The negative impact to her businesses has caused Gina significant mental and financial stress. She now has to drive 45 miles roundtrip just to get fast, reliable service.

To ensure her story will be one of the last of its kind, Gina has become a broadband advocate in her county, encouraging speed tests that lead to accurate mapping and stronger outcomes for businesses of all kinds.

4. Stakeholder Engagement

with digital equity needs. In addition, this collaboration now has agency representatives on the Advisory Council. Follow-up conversations included the following state agencies:

- Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs Office
- Kansas Department of Aging and Disability Services
- Kansas Department of Agriculture
- Kansas Department for Children and Families Division of Medicaid and Children’s Mental Health
- Kansas Department of Commerce
- Kansas Department of Corrections
- Kansas Department of Education
- Kansas Department of Health and Environment Division of Health Care Finance
- Kansas Housing Resources Corporation
- KANSASWORKS Office of Registered Apprenticeship

4.1.8 Public Comment

As required by the NTIA, this plan must first be presented for public comment prior to submission. That process and timing, as established in NTIA guidance, is as follows:

Step	Description	Timeline
1. State drafts digital equity plan	KOBD has used the support of their State Federal Program Officer (FPO) and NTIA staff for informal reviews and feedback before publishing their Digital Equity Plan for public comment. KOBD has used the provided template to make the Plan available for public comment prior to submission to NTIA.	Q1-Q3 2023
2. State posts draft digital equity plan for public comment	KOBD is required to make the draft Digital Equity Plan available for public comment, consider the comments made, and revise the digital equity plan as appropriate. KOBD must also provide a written response to each comment and describe any changes made to the plan as a result.	Q3-Q4 2023
3. State submits final digital equity plan and public comments	After incorporating feedback from public comments into the Digital Equity Plan, KOBD will use the NTIA Grants Portal to submit the final digital equity plan and a Record of Public Comments and Actions Taken and attest to meeting statutory and NOFO requirements.	Q4 2023

KOBD’s process for Step 2 above (collecting and incorporating public comment) has been completed as follows:

- Governor Kelly issued a proclamation for Digital Equity Week in late September⁵²
- The digital equity plan in its entirety, along with appendices, was published to the KOBD website in English,

⁵² *Governor Kelly Releases Kansas Broadband Digital Equity Plan for Public Comment*, Oct.2, 2023
<https://www.kansascommerce.gov/2023/10/governor-kelly-releases-kansas-broadband-digital-equity-plan-for-public-comment/>

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Spanish, and Vietnamese

- The public comment period opened on October 2, 2023
- KOBD notified the Advisory Council of the submission to encourage communication and participation from constituents
- KOBD conducted email and social media campaigns to reach partners identified during outreach activities, including members of covered populations, Sovereign Tribal Nations, local and regional assets, state agencies, and other willing supporters
- Comments were made on the KOBD website, where a web form with the required fields was accessible for comments in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese
- KOBD monitored the submissions and addressed them appropriately in writing
- KOBD updated the Digital Equity Plan as necessary based on public comments, weighing, and logging the content, frequency, relevance, and disposition of each submission
- Upon completion of the public comment period, KOBD exported all submissions to the Public Comments Disclosure Tab on the Local Coordination Tracker provided by NTIA
- Upon addressing all public comments and finalizing the Digital Equity Plan, KOBD will submit the plan to NTIA as directed in Step 3 above

4.2 Obstacles and Challenges in Outreach

As the focus on digital equity concerns continues to deepen throughout the state, KOBD must “open the tent” and include not just the stakeholders reached during our initial efforts, but also those who have been missed in engagement efforts. KOBD welcomes current partners, organizations new to KOBD, leaders, and advocates who can help drive communications and education throughout the state.

4.2.1 Digital Equity Asset Identification

Identifying and mapping the digital equity assets in Kansas has just begun and will be an ongoing effort. To effectively build a resource that is an accurate and useful tool for decision makers and the public, KOBD will work to support dedicated resources. A data-rich population and asset tool can serve as a crucial information source for decision-making by KOBD and partners. A related public online digital equity asset map can help individuals and organizations throughout the state connect for resources, shared connections, and planning. With this map as a user-friendly communications tool, KOBD can support digital equity stakeholders in a more clear, focused, and deliberate way.

4.2.2 Rural Density, Distance, and Availability

Attracting community members to rural meetings was sometimes a challenge, though overall attendance was strong, and the Roadshow was an unqualified success. In some instances, Roadshow stops attracted over 40 attendees and garnered great feedback. While KOBD also experienced Roadshow events with little attendance despite communications with traditional and non-traditional media sources, those who did participate provided equally valuable feedback. Continually building the network of well-connected local champions who encourage their communities to participate is essential to future engagements.

4. Stakeholder Engagement

4.2.3 Trust Takes Time

KOBD's initial outreach efforts are typically the first interactions with covered population members, local leaders, and advocates regarding broadband access and adoption. KOBD has made a commitment to moving beyond the first stages of communication with Kansans on their digital equity efforts. As programs and activities emerge, continual communication with key partners and stakeholders will be integral to ongoing success.

KOBD is fortunate to have the Advisory Council and other broadband champions who can make connections with community leaders and advocates. By committing to having KOBD Digital Equity staff spending time "in the community," these relationships will flourish.

4.2.4 State Agencies and Statewide Resources

Members of the Advisory Council were clear that many of the partner agencies and organizations identified in this plan are at (or over) capacity, especially with personnel and resources. Tighter collaborations, shared resources, support networks, and effective communication will lead to sustainable digital equity efforts. Rather than design and implement activities that duplicate existing efforts, KOBD will execute many components of this plan in alignment with partners to support, enhance, and scale existing programs. Leveraging the expertise, networks, and ideas of partners will ensure timely, useful, and efficient resource use that effectively supports the broader statewide objectives outlined in this first digital equity plan for the state.

4.3 Future Plans for Stakeholder Engagement

The work to close the digital equity gap relies heavily on local stakeholders. KOBD will maintain relationships with partners that help in plan development, implementation, monitoring, and growth. The future strategies and plans discussed in the following section describe how KOBD will maintain and grow stakeholder engagement. This plan's evolution will continue to rely on future stakeholder engagement during the implementation phase in ensuring the plan is being updated, maintained, and elevated to fully reflect covered populations' needs. This will lead to adequate, affordable, and reliable broadband with the devices, skills, and support necessary to actually close the digital divide in Kansas.

4.3.1 Digital Equity Advisory Council

The Advisory Council, with membership intended to represent every covered population, will continue to play a key role in the implementation of the BEAD and DEA plans, offering feedback from the field as program development takes place and continuing to connect with resources in the field.

Advisory Council members have selected implementation roles including the Outreach and Engagement role, which promotes Digital Equity by convening statewide partners to inform and execute ongoing activities and events; the Advocacy role, which provides public support for or recommendations on a particular state cause or policy; and the Digital Equity Ambassador role, which is a promoter or representative called upon for specific activities to close the digital divide. KOBD believes these roles will assist in driving purpose and participation of not only the continued monthly Council meetings, but also local implementation activities — therefore increasing awareness and opportunity for KOBD to meet the covered populations where they are, and highlight the programs that support them.

4.3.2 Regional Broadband Planning Strategy for BEAD/DEA Alignment

As infrastructure deployment begins, KOBD will support regional broadband planning efforts in combination with

4. Stakeholder Engagement

its BRC program, planning work, and technical assistance. Early and clear communication with these local and regional stakeholders about the parallel work of digital equity will be important.

The KOBD BEAD and DE teams are in communication to strategize how BEAD funds, additional federal and state infrastructure funds, and digital equity funds (both from NTIA and otherwise) all interplay. This will ensure there is no duplication of services and that a distribution of resources reaches every part of the state. This process is best informed by open channels of communication that empower local leaders and advocates. As discussed before, KOBD will use KDC's eight regions of economic development as the regional support structure that will in turn support local broadband efforts.

KOBD will interact with these local and regional broadband groups concerning digital equity in a number of ways:

1. Help educate in identifying and supporting existing digital equity assets and efforts
2. Allow KOBD staff to assess places where BEAD and DE funds can be used strategically through local identification of partners and improved communication between broadband access, affordability, and adoption activities
3. Supply guidance to support identified digital equity efforts, encourage digital equity plans, and integrate their efforts into the growing statewide digital equity network

KOBD created an overlap in personnel between State Digital Equity planning teams and BEAD Program planning teams to create subject matter experts knowledgeable about both programs and aware of milestones in each area. KOBD's staff will continue to increase their industry knowledge highlighting DEA objectives of Affordability, Availability/Adoption, and Cybersecurity.

An example of related BEAD and DE activities is partnership with workforce engagement and Economic Development organizations like KANSASWORKS. Digital Equity benefits from identifying opportunities for multilingual Kansans and individuals with disabilities who can work in customer service and technical assistance, while BEAD helps create new career pathways for newly skilled technical line workers through partnership with the Kansas Board of Regents.

The strategies developed in this DE plan will be implemented alongside multiple broadband infrastructure and digital equity funding sources as listed in Table 1. As noted there, KOBD has executed (and continues to execute) multiple federally funded programs that are all carefully coordinated and cross-optimized to ensure minimal overlap, clear delineations of rules and purpose, and thorough, accurate reporting. This history of efficient management across multiple programs will continue with DE and BEAD funding and programs.

While KOBD plans that all other BEAD funding will be allocated for infrastructure, the KOBD DE plan and the BEAD Five-Year Action Plan (FYAP) will be tightly integrated to ensure that closing the digital divide is a critical component of statewide efforts. The primary focus of the FYAP will be developing a strategy to provide all Kansans the infrastructure necessary to access broadband internet. However, the FYAP will also address digital adoption strategies such as digital skills training, device access, broadband affordability, and workforce development (KOBD plans to use a portion of allocated BEAD funds for workforce efforts related to broadband infrastructure projects). These factors all contribute to the success of broadband infrastructure projects and impact project take rates. The DE plan will complement the FYAP by crafting detailed strategies to deploy digital opportunity resources that coincide with infrastructure projects funded through BEAD allocation. In doing so, Kansas plans to have a comprehensive approach to addressing broadband and digital opportunity needs in the state.

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Objectives for the BEAD FYAP are presented below with their corresponding relationship to the DE plan.

BEAD OBJECTIVE	BEAD GOALS	DE PLAN ALIGNMENT
Ensure universal broadband coverage to every home, business, farm, and CAI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand middle-mile infrastructure and interexchange points to reduce deployment costs to unserved communities Prioritize unserved, high-cost, and rural locations Understand and mitigate the localized barriers to deployment 	Support for all covered populations, especially rural residents; Support for joint community planning
Leverage innovative solutions and “future-proof” technologies for broadband deployment and accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize fiber deployment solutions Evaluate and deploy non-fiber broadband technologies where economically and technically required Examine process(es), partnership(s), and grant design(s) to ensure sustainability and the accrual of long-term benefits 	Support for availability objective; support for continuous partnership with practitioners and funders to ensure sustainability
Continue to develop and evolve the digital economy throughout the state	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop training and certifications for broadband installation and maintenance related jobs Develop training for broadband-affiliated jobs (i.e., sales, customer service, technical support) Create career pathways (i.e., apprenticeships) to meet the workforce need for universal broadband coverage 	Development of digital skills and cybersecurity training programs; Support for workforce efforts
Ensure all Kansans can live, learn, work, play and compete regardless of where they live in the state	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize digital skills development and training for covered populations Create statewide digital navigator and device placement program(s) Augment the value of universal broadband coverage to Kansans (i.e., telehealth, remote working, education, social and community activity, etc.) 	Support for all covered populations; support for device, availability, digital skills, public service, and affordability objectives

4.3.3 Act as the Convener on Key Issues

The Kansas network of digital equity practitioners is new and needs support to mature to a network of well-resourced collaborators working toward a unified goal. Stakeholders are interested in formal and centralized conversations around better ACP outreach, the role of housing authorities in promoting and offering digital equity resources, and the creation of toolboxes of various resources for organizations.

KOBD will lead issue-specific conversations through quarterly round tables, issue-specific learning sprints, and conferences for the development of this field.

KOBD will inform state agencies and service providers in the healthcare, education, nonprofit, and other industries on the availability of programs and resources for covered populations, and will encourage participation in collaborative efforts or platforms where appropriate.

Being intentional about coordinating public and private funds together for digital inclusion programs is necessary. Amplifying the historic investment of digital equity funds by energizing and aligning local philanthropic organizations will contribute to the long-term sustainability of these initiatives. KOBD will reach out to community foundations and other private philanthropies to assess whether a state role as matchmaker, strategic partner, or another designation is appropriate. Regardless, Kansas’ foundations will play a vital role in digital equity for the state.

4.3.4 Be Present Across the Entire State of Kansas

Kansans want to be part of an ongoing conversation about digital equity, but also want to serve as part of the solution to close the digital divide. KOBD will return to all eight economic development regions of the state and revisit half or more of the original Roadshow stops to keep the dialogue going, assess progress, and discuss needs.

The local conversations made it clear that support for the full spectrum of broadband issues — access, affordability, and adoption — will be a critical role for KOBD in our communities. Close work with potential partners like the Kansas Farm Bureau, Kansas State University Rural Education Center, and other entities focusing on rural populations will be important in ensuring DE efforts extend throughout all Kansas.

4.3.5 Deepen Existing Relationships and Build Out Additional Digital Equity Partnerships



KOBD is fortunate to have the support of many organizations actively working in the digital equity space. Yet, more organizations can still come to the table. While many have been identified, relationships take time to develop. For example, conversations with housing authorities regarding affordability efforts have occurred, but there is more work to do. Housing authorities and Community Action Programs (i.e., operators of housing programs in areas that do not have defined housing

authorities) could coordinate to develop programs that provide covered population support. KOBD had success in holding a focus group for the Hispanic population served by the United Food and Commercial Workers Union. Expanding KOBD's ongoing communication and support of their efforts will be important, as will building relationships with other labor unions and trade organizations.

Another example is the need to create digital navigator programs in collaboration with organizations such as the Kansas Association of Retired School Personnel (KARSP), the Hospital Association, the Medical Society, and community health workers. Continued communication and outreach for this purpose will continue, and deepening these relationships will be key to KOBD's efforts.

Likewise, KOBD and its partners will need to increase collaboration with media outlets to raise awareness and support efforts. Local newsrooms, including those reaching covered populations, such as rural weekly news outlets, nonprofit communications vehicles, members of the Black and Latino/Hispanic press, and hyperlocal digital-only fill critical information gaps among Kansas residents. These outlets will be key partners in increasing awareness of broadband resources and will also serve as digital equity assets themselves as they pursue objectives to enhance the civic and economic participation of Kansas residents.

Digital inclusion coalitions often include libraries, community-based organizations, local governments, housing authorities, and others in communities across the country. These coalitions organize to cooperatively address equitable access to and use of communication technologies, and play a key role in promoting and supporting healthy digital equity ecosystems.⁵³ KOBD will strengthen existing relationships with these coalitions to support cross-organizational collaboration. Digital equity planning should include creating and sustaining healthy digital equity ecosystems.

⁵³ Benton Institute for Broadband and Society. "A Checklist for Evaluating Digital Equity Visions". https://www.benton.org/sites/default/files/DEV_checklist.pdf. (25 KB)

5.1 Implementation Strategy and Key Activities

Nonprofits, state agencies, and others are performing quality digital equity work in Kansas. That work is not consistently coordinated or supported on a statewide basis. With funding from NTIA and support from KOBD, the impact of this work can be focused and amplified throughout Kansas.

Plan and outcome monitoring, improvement, and sustainability

To keep the DE plan current and reflecting needs as they change throughout the life of the effort, KOBD will institute a regular monitoring and improvement cadence. Repeated annually, the cadence will ensure the plan is responsive, improving, and sustainable. The cadence will take the following shape:

Activity	Purpose	Stakeholders	Frequency
Statewide survey	Generate KPI data	General public, covered populations	Annual
KPI review	Track progress against objectives	KOBD, NTIA	Annual
Plan progress review	Track progress against planned activities, schedule, budget, etc.	KOBD, NTIA	Semi-annual
Advisory Council checkpoint	Continuous check on activity; advice; feedback	Advisory Council	Monthly
Partner evaluation	Review opportunities for improvement with practitioners and state agencies	Partners, state agencies, other practitioners	Annual
BEAD coordination activities	Ensure alignment and no duplication of effort with BEAD and workforce activities	BEAD team, ISPs, communities, workforce entities, NTIA	Monthly
NTIA reporting	Provide NTIA	NTIA, general public	Semi-annual

KOBD believes its role is to serve as a coordinating and supporting statewide partner. With this in mind, KOBD developed the following implementation strategies and key activities with input gathered from listening sessions; focus groups with members of all covered populations; outreach sessions with state agencies and organizational partners; and Advisory Council meetings.

5.1.1 Strategy 1: Leverage the work of existing partners to enhance the number of digital equity resources throughout the state

Most digital equity organizations in Kansas deliver vital services in limited geographic regions. KOBD will help connect these entities with a network of digital equity resources to effectively scale to cover the entire state. KOBD will also help state departments and agencies focus on inter-agency communication and planning to streamline offerings, increase awareness, and magnify their collective impact while being good stewards of public dollars.

The first challenge in narrowing the digital divide in Kansas is to scale up existing programs. As identified elsewhere in this plan, many agencies and organizations supporting digital equity work in Kansas are building their resources and are not sufficiently funded to scale their excellent work statewide. A consolidated pool of digital equity funding to support expansion of these programs will help address resource-constrained efforts. Coordination with state agencies and benefits management divisions on messaging, opportunities to improve public services, and resource sharing will narrow gaps in awareness that contribute to low ACP enrollment.

5. Implementation

These activities advance all digital equity plan objectives, principally the desire to promote the accessibility and inclusivity of public resources and services. State agencies will be pivotal in leading the way on this issue, which will answer a major concern raised by Advisory Council members and the public. Existing digital equity efforts must be expanded to provide greater access to services. This increased access will in turn lead to improvements in KPIs related to device programs, affordability, digital literacy skills, and cybersecurity.

TABLE 22: STRATEGY 1 ACTIVITIES

Activity	Impacted Populations	Objectives
<p>1 Coordinate state agency support of covered populations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with an inter-agency committee of covered population subject matter experts to make sure external facing services align with existing digital inclusion programs • Ensure state agency resources are more inclusive and accessible to all Kansans • Develop a training and communications program to increase awareness and promote ACP and other digital equity affordability programs • Engage with entrepreneurial-facing resources in the Department of Commerce and other organizations to reach underrepresented members of covered populations • Tie existing efforts like the Community Healthcare Worker program, library initiatives, and population-specific programs like Revolucion Educativa into digital navigation skills work 	All covered populations	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
<p>2 Create a consolidated funding pool to scale up support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a funding mechanism to promote collaboration between digital equity organizations to expand offerings through funding opportunities that pilot new collaborations from cohort support • Give these cohorts short, attainable goals leading the coalition to larger funding opportunities after establishing initial benchmarks for ideas like supporting a consortium of tech hubs (example: Topeka’s IBSA and a larger, regional urban and rural coalition) and initiatives that expand remote-work upskilling (example: The Innovation Center and new rural partners working on remote worker training opportunities, especially for covered populations) 	All covered populations	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
<p>3 Fund expansion of existing efforts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support existing efforts and work with additional funding, allowing established partners, like the Kansas Library Association, KC Digital Drive, and Goodwill Industries, to continue to build their footprint with a goal of statewide digital equity services • Promote the replication of successful models with new partners when appropriate • Increase awareness, skills, and support of ways to make services more accessible, available, and inclusive • Use CPF-DCT funds to promote broadband access in communities where affordability is a barrier to broadband adoption through the purchase and installation of laptops, tablets, desktop personal computers, and public Wi-Fi equipment 	All covered populations	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

4	Create a statewide clearinghouse of digital equity resources	All covered populations	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a collection of software resources accessible to digital equity entities. Software platforms focused on digital equity challenges include Northstar, DigitalLearn.org, and Human-I-T Help ensure these platforms, training, and support are accessible to digital equity organizations with the expertise and infrastructure of partners Encourage statewide use of these platforms to provide aggregated and standardized data to inform decision-making, indicate success or improvement opportunities, and provide transparency to stakeholders 		
5	Expand technical capabilities to cover the entire state	All covered populations	3, 4, 5
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the expansion of the KU Center for Telemedicine and Telehealth suite of digital offerings throughout the entire state, and request additional support from organizations such as the Kansas Hospital Association and the Medical Society to expand telemedicine access Support telemedicine training and information fairs within healthcare facilities in partnership with organizations such as AARP Support emergency services and navigators for public services, especially in rural areas, by partnering with local nonprofits to deliver virtual training sessions in hard-to-reach communities 		
<p>Potential partners: Digital Equity Advisory Council; Goodwill Bridge to Technology; Essential Families; IBSA; The Innovation Center; KLA; KC Digital Drive; KU Center for Telemedicine and Telehealth; Kansas Hospital Association; Kansas Medical Society; AARP; state agencies</p>			

5.1.2 Strategy 2: Create sustainable affordability options building on the success of current partners and programs

Affordability of broadband service, distribution of devices, and availability of digital literacy skills training are imperative for the overall success of this plan. Bolstering existing efforts and creating digital navigation resources throughout the state are critical in moving toward universal service.

Addressing affordability and device accessibility in this manner will improve affordability, digital literacy skills, cybersecurity, devices, and public services KPIs. Increasing the availability of digital navigators across the state will be a focal point, with improvement in ACP enrollment, device access, and digital literacy skills access expected as a result. KOBD will use ACP enrollment as its initial affordability KPI, replaced with a Kansas-specific affordability program when available. Additionally, KOBD will support development of a statewide device distribution network that will directly improve access to devices, with progress monitored through ACS responses.

TABLE 23: STRATEGY 2 ACTIVITIES

Activity	Impacted Populations	Objectives
1	Identify and expand digital navigator resources	2, 3, 4, 5, 6
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a Digital Navigator Expansion grant program designed to identify and assess digital navigation programs and navigators committed to beginning or expanding their digital navigation offerings, with cohorts of participating organizations meeting on a regular basis to co-learn, receive guidance, and 	<p>Aging Individuals; Justice-involved; Veterans; Individuals with a Disability; People with Language Barriers;</p>

5. Implementation

<p>connect with the growing network of digital navigator programs throughout the state</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase KOBD’s awareness of resources to make agency and organization online services more available, accessible, and inclusive to support the work of navigators • Provide knowledge, training, and support for navigators to ensure familiarity with available services, benefits, and opportunities for civic and social engagement online 	<p>Members of Racial or Ethnic Minorities</p>	
<p>2 Support ACP outreach efforts and other affordable programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the growing network of organizations performing ACP outreach, affordable sustainability programs including state agencies and FCC ACP Outreach grantees • Help identify any resources, monitor the improvement in enrollment, and identify areas of the state where resources will be the most effective 	<p>Aging Individuals; Justice-involved; Veterans; Individuals with a Disability; People with Language Barriers; Members of Racial or Ethnic Minorities</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>3 Build a device distribution network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a strong network of device distribution programs that serves the entire state, working with partners to close identified gaps, with leading partners including PCs for People, Digitunity, and others 	<p>Aging Individuals; Justice-involved; Veterans; Individuals with a Disability; People with Language Barriers; Members of Racial or Ethnic Minorities</p>	<p>2, 3, 4, 5, 6</p>
<p>4 Develop a robust and sustainable Kansas affordability program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the development of a long-term state affordability strategy in the potential absence of long-term funding for ACP through potential activities such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Creating a pool of funds comprised of both public and private sources to fund a long-term affordability program for Kansas ○ Building on existing affordability programs to create efficiencies, like KC Digital Drive’s Internet Access Support Program that provides pre-paid debit cards for monthly subscription payment 	<p>Low-income Households; Rural Residents</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>Potential partners: International Rescue Committee; Beyond Barriers; Northwest Kansas Economic Innovation Center; ISPs; Kansas City Digital Drive; philanthropic organizations; state agencies</p>		

5.1.3 Strategy 3: Establish KOBD’s digital equity division as a repository of information and connections

KOBD will act as a two-way conduit of information, facilitating the development of programs, connecting residents with the latest information, and delivering sector-specific resources. This coordinating role will help ensure a continuous feedback loop strengthening statewide planning through local data and insight while improving local and regional access to key data and resources.

By taking on this role, KOBD will act as the backbone organization driving the coordination of digital equity plan efforts. The office will monitor measurable objectives, recognizing when pivots will be necessary to achieve the

stated goals. Most notably, encouraging the growth of statewide digital navigation services will directly impact nearly all of these objectives. KOBD is uniquely positioned to support the accessibility and inclusivity of public resources as it convenes other state agencies. The office will work to improve broadband availability, adoption, and affordability through the effective management of grant programs designed to close the gaps.

TABLE 24: STRATEGY 3 ACTIVITIES

Activity	Impacted Populations	Objectives
1 Create a digital equity map and dashboard <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with partners to create an online digital equity map and dashboard that will help the agency, organizations, and the public understand progress in closing the digital literacy skills gap Help ensure regular updates to the map and dashboard to improve accuracy, keep data current, and add useful new data 	All covered populations	3, 4, 5
2 Fund digital navigator training programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fund train-the-trainer programs for organizations that are rapidly expanding their digital navigation systems Build a cadre of certified and qualified trainers capable of providing basic device support, guidance for online public services, information on navigating the internet, training for commonly used software, and more 	Aging Individuals; Justice-involved; Veterans; Individuals with a Disability; People with Language Barriers; Members of Racial or Ethnic Minorities	2, 3, 4, 5
3 Convene and connect practitioners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Act as a convener of resources, bringing together practitioners from across Kansas with intention, including working with local and regional leadership on the integration of digital equity guidance with their broadband efforts 	Low-income Households; Aging Individuals; Justice-involved; Veterans; Individuals with a Disability; People with Language Barriers; Members of Racial or Ethnic Minorities	2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Potential partners: Digital Equity Advisory Council; University of Kansas Center for Digital Inclusion; State Library of Kansas; Community leaders; Digital Navigators; Labor Unions; KBOR institutions and private higher education; Haskell Indian Nations University		

5.1.4 Strategy 4: Engage and educate partners and donors to cultivate long-term investment in digital equity

Private investments and philanthropies need time and accurate information to adjust digital equity needs with their giving priorities. Long-term and meaningful relationships create the trust that establishes sustainable long-term success.

The Capacity and Competitive Grant funds will impact Kansas positively over the long term. KOBD will focus on amplifying those benefits by bringing more philanthropic partners to the table. Funding impacts the performance of all KPIs, making engagement of the philanthropic sector an important function of the Digital Equity work performed by the office.

TABLE 25: STRATEGY 4 ACTIVITIES

Activity	Impacted Populations	Objectives
1 Build upon existing work by philanthropic partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen existing relationships with the philanthropic sector to establish digital equity as part of their grant-giving priorities, including the Kansas Community Foundation and others Leverage these partnerships to focus on identifying the most impactful programs for covered populations, facilitating and encouraging events, and inspiring action 	All covered populations	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
2 Create a consolidated funding pool to scale up support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus investments on strategic projects including scholarship programs, provider-led broadband technician training programs, tech hub network creation, and investment in technology centric “Career Cluster” exposure programs, particularly to students who are members of the covered populations 	All covered populations	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Potential partners: Digital Equity Advisory Council; United Way; Goodwill Bridge to Technology; AARP; Kansas Community Foundation; KBOR institutions and private higher education; Haskell Indian Nations University; Philanthropic organizations		

5.1.5 Strategy 5: Empower Kansans with in-demand workforce skills so they can thrive wherever they live

Digital equity involves creating opportunities where they have been absent. Addressing local digital equity needs by incorporating solutions into new broadband initiatives is an opportunity to close the digital literacy skills gap. At the same time, expanding the availability of digital literacy skills training programs will increase the number of Kansans with skills, driving the digital economy for decades to come.

Addressing covered population needs as part of this integrated planning work improves not just their skills, but also their communities and livelihoods. Families and residents across the state will have greater potential to create financial prosperity through improved employment prospects, greater access to education and training, and the ability to pursue their entrepreneurial dreams. All these individual benefits roll up to improve Kansas’ financial and social outlook. Because cybersecurity is a core component of digital literacy skills, Kansas businesses and communities will be stronger and safer.

TABLE 26: STRATEGY 5 ACTIVITIES

Activity	Impacted Populations	Objectives
1 Integrate digital equity with broadband infrastructure planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure regional and local broadband planning teams receive information about digital equity needs early in the process of building their own local efforts Support local and regional teams in the development of digital equity plans 	Low-income Households; Rural Residents	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

5. Implementation

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote BEAD-related workforce development programs housed in community colleges and other higher education institutions by encouraging scholarship development, employment matching to covered populations, and collaboration between digital equity partners and their local colleges and other providers 		
<p>2 Promote advanced digital literacy skills programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify, support, and promote programs that build basic and advanced digital literacy skills for high-demand workforce careers, maximizing access for members of the covered populations to technology-forward programs in higher education institutions, Registered Apprenticeship programs, and technology skills programs in communities like Future Leaders Outreach Network, Youth Entrepreneurship Exchange, Lead for America Fellows program, and others Help expand technology-centric “Career Cluster” efforts for K-12 students in school districts, paying particular attention to areas with historic underinvestment 	<p>Aging Individuals; Justice-involved; Veterans; Individuals with a Disability; People with Language Barriers; Members of Racial or Ethnic Minorities</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>3 Align statewide cybersecurity efforts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align existing efforts on cybersecurity with OITS, the universities, KBOR, and others to ensure there is a continued evolution of and learning about cybersecurity issues 	<p>Aging Individuals; Veterans; Individuals with a Disability; People with Language Barriers</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>Potential partners: Cerebral Palsy Research Foundation; Kansas Accessibility Resource Network; Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services; Registered Apprenticeship programs; Future Leaders Outreach Network; Youth Entrepreneurship Exchange; Lead for America; K-12; OITS; Labor Unions; KBOR institutions and private higher education; Haskell Indian Nations University</p>		

KOBD will monitor and identify gaps in needed programs, such as identifying a robust cybersecurity asset, coordinating a clearinghouse of digital literacy skills resources, and developing a model statewide digital navigator network. Regionally, KOBD will support technical assistance, introduction of resources, and detailed identification of local needs and solutions. Understanding community needs will shift as statewide implementation of the Digital Equity Plan progresses, KOBD will work with stakeholders to evaluate feedback and tailor efforts to ensure the most responsive, effective plan implementation.

Although KOBD recognizes the additional work required to identify specific gaps and the necessity of adapting to inevitable change throughout the implementation of this plan, some gaps beyond simple availability of broadband options are clear at the start. These make for clearer targets as implementation of the plan begins:

- Awareness:** As noted, eligible Kansans’ participation in ACP is lower than ideal. As KOBD heard repeatedly throughout the Roadshow, lack of awareness of affordability options offered through federal, state, or ISP programs is a significant barrier to adoption. But even this lack of awareness is a symptom of a larger issue: Kansans in general are not aware of what broadband options are available, what the benefits of broadband are, what skills are necessary to maximize its usefulness, and what resources are available to address these challenges.

KOBD’s approach to closing this gap will be to convene and connect players throughout the state to

identify opportunities to collaborate, build communications plans, share resources, and ultimately reach as many Kansans as possible with the message that broadband is critical and resources are available for affordability, digital skills, and other assistance.

KOBD has already begun this work by regularly convening ISPs from across the state, conducting working sessions with agencies and covered population stakeholders, and working through the Advisory Council. KOBD will expand and unify these efforts in the coming years in its role as the conductor of Kansas' DE and BEAD efforts.

Additionally, this plan envisions specific activities within each KOBD DE Strategy, many of which relate directly to closing this gap. Examples include Strategy 1's activities geared toward inter-agency committee action, training and communications program development, and Commerce outreach. Strategy 2's ACP outreach efforts will help share and standardize messaging and networks throughout the state to ensure increased awareness of affordability options. As KOBD's strategies are interrelated and reinforce one another, multiple additional activities will support this work.

- **Data and Inventory:** As mentioned throughout this plan, digital equity data is relatively sparse in Kansas. Very few DE plans have been started, there is no statewide inventory of practitioners, and data for specific covered populations is in some cases non-existent. While KOBD's strategy is to connect and support a statewide network of digital navigators, this strategy and others will depend on clarity around what resources exist, what work practitioners are already involved in or may be able to assume, and what the specific needs of covered populations are throughout the state. Activities to address these challenges include Strategy 1's efforts to expand the footprint of current practitioners; Strategy 3's digital equity map and dashboard, which will help identify practitioners and gaps; and the introduction of KOBD's planned statewide survey to collect specific data for each of the state's covered populations, where much of that data does not currently exist.

These of course are not the only digital equity gaps in Kansas, but addressing these critical underlying challenges will ultimately support closing the others and illuminate new challenges and opportunities as implementation unfolds. KOBD will address additional gaps that will have varying impact on specific covered populations. Examples include using the nascent statewide network as a connector for isolated rural and/or aging residents. Focusing on Strategy 4's philanthropy and funding activities to identify and amplify funding sources will drive increased awareness and implementation of programs that benefit Kansans with a language barrier and those who may face challenges securing affordable devices or adequate support and training (including veterans and MDU residents who are disproportionately members of ethnic or racial minorities).

Standing up new statewide initiatives requires monitoring and evaluation of program success. Consistent evaluation of performance indicators of program activity can determine strategy and help respond to evolving circumstances. As stated, some tools to measure stated KPIs will need to be established and tracked as new endeavors. KOBD will evaluate these on an ongoing basis to ensure progress toward goals continues. Thus, KOBD will monitor the measurable objectives on at least an annual basis, since several KPIs are connected to ACS or annual statewide survey data. Measurement tools may need to be created (such as the percentage of covered population with basic digital literacy or cybersecurity skills available within a 30-minute commute of the nearest CAI) to help determine the proper KPIs.

5. Implementation

This strategy will help drive actionable activities that coordinate and identify programs, and also yield additional targeted opportunities to conduct more listening sessions, webinars, focus groups, and surveys during the implementation phase focusing on programs serving specific counties or neighborhoods with one or more covered populations represented.

Reporting will be necessary for subgrantee-funded activities operated by other state agencies, organizations, and partners. This will help KOBD understand the effectiveness of the plan's design, offering opportunities to adjust the approach if necessary.

Many of the key activities will be conducted with other statewide resources such as DCF, members of KLA, higher education institutions related to KBOR, and more. By design, a number of these state agencies are part of the Advisory Council and will evaluate the implementation, execution, and effectiveness of key initiatives of the Digital Equity Plan.

KOBD is committed to universal service, which requires closing the digital equity gap across Kansas. The coordinated and judicious use of resources and funds dedicated to this effort will help achieve both goals.

5. Implementation

5.2 Timeline

Activities	Phases	Planning	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Objectives*		
		Consult, collaborate, and plan	Build digital equity capacity	Implement and monitor success	Continue to monitor, plan, and assist with grants.	Continue Phase 3, review and plan	Develop next five-year DE Plan			
		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	
Plan and outcome monitoring, improvement, and sustainability	<i>See plan section 5.1 for details of the planned recurring cadence for these activities</i>								1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	
Apply for Digital Equity Capacity Grant funds										1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
STRATEGY 1 ACTIVITIES										
<i>Coordinate state agency support of covered populations</i>										1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
<i>Create a consolidated funding pool to scale up support</i>										1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
<i>Fund expansion of existing efforts</i>										1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
<i>Create a statewide clearinghouse of digital equity resources</i>										3, 4, 5
<i>Expand technical capabilities to cover the entire state</i>										1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
STRATEGY 2 ACTIVITIES										
<i>Identify and expand digital navigator resources</i>										2, 3, 4, 5, 6
<i>Support ACP outreach efforts</i>										2
<i>Build a device distribution network</i>										5
<i>Develop a robust, sustainable Kansas affordability program</i>										2, 5
STRATEGY 3 ACTIVITIES										
<i>Create a digital equity map and dashboard</i>										3, 4, 5
<i>Fund digital navigator training programs</i>										2, 3, 4, 5, 6
<i>Convene and connect practitioners</i>										2, 3, 4, 5
STRATEGY 4 ACTIVITIES										
<i>Build upon existing work by philanthropic partners</i>										1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
<i>Create a consolidated funding pool to scale up support</i>										1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
STRATEGY 5 ACTIVITIES										
<i>Integrate DE and BEAD planning</i>										1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
<i>Promote advanced digital literacy skills programs</i>										3
<i>Align statewide cybersecurity efforts</i>										3
Development of 2030-2034 Digital Equity Plan										1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

*OBJECTIVES

1: Broadband Availability. 2: Affordable Broadband. 3: Digital Literacy Skills. 4: Cybersecurity. 5: Device Availability & Affordability 6: Accessibility of Public Services

6. Conclusion

This is the first statewide digital equity plan for Kansas, developed with many dedicated individuals, organizations, Sovereign Tribal Nations, and state agency staff members who are committed to close the digital divide in Kansas. KOBD thanks the many people who attended Roadshow events, listening sessions, focus groups, Advisory Council meetings, tribal consultations, and other touchpoints as input was gathered from across the state.

This Digital Equity Plan shows KOBD's investment of time, energy, and resources dedicated to close the digital equity gap for all Kansans. Standing up new activities, monitoring the success of programs, and tracking progress will be important during the first five years of implementing this plan. KOBD and its partners will adapt as necessary when changing circumstances require it. As such, this Digital Equity Plan is a living, breathing, iterative, and changing document that will need everyone's effort for it to be successful.

Lastly, KOBD found direct conversations with individuals from the Roadshow were essential and the heart of this work. We are committed to spending time in our uniquely beautiful state with the individuals, families, farmers, and communities who are working through their connectivity issues every day. Thank you for welcoming us as we continue to travel across the state, collaborate with advocates, and work with providers to ensure broadband connectivity and digital equity for all Kansans.



Appendix 1 — Glossary

Appendix 2 — Digital Equity Asset Inventory

Appendix 3 — Existing Digital Equity Programs

Appendix 4 — Kansas Office of Broadband Development and Wichita State University Roadshow

Report — “Digital Equity in Kansas”

Appendix 5 — University of Kansas Institute for Policy and Research Report – “Digital Inclusion Assets in

Kansas” Appendix 6 — Agriculture Bureau Survey of Constituents

Covered Population Definitions	
Term	Definition
Aging Individuals	An individual who is 60 years of age or older.
Covered Household (Referred to in this plan as "Low-income household")	A household, the income of which for the most recently completed year is not more than 150 percent of an amount equal to the poverty level, as determined by using criteria of poverty established by the Bureau of the Census.
Incarcerated Individuals (Referred to in this plan as "Justice-involved")	Incarcerated individuals, other than individuals who are incarcerated in a Federal correctional facility.
People with disabilities	With respect to an individual, a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individual, a record of such an impairment, or being regarded as having such an impairment.
People with language barriers	Individuals with a language barrier, including those who are English learners or have low literacy levels.
Racial and ethnic minorities	Members of racial or ethnic minorities as defined by the U.S. Census
Rural inhabitants	Any area other than a city or town that has a population of greater than 50,000 inhabitants, any urbanized area contiguous and adjacent to a city or town that has a population of greater than 50,000 inhabitants and In the case of a grant or direct loan, a city, town, or incorporated area that has a population of greater than 20,000 inhabitants.
Veterans	A person who served in the active military, naval, air, or space service, and who was discharged or released therefrom under conditions other than dishonorable.
Additional Terms and Definitions	
Term	Definition
AARP	American Association of Retired Persons
ACP	Affordable Connectivity Program: An FCC benefit program that helps ensure that households can afford the broadband they need for work, school, healthcare, and more
ACS	American Community Survey
Advisory Council	A group of respected leaders in the public and private sectors invited to represent Kansans from all covered populations and all areas of the state
APDS	American Prison Data Systems
ARPA	American Rescue Plan Act: Federal stimulus bill to aid public health and economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic provided \$350 billion in emergency grant funding for state, local, territorial and tribal governments, known as the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds
AT	Assistive Technology
ATK	Assistive Technology for Kansans
BAG	Broadband Acceleration Grant
BEAD	Broadband Equity, Access, and Development

Term	Definition
BEAD-FP	Broadband Equity, Access, and Development Final Proposal
BEAD-IP	Broadband Equity, Access, and Development Initial Proposal
BPAG	Broadband Partnership Adoption Grant: A program created to drive immediate access and long-term impact through expanding broadband infrastructure and supporting internet access related to telehealth services, remote learning, and remote work, while also investing in the state of Kansas for future generations.
Broadband	Refers to high-speed Internet access that is always on and faster than traditional dial-up access. Broadband includes several high-speed transmission technologies, such as fiber, wireless, satellite, digital subscriber line and cable
BSLs	Broadband Serviceable Locations
BTA	Broadband Technical Assistance
CAF	Connect America Fund
CERG	Connectivity Emergency Response Grant
CAI	Community Anchor Institution: A public school, a public or multi-family housing authority, a library, a medical or healthcare provider, a community college or other institution of higher education, a State library agency, and any other nonprofit or governmental community support organization.
Community Needs Assessment	Systematic process of identifying the needs or gaps in service of a neighborhood, town, city, or state, as well as the resources and strengths available to meet those needs
Covered Population	For the purpose of this plan, the term low-income will be used
CPF	Capital Project Fund
CPF-DCT	Capital Project Fund Digital Connectivity Technology
CPRF	Cerebral Palsy Research Foundation
CSAS	Career Standards and Assessment Services
CTE	Career and Technical Education
CTSO	Career and Technical Student Organizations
Digital Equity (or "DE")	Digital equity: A condition in which all individuals and communities have the information technology capacity needed for full participation in our society, democracy, and economy
DE Plan	State Digital Equity Plan
DEA	Digital Equity Act: An FCC program that provides \$2.75 billion to promote and create programs that reflect digital equity and inclusion
DECK	Digital Equity for Connecting Kansans
DI	Digital Inclusion: Ensuring that individuals and communities have access to robust broadband connections; Internet-enabled devices that meet their needs; and the skills to explore, create and collaborate in the digital world
Digital Divide	The gap between those of a populace that have access to the Internet and other communications technologies and those that have limited or no access

Term	Definition
Digital Literacy	The ability to leverage current technologies, such as smartphones and laptops, and Internet access to perform research, create content and interact with the world
Digital Navigator	Trusted guides who assist community members in internet adoption and the use of computing devices. Digital navigation services include ongoing assistance with affordable internet access, device acquisition, technical skills, and application support
Digital Skills	Any skills related to operating digital devices or taking advantage of digital resources
DOC	Department of Corrections
E-Rate	Program for Schools and Libraries
ED	Economic Development
EDD	Economic Development Districts
EMMBI	Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
FLON	Future Leaders Outreach Network
FPO	Federal Program Officer
FYAP	Five-Year Action Plan
HUD	U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development
IJA	Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act
IKE	Eisenhower Legacy Transportation Program
Incarcerated Individuals	For the purpose of this plan, the term Justice-Involved will be used
Infrastructure	Any cables, fiber optics, wiring, wireless broadcasting technology, or other permanent equipment that is capable of providing access to internet connections to individual locations
IOT	Internet of Things
IRC	International Rescue Commission
ISP	Internet Service Provider
Justice - Involved	Incarcerated individuals, other than individuals who are incarcerated in a Federal correctional facility
KANREN	Kansas Research and Education Network
KARSP	Kansas Association of Retired School Personnel
KBOR	Kansas Board of Regents
KCDD	Kansas City Digital Drive
KCK	Kansas City Kansas
KCMO	Kansas City Missouri
KDADS	Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services
KDC	Kansas Department of Commerce
KDCF	Kansas Department of Children and Families
KDE	Kansas Department of Education
KDHE	Kansas Department of Health and Environment
KDOC	Kansas Department of Corrections

Term	Definition
KDOT	Kansas Department of Transportation
KHF	Kansas Health Foundation
KISO	Kansas Information Security Office
KLA	Kansas Library Association
KOBD	Kansas Office of Broadband Development
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
KSDE	Kansas State Department of Education
KSHL	Kansas Silver Haired Legislature
KSU	Kansas State University
KU	University of Kansas
Lifeline	FCC support for Affordable Communications that can apply to monthly telephone and/or broadband services
LIHEAP	Medicaid, Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program
LINC	Lasting Infrastructure and Network Connectivity
Low-Income	A household, the income of which for the most recently completed year is not more than 150 percent of an amount equal to the poverty level, as determined by using criteria of poverty established by the Bureau of the Census.
MARC	Mid-America Regional Council
MDU	Multi-dwelling Unit
NAAAP	National Association of Asian American Professionals
NAACP	National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
NDIA	National Defense Industrial Association
NTIA	National Telecommunications and Information Administration
OITS	Kansas Office of Information Technology Services
PPMC	Public Policy and Management Center
Roadshow	The 2023 KOBD series of sessions across Kansas, facilitated by the WSU Public Policy & Management Center, designed to help KOBD share information about DE planning and learn about the experiences and needs of Kansans as they relate to broadband and digital equity
S&T	Science + Technology
SDOH	Social Determinants of Health: The conditions and factors in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age that significantly influence their overall health and well-being.
SFRF	State Fiscal Recovery Funds
SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
SPARK	Strengthening People and Revitalizing Kansas
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
TAP	Telecommunications Access Program
Telemedicine	The use of high-speed, high-capacity Internet to support long-distance healthcare services, patient and provider education and enhanced healthcare administration

Term	Definition
TSC	Topeka and Shawnee County - Get Digital Coalition
UFCW	United Food and Commercial Workers International Union
USF	Universal Service Fund
WIC	Wichita Indochinese Center
WIOA	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
WSU	Wichita State University

Organization	Covered Populations								Region
	Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans	
Bonner Springs Public Library	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Bonner Springs Senior Citizen Center	✓			✓					East Central
Bonner Springs YMCA	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			East Central
Boys & Girls Club of Greater Kansas			✓	✓	✓	✓			East Central
Boys & Girls Club of Greater Kansas City - Olathe Unit			✓	✓	✓	✓			East Central
Boys & Girls Club of Topeka			✓	✓	✓	✓			East Central
Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			East Central
Center of Grace	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Central Avenue Betterment Association (CABA)			✓		✓	✓			East Central
Children's Mercy Adele Hall Campus			✓	✓	✓	✓			East Central
Community Action Inc Avondale East	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	East Central
Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR-Kansas)			✓		✓	✓			East Central
Digital Storytelling Center of Kansas City (digiSTORY KC)						✓			East Central
EducationSuperHighway	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			East Central
El Centro Inc.		✓			✓	✓			East Central
Essential Families	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Flint Hills Technical College - Adult Education Center	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Future Leaders Outreach Network (FLON)			✓			✓			East Central
Harvest American Corporation			✓						East Central
HCA Midwest Health	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Heartland Black Chamber			✓			✓			East Central
IBSA			✓			✓			East Central
Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging	✓			✓					East Central
Jewish Family Services	✓		✓						East Central
Johnson County Area Agency on Aging	✓			✓					East Central
Johnson County Community College - Adult Education Center (JCAE)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Johnson County Library - Central Resource Library	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Johnson County Workforce Center	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Johnson Library	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Kansas Accessibility Resource Network (KSARN)				✓					East Central
Kansas Association of Area Agencies on Aging and Disabilities	✓			✓					East Central
Kansas Association Of Local Health Departments	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Kansas Association of Retired School Personnel (KARSP)	✓								East Central

Organization	Covered Populations								Region
	Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Veterans		
Kansas City Kansas Community College	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Kansas City Kansas Public Library	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Kansas Commission on Disability Concerns				✓					East Central
Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs Office			✓					✓	East Central
Kansas Community Corrections Offices (24th Judicial District Community Corrections)		✓							East Central
Kansas Community Corrections Offices (24th Judicial District Community Corrections)		✓							East Central
Kansas Community Corrections Offices (4th Judicial District Community Corrections)		✓							East Central
Kansas Community Corrections Offices 10th Judicial District Community Corrections		✓							East Central
Kansas Community Corrections Offices 3rd Judicial District Community Corrections		✓							East Central
Kansas Community Corrections Offices 7th Judicial District Community Corrections		✓							East Central
Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services	✓			✓					East Central
Kansas Department of Children and Families - Kansas City Regional Service Center			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		East Central
Kansas Department of Commerce	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		East Central
Kansas Department of Corrections; Northern Parole Region		✓							East Central
Kansas Health Department and Environment (KHDE)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Kansas Hospital Association Northeast District	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Kansas Housing Resources Corporation	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			East Central
Kansas of Information Technology Services (OITS)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Kansas Office of Broadband Development	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Kansas State Department of Education			✓	✓	✓	✓			East Central
Kansas State Library of Kansas	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Kansas University Center for Digital Inclusion	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
KC Digital Drive			✓			✓			East Central
Konza United Way	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	East Central
KSKPS Instructional Technology			✓	✓	✓	✓			East Central
Lawrence Workforce Center	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Livable Neighborhoods	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
LKC Kansas City Coalition for Digital Inclusion	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
National Association of Asian American Professionals (NAAAP) – Kansas City Chapter						✓			East Central

Organization	Covered Populations								Region
	Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans	
NCircle		✓							East Central
New Hope Church Of God In Christ	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Olathe Family YMCA	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			East Central
Olathe Health Virtual Care	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Olathe Indian Creek Library	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Resurrection Computer Ministry	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Revolucion Educativa			✓		✓	✓			East Central
Shawnee Mission School District			✓	✓	✓	✓			East Central
Spring Hill Schools Unified School District 230			✓	✓	✓	✓			East Central
The Black Family Technology Awareness Association of Kansas City						✓			East Central
The City of Topeka's Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Office	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			East Central
The Department of Administration's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion				✓		✓			East Central
The Kansas Board of Regents			✓	✓	✓	✓			East Central
The Salvation Army			✓					✓	East Central
The Salvation Army - Men's Ministries			✓					✓	East Central
The Salvation Army - Women's Ministries			✓					✓	East Central
The Salvation Army- Hispanic Ministries			✓		✓			✓	East Central
The Salvation Army- Youth			✓						East Central
The Usher Garage LCC	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	East Central
The Whole Person	✓			✓					East Central
Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Topeka and Shawnee County (TSC) Get Digital Coalition	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Topeka Center for Peace and Justice Inc		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			East Central
Topeka Correctional Facility		✓							East Central
Topeka Public Schools			✓	✓	✓	✓			East Central
Topeka Resource Center for Independent Living	✓			✓					East Central
Topeka Workforce Center	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
United Community Service (UCS) of Johnson County (COVID-19 Fund Advisory Board)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
United Community Services of Johnson County - Homelessness			✓						East Central
University of Kansas	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
University of Kansas Medical Center - Center for Telemedicine & Telehealth	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central

Organization	Covered Populations								Region
	Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans	
Urban Technology Empowered Communities (Urban TEC)			✓	✓	✓	✓			East Central
Veteran Affairs (VA) Eastern Kansas Health Care System								✓	East Central
Washburn Institute of Technology	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Wyandotte-Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging	✓			✓					East Central
YMCA of Topeka	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			East Central
Young Entrepreneurs Program (YEP)				✓	✓	✓			East Central
Barton Community College	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	North Central
Beloit Unified School District 273, Special Education Cooperative			✓	✓	✓	✓			North Central
Central Kansas Library System	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	North Central
Cloud County Community College	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	North Central
COMCARE Salina Regional Health Center	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	North Central
Concordia Unified School District 333 Learning Cooperative of North Central Kansas			✓	✓	✓	✓			North Central
Great Bend Unified School District 428, Barton County Cooperative Program of Special Services			✓	✓	✓	✓			North Central
Hays Unified School District 489, Hays West Central Kansas Special Education Cooperative			✓	✓	✓	✓			North Central
Kansas Community Corrections Offices (12th Judicial District Community Corrections)		✓							North Central
Kansas Community Corrections Offices (20th Judicial District Community Corrections)		✓							North Central
Kansas Community Corrections Offices (28th Judicial District Community Corrections)		✓							North Central
Kansas Hospital Association Northwest District	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	North Central
Kansas State University	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	North Central
KANSASWORKS Great Bend	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	North Central
KANSASWORKS Hays	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	North Central
KANSASWORKS Salina	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	North Central
Salina Area Technical College	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	North Central
Salina Area United Way	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			North Central
Salina Family YMCA	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	North Central
Salina Unified School District 305, Central Kansas Cooperative in Education			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	North Central
Smokey Hill Education Service Center			✓	✓	✓	✓			North Central
Smoky Hill Central Kansas Education Service Center			✓	✓	✓	✓			North Central
The Salvation Army in Salina			✓					✓	North Central

Organization	Covered Populations								Region
	Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans	
The Solution Outreach Center of OCKK	✓		✓	✓				✓	North Central
United Way of Central Kansas	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	North Central
United Way of Ellis County	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	North Central
Barton Community College - Barton's Center for Adult Education	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	North Central
Central Kansas Educational Opportunity Center (CKEOC)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	North Central
North Central Flint Hills Area Agency on Aging	✓			✓				✓	North Central
North Central Kansas Library System	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	North Central
Salina Adult Education Center	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	North Central
Abilene Unified School District			✓	✓	✓	✓			Northeast
Atchison Area United Way	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	Northeast
Atchison Family YMCA/Cray Community Center	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			Northeast
Basehor Community Library	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Boys & Girls Club - Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation			✓		✓	✓			Northeast
Boys & Girls Club of Manhattan			✓	✓	✓	✓			Northeast
Central Kansas Mental Health Center	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Central Plains Area Agency on Aging	✓			✓					Northeast
Clay Center Unified School District 379 Twin Lakes Educational Cooperative			✓	✓	✓	✓			Northeast
Community Housing of Wyandotte County	✓		✓		✓	✓			Northeast
Cross Lines Community Outreach, Inc	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Dwight D. Eisenhower Veteran Affairs (VA) Medical Center			✓					✓	Northeast
Easton Unified School District 449			✓	✓	✓	✓			Northeast
Entrepreneur Business Basics						✓			Northeast
Fort Leavenworth Unified School District Leavenworth USD 207			✓	✓	✓	✓			Northeast
Goodwill Artemis Institute	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Goodwill of Western Missouri and Eastern Kansas	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Groundworks Northeast Revitalization Group	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Heartland Chamber of Commerce			✓			✓			Northeast
Heartland Telehealth Resource Center	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Highland Community College	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Holton Unified School District 336, Holton Special Education Cooperative			✓	✓	✓	✓			Northeast
Junction City Workforce Center	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Kansas City Kansas Public Schools (KCKPS)			✓	✓	✓	✓			Northeast

Organization	Covered Populations								Region
	Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans	
Kansas City Unified School District 500, Wyandotte Comprehensive Special Education Cooperative			✓	✓	✓	✓			Northeast
Kansas Community Corrections Offices (1st Judicial District Atchison County Community Corrections)		✓							Northeast
Kansas Community Corrections Offices (1st Judicial District Leavenworth County Community Corrections)		✓							Northeast
Kansas Community Corrections Offices (21st Judicial District Community Corrections)		✓							Northeast
Kansas Community Corrections Offices (22nd Judicial District Community Corrections)		✓							Northeast
Kansas Community Corrections Offices (2nd Judicial District Community Corrections)		✓							Northeast
Kansas Community Corrections Offices (8th Judicial District Community Corrections)		✓							Northeast
Kansas Department of Children and Families - Northeast Regional Service Center			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		Northeast
Kansas Farm Bureau							✓		Northeast
Kansas Library Association	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Kansas Silver Head Legislature	✓								Northeast
Kansas State School for the Blind				✓					Northeast
Keystone Learning Services - Northeast Kansas Education Service Center	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Lansing Unified School District 469			✓	✓	✓	✓			Northeast
Leaning Into Digital Opportunities (LIDO)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Leavenworth Co Library	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Leavenworth County Workforce Center	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Leavenworth Unified School District 453			✓	✓	✓	✓			Northeast
Leavenworth Unified School District 453			✓	✓	✓	✓			Northeast
Linwood Community Library	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
LMH Health Lawrence Hospital	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Manhattan Area Technical College	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Manhattan Housing Authority			✓						Northeast
Manhattan Workforce Center	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Mary Cotton Public Library	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Marysville Unified School District 364, Marshall County Special Education Cooperative			✓	✓	✓	✓			Northeast
Mo-Kan Regional Council	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast

Organization	Covered Populations								Region
	Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans	
Nemaha Central Unified School District 115, Marshall Nemaha County Educational Services Cooperative			✓	✓	✓	✓			Northeast
Northeast Kansas Area Agency on Aging Inc	✓			✓					Northeast
Northeast Kansas Community Action Partnership	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	Northeast
Northeast Kansas Library System	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Osawatomie Library	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Osawatomie Unified School District 367			✓	✓	✓	✓			Northeast
Peabody Township Public Library	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Pottawatomie Wabaunsee Regional Library - Alma	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Pottawatomie Wabaunsee Regional Library - Eskridge	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Pottawatomie Wabaunsee Regional Library - Onaga Branch	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Pottawatomie Wabaunsee Regional Library - St Marys (Headquarters) Branch	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Seneca Free Library	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
The Toolbox			✓		✓	✓			Northeast
The University of Kansas Health System	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Tonganoxie Public Library	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Tonganoxie Unified School District 464			✓	✓	✓	✓			Northeast
United Way of Junction City-Geary County	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	Northeast
United Way of Kaw Valley	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	Northeast
United Way of Leavenworth County	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	Northeast
United Way of the Flint Hills, Inc.	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	Northeast
Wamego Unified School District 320, Special Services Cooperative of Wamego			✓	✓	✓	✓			Northeast
Workforce Partnership - Johnson - Leavenworth - Wyandotte	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Village Initiative		✓	✓						Northeast
Colby Community College - Adult Education Office	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northwest
Colby Workforce Center	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northwest
Goodland Workforce Center	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northwest
Greeley County Library	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northwest
Kansas Department of Children and Families - Northwest Regional Service Center			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		Northwest
Ness City Public Library	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northwest
Northwest Kansas Area Agency on Aging	✓			✓					Northwest
Northwest Kansas Economic Innovation Center			✓				✓		Northwest

Organization	Covered Populations								Region
	Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans	
Northwest Kansas Educational Service Center	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northwest
Northwest Kansas Technical College	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northwest
Kansas Community Corrections Offices - Northwest Kansas		✓							Northwest
Northwest Kansas Library System	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northwest
AB&C Bilingual Resources, LLC					✓	✓			Sedgwick
Boys & Girls Club of South Central Kansas			✓	✓	✓	✓			Sedgwick
Cerebral Palsy Research Foundation of Kansas, Inc. (CPRF)				✓					Sedgwick
Dennis Schoenbeck North YMCA	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			Sedgwick
East YMCA	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			Sedgwick
Goodwill Digital Skills Mobile Training Center "Learn IT (Information Technology) Lab	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Sedgwick
Kansas Community Corrections Offices (18th Judicial District Community Corrections)		✓							Sedgwick
Kansas Department of Children and Families - Wichita Regional Service Center			✓	✓	✓	✓			Sedgwick
Kansas Department of Corrections; Southern Parole Region		✓							Sedgwick
Kansas Museums Association	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Sedgwick
Ken Shannon Northwest YMCA	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			Sedgwick
National Association for the Advancement of Colored individuals (NAACP) - Kansas Chapter						✓			Sedgwick
NexStep Alliance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Sedgwick
Richard A. Devore South YMCA	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			Sedgwick
Robert D. Love Downtown YMCA	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			Sedgwick
Sedgwick County COMCARE Children's Services			✓	✓	✓	✓			Sedgwick
South Central Wichita West Orchard Salvation Army			✓					✓	Sedgwick
South East Wichita Citadel Corps Community Center								✓	Sedgwick
Steve Clark YMCA	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			Sedgwick
The International Rescue Committee (IRC)			✓		✓	✓			Sedgwick
The Salvation Army Citadel			✓					✓	Sedgwick
The Wichita Sedgwick County Community Action Partnership (WSCCAP)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	Sedgwick
United Way of the Plains	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	Sedgwick
Urban League of Kansas			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		Sedgwick
Veteran Affairs (VA) Wichita Regional Office								✓	Sedgwick

Organization	Covered Populations								Region
	Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans	
Veteran Providers' Coalition of Sedgwick County								✓	Sedgwick
West YMCA	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			Sedgwick
Wichita Indochinese Center (WIC)			✓		✓	✓			Sedgwick
Wichita State University	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Sedgwick
Wichita State University Office of Diversity and Inclusion	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Sedgwick
Wichita State University; American Small Business Development Center	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Sedgwick
Wichita Work Release Facility (WWRF)		✓							Sedgwick
Wichita Work Release Facility; Central Office of Kansas Department of Corrections		✓							Sedgwick
Wichita Workforce Center	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Sedgwick
Workforce Centers of South Central Kansas	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Sedgwick
YMCA Partner to Collective Impact at United Way of the Plains	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	Sedgwick
Kansas Association of Educational Service Agencies- ORION Education & Training			✓	✓	✓	✓			Sedgwick
Augusta Public Library	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	South Central
Basehor-Linwood Unified School District 458			✓	✓	✓	✓			South Central
Boys & Girls Club of Hutchinson			✓	✓	✓	✓			South Central
Butler Community College	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	South Central
Butler Workforce Center	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	South Central
Cowley County Workforce Center	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	South Central
Education Services and Staff Development Association of Central Kansas (ESSDACK)			✓	✓	✓	✓			South Central
Harvey County United Way	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	South Central
Hutchinson Community College	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	South Central
Kansas Community Corrections Offices (13th Judicial District Community Corrections)		✓							South Central
Kansas Community Corrections Offices (19th Judicial District Community Corrections)		✓							South Central
Kansas Community Corrections Offices (27th Judicial District Community Corrections)		✓							South Central
Kansas Community Corrections Offices (9th Judicial District Community Corrections)		✓							South Central
Kansas Community Corrections Offices (South Central Kansas)		✓							South Central
Kansas Hospital Association South Central District	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	South Central
KANSASWORKS Hutchinson	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	South Central

Organization	Covered Populations								Region
	Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans	
McPherson Family YMCA	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			South Central
McPherson Unified School District 418, McPherson County Special Education Cooperative			✓	✓	✓	✓			South Central
Mid-Kansas Community Action Program	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	South Central
Newton Public Library	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	South Central
Newton Unified School District 373, Harvey County Special Education Cooperative			✓	✓	✓	✓			South Central
Newton YMCA	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			South Central
Peabody Township Library	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	South Central
Rice County United Way, Inc.	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	South Central
South Central Kansas Area Agency on Aging	✓			✓					South Central
South Central Kansas Library System	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	South Central
South Central Kansas Special Education Cooperative #605				✓					South Central
The Salvation Army in Hutchinson			✓					✓	South Central
Turon Community Library	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	South Central
United Methodist Health Ministry Fund	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	South Central
United Way of Reno County, Inc.	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	South Central
Whitewater Memorial Library	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	South Central
Winfield Unified School District 465, Cowley County Special Services Cooperative			✓	✓	✓	✓			South Central
YMCA of Hutchinson and Reno County	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			South Central
Belle Plaine Unified School District 357			✓	✓	✓	✓			South Central
Hutchinson Community College - Adult Education Center	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	South Central
United Way of El Dorado, Kansas, Inc.	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	South Central
United Way of McPherson County	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	South Central
Winfield Public Library	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	South Central
Boys & Girls Club of Southeast Kansas			✓	✓	✓	✓			Southeast
Burlington Unified School District 244; Coffey County Special Education Cooperative			✓	✓	✓	✓			Southeast
Community Health Center of Southeast Kansas	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
East Central Kansas Area Agency on Aging	✓			✓					Southeast
East Central Kansas Economic Opportunity Corp			✓						Southeast
Emporia Salvation Army		✓						✓	Southeast
Emporia Unified School District 253 Flint Hills Special Education Cooperative			✓	✓	✓	✓			Southeast
Farha Sports Centers (Andover) - Greater Wichita YMCA	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			Southeast

Organization	Covered Populations								Region
	Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households	People with Disabilities	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans		
Fort Scott Community College	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
Fort Scott Community College	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
Hope Unlimited			✓						Southeast
Howard City Library	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
Howard Unified School District 282, Chautauqua and Elk County Special Education Services			✓	✓	✓	✓			Southeast
Humboldt Public Library	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
Independence Community College	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
Iola Public Library	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
Kansas Community Corrections Offices (11th Judicial District Community Corrections)		✓							Southeast
Kansas Community Corrections Offices (14th Judicial District Community Corrections)		✓							Southeast
Kansas Community Corrections Offices (30th Judicial District Community Corrections)		✓							Southeast
Kansas Community Corrections Offices (31th Judicial District Community Corrections)		✓							Southeast
Kansas Community Corrections Offices (5th Judicial District Community Corrections)		✓							Southeast
Kansas Community Corrections Offices (6th Judicial District Community Corrections)		✓							Southeast
Kansas Department of Children and Families - Southeast Regional Service Center			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		Southeast
Kansas Department of Corrections		✓							Southeast
Kansas Hospital Association Southeast District	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
KANSASWORKS Chanute	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
KANSASWORKS Independence	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
Labette Community College	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
Louisburg Library	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
Louisburg Unified School District 416			✓	✓	✓	✓			Southeast
Moran Public Library	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
My Father's House			✓				✓		Southeast
Neosho Community College	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
Paola Adult Education Center	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
Paola Free Library	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
Paola Housing Authority			✓						Southeast
Paola Unified School District 368			✓	✓	✓	✓			Southeast

Organization	Covered Populations								Region
	Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans	
Paola Unified School District 368, East Central Kansas Special Education Cooperative			✓	✓	✓	✓			Southeast
Pittsburg Family YMCA	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			Southeast
Prairie View Unified School District 362			✓	✓	✓	✓			Southeast
Savonburg Public Library	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
See-KAN Cooperative Development, INC Chanute CHDO			✓						Southeast
Southeast Kansas Area Agency on Aging	✓			✓					Southeast
Southeast Kansas Community Action Program, Inc.	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	Southeast
Southeast Kansas Education Service Center			✓	✓	✓	✓			Southeast
Southeast Kansas Independent Living	✓			✓					Southeast
Southeast Kansas Library System	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
Southeast Kansas Mental Health Center	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
Southeast KANSASWORKS Emporia Workforce Center	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
Southeast KANSASWORKS Paola	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
Southeast KANSASWORKS Pittsburg	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
Southeast Regional Service Center Kansas Department of Children and Families			✓	✓	✓	✓			Southeast
Sumner County Workforce Center	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
The University of Kansas; Life Span Institute at Parsons	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
Thrive Allen County	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		Southeast
United Way of Franklin County Assn	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	Southeast
United Way of Miami County Kansas	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
United Way of Southwest Missouri & Southeast Kansas	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	Southeast
Neosho County Community College	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	southeast
Compass Behavioral Health - Garden City Community Support Services				✓					Southwest
Dodge City Community College - Adult Learning Center	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southwest
Dodge City Family YMCA			✓	✓	✓	✓			Southwest
Dodge City Public Schools			✓	✓	✓	✓			Southwest
El Dorado YMCA			✓	✓	✓	✓			Southwest
Finney County United Way	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	Southwest
Garden City Career Connection Academy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southwest
Garden City Community College	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southwest
Kansas Community Corrections Offices (16th Judicial District Community Corrections)		✓							Southwest
Kansas Community Corrections Offices (25th District)		✓							Southwest

Organization	Covered Populations								Region
	Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans	
Kansas Community Corrections Offices (26th District)		✓							Southwest
Kansas Department of Children and Families - Southwest Region Service Center			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		Southwest
Kansas Hospital Association Southwest District	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southwest
KANSASWORKS Dodge City	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southwest
KANSASWORKS Garden City	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southwest
Larned Unified School District 495, Tri County Special Services Cooperative			✓	✓	✓	✓			Southwest
Liberal Unified School District 480			✓	✓	✓	✓			Southwest
Seward County Community College/Area Technical School	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southwest
Seward County United Way	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	Southwest
Southwest Kansas Area Agency on Aging	✓			✓					Southwest
Southwest Kansas Library System	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southwest
Southwest KEE Affiliate Office	✓			✓					Southwest
Southwest Plains Regional Service Center	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southwest
Southwest Plains Regional Service Center			✓	✓	✓	✓			Southwest
United Way of Dodge City	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	Southwest
YMCA of Southwest Kansas			✓	✓	✓	✓			Southwest
Garden City Public Schools			✓	✓	✓	✓			Southwest
American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)	✓								Statewide
Benton Institute for Broadband & Society	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Statewide
Digitunity	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Statewide
Kansas Association of Center for Independent Living	✓			✓					Statewide
Kansas Black Farmers Association	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		Statewide
Kansas Department of Children and Family Services			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		Statewide
PCs for People	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Statewide
Rebuild Local News	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Statewide
United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW)	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	Statewide
Veteran Affairs			✓					✓	Statewide
American Prison Data System (APDS)		✓							Virtual
Network Kansas	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Virtual
Galvanize							✓		Virtual

Appendix 3 – Digital Equity Programs

		Covered Populations								
Organization	Type of Program	Covered Populations								Region
		Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans	
American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BACKTOWORK50 • Older Adults Technology Services (OATS) • Fraud Watch Network • Learn@50+ 	✓								East Central
Bonner Springs City Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Literacy Training • Learning Express Library • One - on - One Computer Support • Adult Diploma Completion Program (ADC) • EBSCO Learning Express - Job & Career - Career Preparation - Adult core skills - Computer skills center • Free public access to computers and wi-fi 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Boys & Girls Club of Greater Kansas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education & Career Development program • Technology Program • Atomic Blast Summer Enrichment Program 			✓		✓	✓			East Central
Boys & Girls Club of Greater Kansas City - Olathe Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education & Career Development program • Technology Program • Atomic Blast Summer Enrichment Program • Lift Zones 			✓		✓	✓			East Central
Boys & Girls Club of Topeka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Literacy Essentials • Workforce Readiness 			✓		✓	✓			East Central
Center of Grace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer Skills for Beginners • Alternative Classes for ESL and Older Adults 	✓				✓				East Central
Central Avenue Betterment Association (CABA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer Mentoring Program • ToolBox - More Information Coming Soon 			✓		✓	✓			East Central
Digital Storytelling Center of Kansas City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KCdigiKids Program • DigiSTORY KC 			✓			✓			East Central
El Centro Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrichment Program 			✓		✓	✓			East Central

		Covered Populations								
Organization	Type of Program	Covered Populations								Region
		Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households ²	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans	
Essential Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Navigators Digital Literacy classes Digital Workforce Development Laptop and Internet savings program Virtual Mental Healthcare Program 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Flint Hills Technical College - Adult Education Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESL Program Adult Education Program 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Future Leaders Outreach Network (FLON)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educational Virtual Reality(E-VR) Technology Job Readiness & Career Exploration Simulation Trailer 			✓			✓			East Central
Gil Carter Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Wi-Fi 			✓		✓	✓			East Central
Goodwill Bridge to Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Skills Training Academic Preparation Career Exploration Training on the Fourth Industrial Revolution 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
IBSA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Literacy Training Digital Tech Training for Youth Job Development, Retention & Support Services Internet Access Support Program Device Program Free access to computers and wi-fi 			✓		✓	✓			East Central
Independent Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Access computer lab Computer Assistance Kansas Telecommunication Access Program (TAP) Youth Transition Services Independent Living Skills Training 	✓			✓					East Central
Instructional Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SPED Instructional Hub - Technology-rich learning tool with resources that assist Special Education teachers in providing high-quality instruction 				✓					East Central

		Covered Populations									
Organization	Type of Program	Covered Populations								Region	
		Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans		
Johnson County Community College Adult Education Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Basic Education/GED Test Preparation • Workforce Development and Continuing Education Programs • Youth Enrichment Program • Kansas (AO-K) program • Veterans Mentor • ESL Classes 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Johnson County Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Udemy • Brainfuse Adult Learning Center • GCF Learn Free • Job and Career Accelerator • Universal Classes • Free public access to computers and wi-fi 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Kansas Accessibility Resource Network (KSARN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free training • State of Kansas Computer Training • Assistive Technology Basics • Training the Workforce 				✓						East Central
Kansas City Kansas Community College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accelerating Opportunity (AO-K) • ESL Program • Adult Basic Education Classes 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Kansas City Kansas Public Schools (KCKPS) Instructional Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer Access Clever • Career & Technical Education 				✓	✓	✓				East Central
Kansas City Public Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tech Access - Digital Skills Training - NorthStar - GCF Global - Grow with Google Certifications - Tech to Go - computer and hotspot checkout • Digital Learn • Free public access to computers and wi-fi 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aging and Disability Resource Center • GetSetUp 	✓			✓						East Central

		Covered Populations									
Organization	Type of Program	Covered Populations								Region	
		Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households ²	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans		
Kansas Department of Children and Families - Kansas City Regional Service Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Program • Accelerating Opportunity Kansas (AO-K) Career Pathway Program 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Kansas State Library of Kansas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webjunction • Free public access to computers and wi-fi • Hotspot Checkout 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Kansas Technical Assistance System Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kansas Instructional Resource Center for Visually Impaired (KIRC) 				✓						East Central
Kansas University Center for Digital Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology Education Program - The Return Project • Workshops for digital navigators or peer mentors • Employment related digital sessions 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
KC Digital Drive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KC Goes Tech • Internet Access Support Program • Workshops 			✓			✓				East Central
KC Footprints - Wayne D. White Recovery Community Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer Skills Training 			✓						✓	East Central
Lawrence Workforce Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kansas Registered Apprenticeship • Classroom Training Opportunities • Career Interest and Skills Assessments • Workshops for Job and Life Success • Career Counseling • On-the-Job training • Young Adult Programming (Ages 16-24) • Customized Services for Veterans • One-on-one job search assistance • Referral to veterans programs • Free public access to computers and wi-fi 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central

Organization	Type of Program	Covered Populations								Region
		Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans	
Ncircle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certification Training - Digital Literacy: (Basic computer, Internet Basics, Using Email, Social Media, Windows10, Microsoft Word Office 2016, Microsoft Excel Office 2016, Microsoft PowerPoint Office 2016.) - Technology: (CompTIA A+, Security Certifications or other tech programs) 		✓							East Central
Olathe Indian Creek Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hotspot Checkout • EBSCO - Learning Express - Job & Career Accelerator - Computer & Internet Basics - Microsoft Windows & software (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, etc.) • Free public access to computers and wi-fi 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Revolucion Educativa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EducaTec 					✓	✓			East Central
TechConnect Hotline Service - Digital Navigators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internet to Go: Lending Wi-Fi Hotspots • Laptops To Go 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
The Black Family Technology Awareness Association of Kansas City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Computer Training 						✓			East Central

		Covered Populations								
Organization	Type of Program	Covered Populations								Region
		Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans	
The University of Kansas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kansas Deaf Blind Equipment Distribution Program (iKAN Connect) • Kansas Telecommunication Access Program (TAP) • Assistive Technology for Kansans (ATK) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Funding assistance training - Device demonstration - Equipment loan • Kansas University Cybersecurity Boot Camp • GenCyber Summer Camp <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cybersecurity Concepts and First Principles 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
The Whole Person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent Living Skills Training • Telecommunication Access Program (TAP) • Employment Services • Youth Services 	✓			✓					East Central
Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public access to computers, printers, faxes, and wi-fi • Technology Training offered in Spanish • Community Navigator Walk - In Resource Assistance 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Topeka and Shawnee County (TSC) Get Digital Coalition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Topeka and Shawnee (TSC) County Get Digital Program 	✓		✓		✓	✓			East Central
Topeka Correctional Facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Last Mile Computer Coding Program 		✓							East Central

		Covered Populations									
Organization	Type of Program	Covered Populations								Region	
		Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households ²	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans		
Topeka Workforce Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kansas Registered Apprenticeship • Classroom Training Opportunities • Career Interest and Skills Assessments • Workshops for Job and Life Success • Young Adult Programming (Ages 16-24) • Customized Services for Veterans • One-on-one job search assistance • Referral to veterans programs • Free public access to computers and wi-fi • Northstar 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central
Urban Technology Empowered Communities (Urban TECH)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Literacy classes 			✓		✓	✓				East Central
Washburn Institute of Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accelerating Opportunities Kansas Program (AO-K) • Career/Technical Education • Skill assessments • EducationToGo Courses • Apprenticeships 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	East Central	
American Prison Data System (APDS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career readiness education • Device Support 		✓							Nationally	
Digitunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect donors of computers to community-based organizations 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Nationally	
Barton Community College - Barton's Center for Adult Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Basic Education classes 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	North Central	
Central Kansas Educational Opportunity Center (CKEOC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and education choices • Career Planning 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	North Central	

		Covered Populations								
Organization	Type of Program	Covered Populations								Region
		Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans	
Cloud County Community College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Education Program - Computer skills/earn Technology certificates - Technical training - Employment skills/earn WORKReady Credential • Accelerating Opportunities Kansas Program (AO-K) 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	North Central
Kansas State University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - K-State Research and Extension Office - Professional Development and Training - Adult Development and Aging Programming - Assistive Technology Program • K-State Aerospace & Technology Campus Fleet 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	North Central	
KANSASWORKS Great Bend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Assessments • Job Search and Placement Services • Occupational Skills Training • On-the-Job Training • Workforce Development Training • Workforce Preparation Activities • Free public access to computers and wi-fi • Northstar 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	North Central	
KANSASWORKS Hays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Assessments • Job Search and Placement Services • Occupational Skills Training • On-the-Job Training • Workforce Development Training • Workforce Preparation Activities • Free public access to computers and wi-fi • Northstar 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	North Central	

		Covered Populations								
Organization	Type of Program	Covered Populations								Region
		Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households ²	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans	
KANSASWORKS Salina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job Search and Placement services • Occupational Skills Training • On-the-Job Training • Workforce Development Training • Labor Market Analysis • Candidate Screening & Referral • Free public access to computers and wi-fi • Northstar 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	North Central
Independent Connection, Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent Living Skills Training - Learning to use adaptive equipment • Pre - Employment Transition Services 	✓			✓					North Central
Smoky Hill Education Service Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Citizenship and Technology Program • Learn360 			✓	✓	✓	✓			North Central
The Solution Outreach Center of OCCK; Assistance Technology Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistive Technology • Employment Service & Job Training • Telehealth 	✓			✓	✓				North Central
3 Rivers Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telecommunications Access Program (TAP) • Technical Assistance 	✓			✓					Northeast
Basehor Community Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free public access to computers and wi-fi • Software Tutorials 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster Grandparent Training • Refugee Employment Services • Refugee Learning Center 	✓				✓	✓			Northeast
Easton Unified School District 449	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9-12 Grade - 1:1 Computer Program • Wi-fi available on school campus 			✓	✓	✓	✓			Northeast
Entrepreneur Business Basics (EBB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrepreneurship Program JUMP • EMERGE Entrepreneur Incubator 						✓			Northeast

		Covered Populations									
Organization	Type of Program	Covered Populations								Region	
		Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans		
Goodwill Artemis Institute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Skills Training Bridge to Technology Grow with Google Career Certificate IBM SkillsBuild 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Groundworks Northeast Revitalization Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technology Library - Computer & Wi-Fi Checkout Learn to Earn Program 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Highland Community College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult Education Program Accelerating Opportunities Kansas Program (AO-K) Computer Usage Work Readiness 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Jewish Family Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JFS Tech Connect Device/Internet access Program JFS Tech Connect 10 - Week Course Workshops 	✓		✓							Northeast
Junction City Workforce Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Career and Skills Assessment Resume Building Veteran Services Kansas Registered Apprenticeship Program Life and Job Success Workshops Free public access to computers and wi-fi Northstar 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Kansas Department of Children and Families - Northeast Regional Service Center-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work Program Accelerating Opportunity Kansas (AO-K) Career Pathway Program 			✓	✓	✓	✓				Northeast
Kansas Farm Bureau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural Kansas Apprenticeship Program (RKAP) 							✓			Northeast
Kansas Online Learning Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult Education Youth Education 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast

		Covered Populations								
Organization	Type of Program	Covered Populations								Region
		Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans	
Kansas State School for the Blind	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistive Technology Program • Career Exploration & Pre-Vocational Skills Training • Online Courses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Computer Application - Trainingware - Microsoft Computer Science 				✓					Northeast
Lansing Unified School District 469	• 1:1 Technology Initiative			✓	✓	✓	✓			Northeast
Leaning Into Digital Opportunities (LIDO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to computer technology • Technical training • Digital literacy skill training • Referrals to wide range of resources 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Leavenworth County Workforce Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills Assessment • Area Labor Market Data • Job search, placement, and training • Mature Working Program • WIOA Adults and Dislocated Workers Program • Reentry Specialized Employment Counseling & Training • Free public access to computers and wi-fi • Northstar 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Leavenworth Public Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Literacy Program • ACP application module 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Manhattan Public Library	• Public Computer	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Manhattan Workforce Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Adult Programming (Ages 16-24) • Resume Building • Career and Skill Assessment • Kansas Registered Apprenticeship • Life and Job Success Workshops • Free public access to computers and wi-fi • Northstar 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast

		Covered Populations								
Organization	Type of Program	Covered Populations								Region
		Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households ²	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans	
Mary Cotton Public Library	• Free public access to computers and wi-fi	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Northeast Kansas Community Action Partnership	• Digital Literacy & Work Skills Summer Class	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	Northeast
Northeast Kansas Educational Service Center	• Workshops • Career and Technical Education (CTE) Technical Assistance • Assistive Technology Education Children with Handicaps (ATECH) • ICanConnect • Employment • Migrant Education Program	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Pottawatomie Wabaunsee Regional Library - Alma Branch	• Free public access to computers and wi-fi • Chromebooks and Internet hotspots	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Pottawatomie Wabaunsee Regional Library - Eskridge Branch	• Free public access to computers and wi-fi • Chromebooks and Internet hotspots	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Pottawatomie Wabaunsee Regional Library - Onaga Branch	• Free public access to computers and wi-fi • Chromebooks and Internet hotspots	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Pottawatomie Wabaunsee Regional Library - St Marys (Headquarters) Branch	• Free public access to computers and wi-fi • Chromebooks and Internet hotspots	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Seneca Free Library	• Free public access to computers and wi-fi	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast
Southwest Kansas Area Agency on Aging	• Older Kansans' Employment Program (OKEP)	✓			✓					Northeast
TopCity.tech	• Device Program • Affordable Device Repairs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northeast

		Covered Populations									
Organization	Type of Program	Covered Populations								Region	
		Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households ²	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans		
Village Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reentry Program • Mentoring Program • Transitional Housing - Continuing Education 		✓	✓							Northeast
Workforce Partnership - Johnson - Leavenworth - Wyandotte	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JOCO KS Works 3.0 • K-12 Work - Based Learning Program • Mature Worker Program • Retain Worker Program • RespectsWorks Program • Skill Up WYCO • WIOA Adult and Dislocated Workers • Veterans Employment and Training Programs • Carl Perkins Vocational Education • Adult Basic Education • Northstar 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		Northeast
Colby Community College - Adult Education Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accelerating Opportunities Kansas Program (AO-K) • Technology Skills • Pre-Employment Skills 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		Northwest
Colby Workforce Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Adult Programming (Ages 16-24) • Resume Building • Career and Skill Assessment • Kansas Registered Apprenticeship • Life and Job Success Workshops • Free public access to computers and wi-fi • Northstar 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		Northwest

		Covered Populations								
Organization	Type of Program	Covered Populations								Region
		Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households ²	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans	
Goodland Workforce Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth Adult Programming (Ages 16-24) Resume Building Career and Skill Assessment Kansas Registered Apprenticeship Life and Job Success Workshops Free public access to computers and wi-fi 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northwest
Greeley County Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access to computers and wi-fi Internet hotspots 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northwest
Kansas Department of Children and Families - Northwest Regional Service Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work Program Accelerating Opportunity Kansas (AO-K) Career Pathway Program 			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		Northwest
LINK Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independent Living Skills Training Kansas Telecommunication Access Program (TAP) 	✓			✓					Northwest
Ness City Public Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access to computers and wi-fi 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northwest
Northwest Kansas Economic Innovation Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural & Remote 			✓				✓		Northwest
Northwest Kansas Educational Service Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshops Career and Technical Education (CTE) Technical Assistance Assistive Technology Education Children with Handicaps (ATECH) ICanConnect Employment Migrant Education Program 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northwest
Northwest Kansas Technical College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult /Community Education Courses Career/Technical Programs 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Northwest
Cerebral Palsy Research Foundation (CPRF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School of Adaptive Computer Training (SACT) Equipment Fund 				✓					Sedgwick

Appendix 3 – Digital Equity Programs

		Covered Populations								
Organization	Type of Program	Covered Populations								Region
		Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households ²	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans	
Create Campaign, Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical Assistance • Culturally - Relevancy Business Training 					✓	✓			Sedgwick
Derby Recreation Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Computer Lab 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Sedgwick
Goodwill Industries of Kansas Administration & NexStep Alliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESL Classes • Citizenship Classes • Digital Skills Training • Career Assistance • Accelerating Opportunity Kansas (A-OK) Program 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Sedgwick
Kansas Department of Children and Families - Wichita Regional Service Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Program • Accelerating Opportunity Kansas (AO-K) Career Pathway Program 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Sedgwick
Kansas Museums Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free public access to computers and wi-fi • Digital Skills Training • Workshops 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Sedgwick
NextStep Alliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Education Programs • ESL Classes • Digital Skills Training • Career Assistance 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Sedgwick
School of Adaptive Computer Training (SACT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer training programs • Job training programs 				✓					Sedgwick
The International Rescue Committee (IRC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Navigators • Digital Literacy classes • ESL Programs • Programs for Refugees / Foreigners Transitioning to the US 			✓		✓	✓			Sedgwick
Topeka Independent Living Resource Center, Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent Living Skill Training - Typing & computer training • The Assistive Technology Program/ Northeast Access Site 	✓			✓					Sedgwick
Urban League of Kansas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Computer Lab 			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		Sedgwick
Wichita Indochinese Center (WIC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Skills Development • ESL Classes 			✓		✓	✓			Sedgwick

		Covered Populations								
Organization	Type of Program	Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans	Region
		Wichita Public Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology Classes • Free public access to computers and wi-fi 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Wichita State University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Small Business Development Center - Workshops, webinars • Community Cybersecurity Education • Digital Literacy and Computer Basics • Community Education 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Sedgwick
Wichita Work Release Facility (WWRF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehabilitation Program for Incarcerated individuals transitioning back to civilian society 		✓							Sedgwick
Wichita Workforce Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Adult Programming (Ages 16-24) • Resume Building • Career and Skill Assessment • Kansas Registered Apprenticeship • Life and Job Success Workshops • Free public access to computers and wi-fi • Northstar 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Sedgwick
Wichita Workforce Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older Kansans Employment Program (OKEP) • Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) • Career & Job skill Training • Workshops • Assessments • WIOA Youth Program • Youth Employment Project/HYPE • Free public access to computers and wi-fi • Northstar 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Sedgwick

		Covered Populations								
Organization	Type of Program	Covered Populations								Region
		Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans	
Orion Education & Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional Development Technology Program Adult Diploma Completion Program Workshops & Training 			✓	✓	✓	✓			Sedgwick
Angels in the Attic, Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Computer Access Center 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	South Central
Augusta Public Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access to computers and wi-fi Computer Skills Training 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	South Central
Belle Plaine Unified School District 357	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1:1 Technology Initiative 			✓	✓	✓	✓			South Central
Beyond Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment Services - Computer Training - Job Search Assistance Independent Living Skills Training - Technical Assistance Assistive Technology Program(AT) Telecommunication Access Program (TAP) 	✓			✓					South Central
Boys & Girls of Hutchinson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> STEAM Education Career Programs 			✓		✓	✓			South Central
Butler Community College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accelerating Opportunities Kansas Program (AO-K) Adult Education Classes 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	South Central

		Covered Populations								
Organization	Type of Program	Covered Populations								Region
		Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans	
Butler Workforce Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Assessments • Job Search and Placement Services • Occupational Skills Training • On-the-Job Training • Workforce Development Training • Workforce Preparation Activities • Microsoft Office training • Digital Skill Programs (Online Applications, LinkedIn, Google Careers, IBM SkillBuild) • Alternative Education and GED Courses • Computer Skill Certification Courses • Job for Veterans State Grant Program (JVSG) • Free public access to computers and wi-fi • Northstar 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	South Central
Cowley County Workforce Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Adult Programming (Ages 16-24) • Resume Building • Career and Skill Assessment • Kansas Registered Apprenticeship • Life and Job Success Workshops • Free public access to computers and wi-fi 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	South Central
Education Services and Staff Development Association of Central Kansas (ESSDACK)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (No Suggestions) Learning Center • Professional Learning Workshops • Career & Tech Education • Technology Support & Services • Distance Learning 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	South Central
Hutchinson Community College - Adult Education Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accelerating Opportunities Kansas Program (AO-K) • ESL Classes • Skills Improvement Program 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	South Central

		Covered Populations								
Organization	Type of Program	Covered Populations								Region
		Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households ²	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans	
KANSASWORKS Hutchinson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Assessments • Job Search and Placement Services • Occupational Skills Training • On-the-Job Training • Workforce Development Training • Workforce Preparation Activities • Free public access to computers and wi-fi • Northstar 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	South Central
Newton Public Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free to Use Public Computer Station • Free Public Wi-Fi 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	South Central
Peabody Township Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free public access to computers and wi-fi 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	South Central
South Central Kansas Library System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology Consulting Services • Continuing Education • Free public access to computers and wi-fi 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	South Central
South Central Kansas Special Education Cooperative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistive Technology • Life Skill Program 				✓					South Central
Southeast Kansas Independent Living (SKIL)	The Assistive Technology Program/ South Central Access Site	✓			✓					South Central
Turon Community Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free public access to computers and wi-fi • Computer Skills Training • ACP assistant program 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	South Central
Whitewater Memorial Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free public access to computers and wi-fi 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	South Central

		Covered Populations								
Organization	Type of Program	Covered Populations								Region
		Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households ²	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans	
Winfield Public Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EBSCO - Learning Express - Job & Career Accelerator - Computer & Internet Basics - Microsoft Windows & software (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, etc.) • Universal Class • Free public access to computers and wi-fi 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	South Central
Fort Scott Community College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Education Classes • Computer Skill Certificate • Kansas Work Ready certificate. 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
Howard City Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free public access to computers and wi-fi 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
Humboldt Public Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free Public access to computers and wi-fi 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
Independence Inc. ADA Computer Lab	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Computer Lab 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
Kansas Department of Children and Families - Southeast Regional Service Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Program • Accelerating Opportunity Kansas (AO-K) Career Pathway Program 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
KANSASWORKS Chanute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Assessments • Job Search and Placement Services • Occupational Skills Training • On-the-Job Training • Workforce Development Training • Workforce Preparation Activities • Free public access to computers and wi-fi • Northstar 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast

		Covered Populations								
Organization	Type of Program	Covered Populations								Region
		Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households ²	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans	
Southeast KANSASWORKS Emporia Workforce Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Assessments • Job Search and Placement Services • Occupational Skills Training • On-the-Job Training • Workforce Development Training • Workforce Preparation Activities • Free public access to computers and wi-fi • Northstar 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
Southeast Kansasworks Paola	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Assessments • Job Search and Placement Services • Occupational Skills Training • On-the-Job Training • Workforce Development Training • Workforce Preparation Activities • Free public access to computers and wi-fi 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast
Southeast KANSASWORKS Pittsburg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Assessments • Job Search and Placement Services • Occupational Skills Training • On-the-Job Training • Workforce Development Training • Workforce Preparation Activities • Transportation, Childcare, Financial Assistance • Alternative Education and GED Courses • Free public access to computers and wi-fi • Northstar 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southeast

		Covered Populations								
Organization	Type of Program	Covered Populations								Region
		Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households ²	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans	
KANSASWORKS Dodge City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Assessments • Job Search and Placement Services • Occupational Skills Training • On-the-Job Training • Workforce Development Training • Workforce Preparation Activities • Free public access to computers and wi-fi 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southwest
KANSASWORKS Garden City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Assessments • Job Search and Placement Services • Occupational Skills Training • On-the-Job Training • Workforce Development Training • Workforce Preparation Activities • Free public access to computers and wi-fi • Northstar 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southwest
Liberal Unified School District 480	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides Technology Training 			✓	✓	✓	✓			Southwest
Southwest Kansas Library System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing Education and Training • Workshops • Automation and Technology Consulting 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southwest
Connect All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Device Program • Digital literacy training 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Statewide
Connecting for Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Technology Centers • Free wi-fi networks covering three housing facilities • Mobile computer lab • Digital life skills classes • Low-cost refurbished PCs 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Statewide
EBSCO Express Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer Skills Training • Career & Test Prep Courses • Career Development Resources 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Statewide
Goodwill Digital Skills Mobile Training Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn IT Information Technology Lab • Digital Skills Training 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Statewide

		Covered Populations								
Organization	Type of Program	Covered Populations								Region
		Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans	
Human-I-T	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer and Internet Training • Tech Support • Internet Access Support Program • Human-I-T Online Store - Low-cost devices & Internet 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Statewide
Kansas Department of Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive database of skills including technology skill training • On-the-Job Training (OJT) and Apprenticeship Program • Military educational and job training with current civilian workplace needs • State of Kansas Internship Program 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Statewide	
Kansas Department of Children and Family Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Program • Accelerating Opportunity Kansas (AO-K) Career Pathway Program 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Statewide	
Lifeline Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides Discounts for monthly Phone and Internet Services 			✓					Statewide	
National Association for the Advancement of Colored individuals (NAACP) - Kansas Chapter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAACP Empowerment Program - Technical Assistance • Workshops & Training classes 			✓			✓		Statewide	
Network Kansas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing Kansas Businesses 			✓				✓	Statewide	
PCs for People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Skills Training • Affordable Repair 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Statewide	
The University of Kansas- Assistive Technology for Kansans (KS TAP) Telecommunications Access Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides specialized equipment 	✓		✓	✓				Statewide	
United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce Essential Courses 	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Statewide	
Veteran Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readiness and Employment (VR&E) 							✓	Statewide	

		Covered Populations								
Organization	Type of Program	Covered Populations								Region
		Aging Individuals	Incarcerated Individuals	Low-Income Households ²	People with Disabilities	People with Language Barriers	Racial/Ethnic Minority Members	Rural Inhabitants	Veterans	
DigitalLearn.org	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internet basics • Email basics • Online safety • Computer basics • Microsoft products basics • Job skills basics - creating resumes, online job search, applying for jobs • Video conferencing basics • Using a Mobile Device • The Affordable Connectivity Program Basics 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Virtual
Galvanize	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coding Bootcamp - (VET TEC) Program 								✓	Virtual



KANSAS BROADBAND ROADSHOW



Digital Equity in Kansas

Kansas Department of Commerce
Office of Broadband Development | May 2023

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Disclaimer

This study was conducted by the PPMC at Wichita State University. The PPMC is an independent research body unaffiliated with the Kansas Department of Commerce, Kansas Office of Broadband Development. This report was prepared by the research team and data collected from external sources. PPMC's findings are based on assumption of data accuracy received from internal and external sources. The findings represent the views, opinions and conclusions of the research team alone. The report does not express the official or unofficial policy of Wichita State University.

Executive Summary



The Kansas Office of Broadband Development (KOBD) was established in 2020 to help ensure all Kansans have the opportunity to live, work, learn, and compete in a global economy by improving universal access to quality, affordable, and reliable broadband.

The information gathered in this report is intended to support the development of the KOBD's State of Kansas Digital Equity Plan, which will aim to ensure people have access and skills to benefit from digital technology. The Public Policy and Management Center (PPMC) at Wichita State University supported KOBD by providing project management, facilitation of statewide stakeholder engagement to solicit resident feedback on digital equity, logistical and strategic support for stakeholder engagement, and a statewide survey. From inception to delivery of the Digital Equity report, this project occurred between January 26, 2023, and May 15, 2023.

Project Approach

The approach of the project sought stakeholder input in a three-step process including:

1. On-site facilitated community listening sessions (Roadshow)
2. Statewide digital survey
3. Virtual focus groups with organizations representing underserved groups (Covered Populations)

KOBD identified access and inclusion as a priority for the project; PPMC supplied translation services to eight roadshow events and offered accommodations for registrants as needed.

Challenges

Those most impacted by lack of affordable, dependable internet access were students, low-income families, businesses, older adults, agriculture, those who work from home, nonnative native English speakers, emergency services, and the disabled. The largest concern regarding digital equity for Roadshow participants was lack of access to the internet in their homes. Those who live in rural areas of Kansas are adversely affected by the lack of broadband access and many voiced feeling “left behind.” This impedes access to education, jobs, and basic health services. Without reliable broadband access, older adults and the disabled cannot access telehealth and mental health services. A community that does not have reliable, affordable broadband will likely not grow, which affects property value and economic growth. This is often coupled with lack of cell phone service, causing rural inhabitants to feel vulnerable and without essential safety services. At every Roadshow location, participants noted the inaccuracy of what ISP providers claim to cover compared to their reality of slow connection speeds and intermittent connectivity. The inaccuracies of coverage maps affect rural populations most significantly.

There is a lack of knowledge regarding the use of basic computer skills for older populations and those with language barriers. Basic literacy skills are needed especially in rural communities. Libraries across the State offer computer literacy training, though the turnout is generally low. The need for reliable devices can be addressed in conjunction with computer literacy. Though feedback suggests that this need pales in comparison with the need for fiber and internet access across the State. FCC maps are not accurate and the formal process to “challenge the map” is hard to navigate.

Champions

Libraries, urban and rural, remain the champions of the community, providing resources, internet access, and training for communities across Kansas. Kansas State Extension offices find ways to connect youth and older adults to necessary resources. The Farm Bureau is advocating for growers and producers across the State. As this is a

grassroots effort, local champions were found in many communities. When possible, these names were identified to the KOBD staff for further discussion.

Opportunities

Jade Piros De Carvalho often refers to the work of installing underground fiber optic cable across the State of Kansas (through KOBD) as “our generation's moonshot.” The PPMC asked focus group participants to imagine their community as though broadband challenges were solved.

“What is possible in your community?”

Access to the global economy	No crime	Lives become more meaningful and purposeful	Civic Engagement
Unlimited access to education	Small towns become more marketable to new residents	Increased productivity and efficiency	Access for older adults and all ages groups
Access to arts and culture	Cure isolation	Age in place	Better for the environment – use less gas
Downtown storefronts filled	Access to health services	Increase in home values	Increase workforce training and opportunity
Great equalizer for the underserved	Attract and retain the next generation	Maintaining schools and hospitals	Public safety and real time alerts for weather related events
Business attraction	Participation in the Global Economy	Work from home option	Economic development

Roadshow

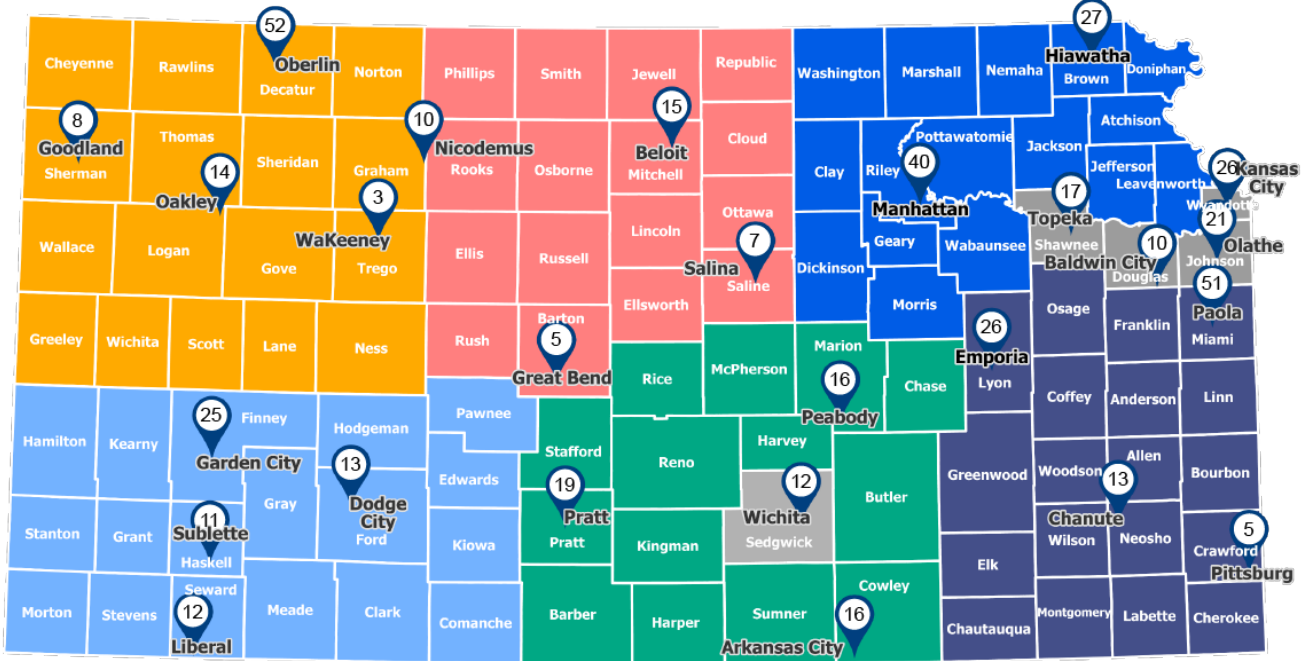


The Public Policy and Management Center planned, executed, and delivered 26 statewide Roadshow focus groups across Kansas between February 14 and May 4. PPMC used the following channels for outreach marketing to local networks to ensure robust participation.

Roadshow marketing included local and regional outreach with the below agencies:

- Lions, Rotary, & Kiwanis Clubs
- Kansas Hispanic, Latino American Affairs Commission
- League of Women Voters
- Girl Scouts
- Latest area employers
- Community colleges, universities
- K-State extension offices
- Local utilities
- Local housing authority
- Local community foundation
- Local school district
- Farm bureau
- Local print media
- Local libraries
- Local chambers of commerce
- Senior services and senior centers
- United way
- Goodwill
- City and county managers
- Social media
- Economic development agencies
- Public information officers
- Chief information officers
- Local museums & Kansas Museum Association
- Salvation Army

Focus Groups were designed by the PPMC to maximize engagement and data collection. Roadshow locations were designated by The Kansas Office of Broadband Development. Attendance numbers are shown on the map below:



<i>Northwest</i>	<i>North Central</i>	<i>East Central</i>	<i>Northeast</i>
Apr. 4 - Oberlin	Mar. 9 - Beloit	Mar. 22 - Topeka	Feb. 28 - Manhattan
Apr. 5 - Oakley	Mar. 9 - Great Bend	Apr. 10 - Baldwin City	Mar. 7 - Hiawatha
Apr. 5 - Goodland	Apr. 19 - Nicodemus	Apr. 11 - Kansas City	
Apr. 19 - WaKeeney	May 4 - Salina	Apr. 13 - Olathe	

<i>Southwest</i>	<i>South Central</i>	<i>Wichita</i>	<i>Southeast</i>
Feb. 22 - Dodge City	Feb. 22 - Pratt	Mar. 23 - Wichita/ Sedgwick County	Feb. 15 - Emporia
Mar. 27 - Garden City	Feb. 23 - Peabody		Mar. 2 - Chanute
Mar. 28 - Sublette	Apr. 25 - Arkansas City		Mar. 2 - Pittsburg
Mar. 28 - Liberal			Apr. 13 - Paola

Each on-site Roadshow delivery followed the same process to ensure continuity. During each Roadshow event, The Kansas Office Of Broadband Development presented

information regarding the statewide digital equity plan and resources available to participants. The PPMC followed with a focus group of six questions. Data gathered from the focus group participants is found below by specific regions and communities.

Northwest Region

This region includes Oberlin, Oakley, Goodland, and WaKeeney, Kansas.

Northwest Region Highlights

- Oberlin: Gateway Civic Center is an asset, Library has computers, internet, 3D printer and classes. Starlink, a satellite internet service provider developed by SpaceX, enables rural residents to have internet access. School is teaching students how to use devices which is a communal benefit.
- Oakley: Most people in town have a consistent connection if they have service. Subsidies are available and an opportunity to identify people in covered populations like the older adults who can be served better.
- Goodland: Through innovation, investments, and partnerships, the city is ahead of other communities. There are options for ISPs in Goodland only. The library, Northwest Kansas Technical College, and public schools are community leaders in technology.
- WaKeeney: Fiber laid throughout the community and serviced by Nex-Tech

Northwest Region Challenges

The Northwest region of Kansas faces unique digital broadband challenges due to its rural and sparsely populated terrain. The region is characterized by vast farmlands and remote communities that are often located far from telecommunication infrastructure.

Broadband challenges include:

- Businesses (i.e., remote workers) are impacted by the inability to scan and transmit documents and the loss of potential businesses because of the inability to have virtual meetings.
- The older adults often feel alone and disconnected.

- Emergency services (i.e., weather emergency communications, response times, hospitals) are negatively impacted.
- Economic impact comes in many forms as citizens must go to the library to fill out job applications, debit/credit card machines lack service, and online business economy has limited access.
- Churches and faith-based communities were impacted especially during COVID by a lack of tech know-how for services.

Many residents and businesses in the region have limited access to high-speed internet services, which negatively impacts their economic growth and quality of life.

Furthermore, the region's extreme weather conditions, such as severe storms and tornadoes, can damage telecommunication infrastructure, leading to prolonged service disruptions. These challenges have made it difficult to bridge the digital divide in the region and improve access to critical broadband services.

Organizations for Follow up in Northwest Region

- Oberlin: Gateway Civic Center, library, schools, Starlink
- Oakley: Northwest Kansas Educational Service Center, Buffalo Bill Cultural Center
- Goodland: Library, Northwest Kansas Technical College
- WaKeeney: Library, McDonalds, Dairy Queen, post office, schools, Bird City Housing Authority, Nex-Tech

North Central Region

The North Central region includes Beloit, Great Bend, Nicodemus, and Salina, Kansas.

North Central Region Highlights

Through the efforts of the Farm Bureau, there was a widespread coordinated effort to challenge the coverage maps and elevate the distinction between a coverage map and a marketing map in Beloit. There is also collaboration among ISPs in the region and the

North Central Regional Planning Commission. The North Central Regional Planning Commission (NCRPC) is responsible for facilitating and coordinating regional planning and development efforts within its jurisdiction. As part of this role, the NCRPC collaborates with internet service providers (ISPs) to expand broadband access and improve connectivity in rural areas. The NCRPC helps identify areas with limited broadband access, works with ISPs to develop solutions, and assists with funding and grant applications to support broadband infrastructure projects. The NCRPC aims to promote economic growth, enhance quality of life, and improve access to essential services in rural communities. Another asset in the region is the Dane G. Hansen Foundation, which awards community grants and scholarships to provide opportunities and improve the quality of life in 26 counties in Northwest Kansas.

- Beloit: There is fiber access within city limits and in some surrounding rural communities the schools are proactive in helping families get connected, and there is coordinated collaboration with entities like the North Central Regional Planning Commission.
- Great Bend: Schools, specifically USD 428, have the best connection in the community and host parent nights and tech day initiatives. Local businesses, like a local coffee shop in Ellsworth, have free public WIFI.
- Nicodemus: The community center has WIFI but with limited range outside of the center. The local ISP Nex-Tech, which is the only provider that serves the area, is very responsive and a great community partner.
- Salina: The city has in-town service, but it caters primarily to the more affluent neighborhoods, less/uneven coverage in lower income areas. Abilene is including fiber in their new housing development builds. Ada, Kansas has a wireless system thanks to North Central Kansas Community Network (NCKCN), a nonprofit private organization that currently serves 14 communities within North Central Kansas with High-speed Fixed Wireless internet.

North Central Region Challenges

North Central Kansas faces several challenges in terms of digital broadband connectivity. Students, lower- and middle-income families, businesses, older adults,

farmers, those who work from home, nonnative English speakers, emergency services, disabled are all affected by lack of digital equity. One of the primary issues is the lack of infrastructure, as many rural areas lack the necessary equipment and fiber-optic cables to support high-speed internet. This leads to slow and unreliable connections, hindering access to online resources such as education and telehealth services. There is a struggle in the rural areas (even as close as five miles outside of Salina for example) to have connectivity at all. In rural Dickerson County students have no access in their homes and lack cell phone service. Additionally, the cost of broadband services is often prohibitive for low-income households, exacerbating the digital divide. Finally, the limited competition among internet service providers in the area further limits the options available for consumers, making it difficult for them to find affordable and reliable broadband services.

Organizations for Follow up by region

- **Beloit:** Kansas Farm Bureau, North Central Regional Planning Commission, Hansen Foundation
- **Great Bend:** Barton Community College, USD 428, USD 431, Southwest Kansas Area Agency on Aging, Golden Belt Telephone (GBT Communications) Association Inc, Kansas WorkforceONE
- **Nicodemus:** Nex-Tech/Nex-Tech Wireless, Nicodemus Township Hall/Visitor Center, A.M.E Church
- **Salina:** NCKCN - North Central Kansas Community Network, Nex-Tech, Library, Senior Center, K-State Aerospace & Tech College, Abilene School District

East Central Region

This region includes Topeka, Baldwin City, Kansas City, Olathe, Kansas.

East Central Region Highlights

- **Topeka:** The city has strong collaboration among organizations addressing broadband challenges and more support is needed for these local providers. The city could offer public connection points in public open spaces like parks.

- Baldwin City: Libraries are revitalized, fiber has reached the south end of Baldwin City, gaps in the fiber are being filled by wireless; Clearwave is a telecommunications company based in Baldwin City that offers high-speed internet, digital phone, and TV services to residential and business customers in the area. In the digital broadband space, Clearwave's services play a crucial role in connecting people and businesses to the internet and enabling them to access the vast array of digital resources available online.
- Kansas City: Fiber infrastructure is strong due to initiatives like Google fiber. Libraries can leverage resources to close the digital divide for covered populations like under-resourced and non-English speakers.
- Olathe: The active nonprofits in this community provide extensive resources to the underserved. Using the community access of these nonprofits could further uncover what covered populations in the Johnson County area really need.

East Central Region Challenges

The East Central Kansas Region faces unique digital broadband challenges despite containing more urbanized areas. The region's digital infrastructure has struggled to keep up with the rapidly growing population, leading to slow internet speeds and limited access to high-speed broadband. Many rural areas in the counties also lack adequate broadband access due to inadequate infrastructure and low population density throughout the counties. The COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted these challenges as many residents have had to rely on remote work, online education, and telehealth services. Also negatively impacted during the pandemic were older adults, veterans, homeless populations, homeschoolers, students, families, under-resourced and marginalized communities with nonnative populations, and people who lack digital skills. The cost of expanding broadband services for these populations is high, and there is a lack of competition among internet service providers, leading to limited options for residents. These challenges have hindered the region's ability to fully participate in the digital economy and have highlighted the need for increased investment in digital infrastructure.

Organizations for Follow up in East Central Region

- Topeka: TSC Get Digital, K-State Research & Extension - Shawnee Co., Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library, City of Topeka: Chief Diversity Equity and Inclusion Office, Washburn Tech East, Washburn, IBSA, Inc.
- Baldwin City: Baker University, Clearwave Fiber, RG Fiber
- Kansas City: Mid-America Regional Council (MARC), KC Digital Drive, KCKPS, Essential Families, Youth Entrepreneur Exchange, Latinx Ed. Cooperation, Goodwill, KC Coalition for Digital Inclusion
- Olathe: Libraries, Jewish Family Services, school districts, community colleges
- Catholic Charities, Department of Aging, Mental Health, and Environment, Parks and Rec., Center of Grace, Latinx Ed. Cooperation

Northeast Region

This region includes Hiawatha and Manhattan, Kansas.

Northeast Region Highlights

- Hiawatha: These are strong communities with committed, local ISPs Several advantages were noted:
 - The Rainbow (ISP) distributes information and is willing to work with local businesses.
 - There are community hot spots in parks and recreation areas.
- Manhattan: As a university town, Manhattan has man advantages:
 - Good connection within city limits
 - Fort Riley and Kansas State University are listed as assets.
 - Competition between ISPs creates good choices and competition for this area
 - Free public WIFI and a strong public school system with 1:1 device for students is noted asset
 - Twin Valley is running fiber in this area
 - WTC is championed for being an asset to the community as an ISP

Northeast Region Challenges

Residents in and around Hiawatha note the local economy depends upon agriculture. Lack of access to dependable, affordable broadband in the rural areas prevents the economy from growing and hinders economic development. One local business owner who has locations in several small towns notes that unless connectivity improves, the offices that employ rural residents will be forced to close. Residents cannot work from home, and this prohibits economic growth. The local hospitals have trouble getting emergency services due to lack of dependable GPS mapping. A participant noted an incident when a telemed helicopter refused to land for emergency services because of lack of location services. Improved access and equity of rural broadband is possibly the singular most critical issue that businesses and residents face in Northeast Kansas. One resident said, "Without better access and infrastructure, we will continue to lose population, businesses, and many of our local communities."

Challenges for Manhattan Area Include:

- Lack of access to telehealth for the older adults, especially in rural areas
- Failure of broadband connection in inclement weather
- Rural expansion requires collaborative efforts, public private partnerships, and city and county leadership
- Lack of options to work from home outside of Manhattan with inconsistent internet and cell connection

Organizations for Follow up in Northeast Region

- Hiawatha: Nemaha County Community Health Workers, Brown County Community Health Workers, and Donovan City Library
- Manhattan: WTC, Blue Valley both laying fiber

Southwest Region

This region includes Dodge City, Garden City, Sublette, and Liberal, Kansas.

(Note: Translation services were provided for all of this region's roadshow locations.)

Southwest Region Highlights

This Southwest Region is characterized by a growing Hispanic population. Libraries, K-State Extension Offices, and community colleges are all community assets in these areas.

- Dodge City: There are collaborative partnerships within the city/counties that focus on underserved areas and serving covered populations by working with the Unified School Districts (USDs) and entities like Dodge City Community College - Adult Learning Center (dc3). There is also a robust public library system.
- Garden City: Multiple service providers and mix of tech in the area is beneficial. Public libraries offer access to devices and internet free of charge.
- Sublette: Robust library services including help with technology are an asset. Free access points (i.e., high school parking lot and library) are critical. Local ISP providers are willing community partners.
- Liberal: EPIC Touch offers broadband grants, which have given sections of town good service. Local companies with vested interest in the community have great impact. USD 480 gives Chromebooks to students.

Southwest Region Challenges

The Southwest Kansas region faces unique digital broadband challenges due to its rural and remote location. Broadband challenges impact rural communities, schools, and teachers (during COVID, students sat in the library parking lot to access the internet), employees working from home, older adults, small business owners, colleges, retail stores, and doctors' offices. All communities are impacted by weather, which derails service. The area has a low population density, making it unattractive for internet service providers (ISPs) to invest in infrastructure. The terrain is also a challenge, with a lot of flat land and few natural features to attach cables. Additionally, extreme weather conditions such as tornadoes and blizzards disrupt communication infrastructure, leading to frequent outages. The lack of reliable high-speed internet access affects not only residents but also businesses and farmers who need to stay connected to the global market.

Organizations for Follow up in Southwest Region

- Dodge City: Dodge City Community College - Adult Learning Center (dc3), K-State Extension Office - Ford County Extension, Dodge City Public Library, Kansas Hispanic & Latino American Affairs Commission (KHLAAC), United Food and Commercial Workers District Union Local 2
- Garden City: Garden City Public Library, Garden City Community College, Southwest Research: K-State Extension Center
- Sublette: Southwest Plains Regional Service Center Libraries
- Liberal: Seward County Community College, Libraries, EPICTOUCH

Southcentral Region

The southcentral region includes Arkansas City, Peabody, and Pratt, Kansas.

Southcentral Region Highlights

Southcentral Kansas includes rural areas often with little to no service. Grant availability allows funding opportunities otherwise impossible. These communities are tight knit, readily supporting one another. Competition among ISPs has begun to cut the cost and provide choices, though there is a long way to go. Additional funding has provided more incentives and investments.

- Arkansas City: USD 470 provides adult education classes. Orion Education in Winfield sells refurbished devices.
- Peabody: TCC network, a multicounty cooperative for service, is an asset. More options for providers in the area are needed. Grants from KOBD have helped. Small TV providers are working on fiber. USD 398 provides good broadband connection for students at school.
- Pratt: Increased incentives for service providers are needed. Library is assisting by offering computer literacy classes.

Southcentral Region Challenges

The underserved residents of this region include older adults, farmers, rural homeowners, low-income families, and homeless populations whose access to employment, healthcare, education, and basic resources correlate to lack of connectivity. Noted concerns by this region include lack of civic engagement without increased access to social media and other communication platforms, especially for older adults in rural areas. However, this group may not see the need for digital literacy to improve connection and reduce isolation. Lastly, the lack of access or slow and intermittent access is no longer acceptable in today's economy and this region is frustrated. ISPs also tend to be territorial, further limiting access and affordability.

- **Arkansas City:** This college town notes a brain drain because of lack of viable connectivity in Arkansas City and in the surrounding region. College students sit in hallways on campus to complete homework due to lack of internet access in their homes. Rural residents emphasized a lack of reliable and affordable internet connection in their homes affecting students. Older adults discuss increased isolation without connection via social media, emails and other. Cell phone coverage is equally lacking in this area.
- **Peabody:** Peabody and the nearby town of Burns lack broadband. Access to emergency services is compromised because the GPS maps don't work for emergency vehicles, creating dangerous conditions for rural residents. The weather can cause spotty internet connection for those who have access at all. Parents of school aged children note the schools use social media to communicate with families, which causes those without connectivity to feel out of the loop. Weather related outages are also a concern.
- **Pratt:** Time spent for rural inhabitants waiting for slow downloads and buffering was a particular frustration to this group.

Organizations for Follow up in the Southcentral Region

- **Arkansas City:** Career tech program at Winfield high school, Cowley Community College Golden Tiger Program for older adults, Angels in the Attic (nonprofit),

COPE project (health and digital access), Eagles Nest, USD 470 adult tech classes, Orion Education

- Peabody: TEEN network in school, Peabody Librarian
- Pratt: Local community college, library, local small ISPs helpful and knowledgeable

Wichita/Sedgwick County Region

This area encapsulates Wichita and Sedgwick County, Kansas.

Wichita/Sedgwick County Region Highlights

Some highlights elevated in the Wichita region were the SNAP/food pantry, legal aide, USD259 providing tech and hotspots to students at home, the robust and evolving library network, immigrant assistance programs, applying for jobs using devices, receiving assistance and free WIFI, and youth with knowledge.

Wichita/Sedgwick County Region Challenges

Wichita faces unique digital broadband challenges due to its urban geography and socioeconomic factors. While high-speed internet infrastructure is available in most areas, the cost of access can be prohibitive for low-income households. The digital divide is exacerbated by the widening education gap for students without in-home access. Also left behind are older adults unfamiliar with technology and/or devices. Low income, underserved groups, and marginalized communities are at greater risk, as well as people with disabilities. Rural communities are also affected by gaps or lack of reliable and affordable coverage the farther you get away from the urban core. This digital divide affects access to education, healthcare, and job opportunities, exacerbating existing inequalities. Furthermore, the pandemic has highlighted the importance of reliable and affordable broadband access for remote work and online learning, but many households lack the necessary infrastructure and equipment. Addressing these challenges requires a combination of public and private investment in broadband infrastructure and programs to increase digital literacy and affordability for underserved communities.

Organizations for Follow up in Wichita/Sedgwick County Region

- WSU
- WSU Tech
- McDonalds
- Starbucks
- Coffee Shops
- YMCA
- Hospital Lobbies
- City Hall/Sedgwick County Government
- Senior Centers
- Churches
- Urban League
- United Way of Central Plains
- Goodwill Industries
- USD 259
- The Wichita Chamber of Commerce

Southeast Region

The southeast region includes Emporia, Paola, Chanute, and Pittsburg, Kansas.

Southeast Region Highlights

Increased competition among providers has allowed competitive pricing for this region. Fiber buildouts happening in Emporia are encouraging to residents. Schools in these towns provide devices and access to students (Pittsburg and Paola), while libraries remain the community anchor by providing access.

- Pittsburg: Good broadband within the city limits which has contributed to economic growth. New residents moved to Pittsburg during the pandemic because of reliable and affordable internet, making working from home a viable option. The public school has its own network for students and is free for

educational services. The City of Pittsburg offers to host a cooperative for ISP providers.

- Chanute: Several ISP provider options with ample equipment and good community education resources. Lynn City is using ARPA funding to expand fiber. Community Health Center of Southeast Kansas/ Chanute Elementary clinic offers telehealth services.
- Emporia: Locally owned companies are a highlight, advocating for improved access to broadband. Buildouts are planned, and fiber has been laid by existing providers.
- Paola: Miami county has a broadband champion whose influence extends through Paola and surrounding towns. This area is well informed and has been advocating for better affordable connectivity for years – a good grassroots effort model. Schools have the best connection in the community for youth training. A unique model has 4-H kids teaching older adults computer literacy.

Southeast Region Challenges

- Chanute: Access to reliable, dependable internet connection is not evenly distributed within the city limits. Toronto public library has WIFI so it covers the parking lot because so many people are working from their cars in the parking lot.
- Paola: Parents who work from home with young children are affected by the lack of access to broadband. It is difficult to attain upward mobility due to lack of equitable access to broadband in homes. Those with disabilities and homeless populations are also greatly affected by lack of access to services. There are safety concerns for rural residents who don't have dependable connectivity.
- Pittsburg: Network outages affect many in the area causing a lack of trust in the system. New residents outside city limits have no access to homes causing frustration and lack of upward mobility. Low-income families and older adults are affected as well.
- Emporia: Decreased profitability for businesses and agriculture is a result of lack of dependable internet connection. Students have suffered from schooling from

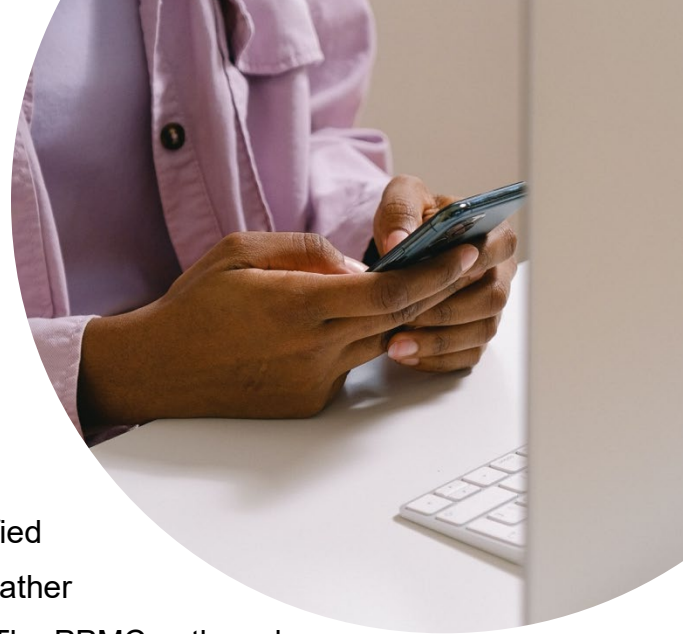
home during COVID – those without connectivity are lagging in school. Participants note inability to perform simple tasks like checking on a flight. Cell phone and landline access is limited in Emporia and the surrounding region.

Organizations for Follow up in Southeast

- Pittsburg: Wesley House provides free WIFI 12 hours per day. Walmart and Dillons grocery stores. The city manager would host a provider cooperative.
- Chanute: Community health center provides telehealth access to the school. Toronto public librarian.
- Emporia: Kansas Farm Bureau
- Paola: KC Digital Drive, Miami County, training for older adults on cybersecurity, Franklin County MOCAM, ISPs provide customer service in resolving problems/ concerns, USD 416

Covered Population

Focus Groups



Overview

The Kansas Office of Broadband Development identified underserved communities (Covered Populations) to gather information from all people affected by digital equity. The PPMC gathered information from six covered population groups in Kansas through virtual and phone methods. Participants were providers of services to these populations, providing insight to the unique challenges of each group. Represented populations included: Senior Services and Disabled, Agriculture, Justice Involved, Refugees and Asylum Seekers, and Veterans.

The covered population groups share common challenges present in the digital age today. Access to basic resources increasingly rely on online access and digital literacy. Applications to apply for basic services like healthcare are online. Access to job applications and educational opportunities and services are also online, presenting challenges for many included in covered populations. Without improved affordable internet connectivity these groups will continue to fall behind. The barriers of the justice involved and refugee populations, for example, are great without the added hinderance of lack of digital equitable access. The many difficulties of being an agriculture producer are vast without the additional challenge of lack of affordable connectivity to land and homes to run businesses. Similarly, the everyday challenges for disabled populations are great without the added burden of lack of access. These covered populations and others need access and considerations necessary to bring them along into an increasingly digital age, especially those covered population groups who live rural areas.

Seniors and Disabled

The PPMC hosted a virtual Roadshow for providers who resource the Area Agencies on Aging across the State. Six providers attended from across the State of Kansas.

Highlights

Workforce Centers, libraries, Johnson County Community College, local provider community WIFI (Hiawatha, KS) and K-State extension offices were noted as highlights in the State for access. The Administration for Community Living Grant was cited as a great resource for older adults, providing internet services and devices. Assistive Technology for Kansas (ATK) provides tech modifications solutions for disabled populations.

Challenges

The lack of reliable and affordable access to the internet at home, coupled with lack the transportation, creates challenges for older adults and those with disabilities. Many rely on internet connection for telehealth and mental health services, at a minimum. Many of the resource applications for those on a limited income are online only. One example of lack of access to resources is the Medicaid Application, which is online only and can be difficult to navigate. The barrier of lack of connection in homes causes reliance on cell phone service. The cost of data for different cell phone packages presents an additional barrier. Older adults may not be as tech savvy; digital literacy training is needed for this group. Older adults may also underestimate the personal fulfillment and social connection that can be gained with increased digital literacy, which may benefit mental health for generations that did not grow up with the internet.

Specific regional challenges for this population:

- Harrington has no public library
- Johnson County needs devices for clients
- Shawnee lacks dependable connectivity
- Rural Johnson County lacks service
- Jefferson County (between Topeka and Lawrence) lacks service

Opportunities

- Help people set up computers in homes for older adults and disabled populations
- College IT departments could provide services and training for clients across Kansas
- Geek Squad noted as a resource

Agriculture

The Kansas Farm Bureau used the focus group questions in an online survey for members to collect information from growers and others involved in agriculture across Kansas. They received 112 fully complete surveys. The following is information from this survey.

Highlights

Several respondents put hope in Starlink; many noted they are on a waiting list. Rural communities are accustomed to working together, helping to write grants and getting access to resources when possible. Community resources in rural areas are Grain and Electric Cooperatives, senior centers, and libraries.

Challenges

Reliable and affordable broadband access is integral for the work of growers and others in agriculture. Everything from livestock auctions, sales, marketing, market trading, invoicing, and other basic business activities rely on connectivity. Many noted they would be able to sell more and grow their business if internet connections were reliable and affordable.

Farm equipment relies on GPS or other mapping connections, if there is no access to GPS in the area it limits the productivity of the farm. Sustainability efforts often rely on technology and access to the internet. Growers in Kansas cannot stay viable without last mile connectivity. Many noted that they will not be able to continue their business unless things improve.

Opportunities

- Work with service providers locally to get reliable, affordable internet
- Reduce weather related disruptions with more secure access through inground fiber
- Set up a fully networked infrastructure by partnering with organizations and companies

Organizations for Follow up

In general, coffee shops, McDonalds, and libraries were noted for offering free Wi-Fi. One participant noted it is not optimal for conducting business on an unsecured network. Specific locations and businesses mentioned are:

- Garden City airport
- Larkrise Coffee in Hamilton
- Hays Recreation Center
- Fort Hays State University
- Uniontown Community Center

With improvement of internet across Kansas, farmers could better monitor the water crisis, animal management, and other efficiencies that urban areas are demanding the agriculture industry pay.

Justice Involved

PPMC hosted three virtual focus groups with those who serve incarcerated and formerly incarcerated populations. Representatives from Southeast Kansas Juvenile, Probation, Drug Courts in Allen, Woodson, Wilson, and Neosho counties participated, as well as the Kansas Department of Corrections, risk education program representatives, and other providers across the State.

Highlights and Locations

For those who are incarcerated or in work release type programs access to resource rooms with computers is available.

Hutchinson and Ellsworth Correctional facilities offer technology literacy classes. Those who are in transitional programs have access to Pathway Grants which provide a Chromebook and three months of cell service with a cell phone. Most of these individuals are estimated to have a basic knowledge of technology.

Challenges

Older adults who are justice involved are often hesitant to use technology or, reluctant to learn. Having been incarcerated for several years, when they are released, many find the world has moved on with technological advancements. Reluctance to learn digital skills may hinder employment, engagement in the community, and access to basic resources.

Affordable connection is a primary hindrance for this group. For those who are justice involved in southeast Kansas, affordability is the primary hindrance to access to broadband. Clients receive government issued cell phones, but they rely on WIFI connection and have limited minutes for calls, hindering access to continuing education and vocational advancement. For example, the FAFSA application for student loans requires an email and 3rd party authentication, which is not an option for these clients. Staffing shortages are also a concern in access to the computer resource rooms in correctional facilities, as staff must be onsite when clients use computers and other technology.

Refugees

The PPMC hosted a virtual focus group for providers who serve refugees and asylum seekers across Kansas. Representatives from the International Rescue Commission attended.

Highlights and Organizations

Many clients receive cell phones as part of the resettlement process. The International Rescue Commission offers tech literacy classes for their clients and families. After

COVID, IRC created a position dedicated to digital literacy. USD 457, in Garden City, offers hotspots for families.

Challenges

Challenges for this group include language barriers, lack of access to devices, and lack of affordable connection in homes. Most applications for jobs and resources are in English and Spanish, and sometimes Vietnamese. Providers noted that they need applications translated into Swahili, Pashto, Dari, Arabic, and Ukrainian for their clients in the Wichita area. Garden City has 40 different countries represented, with many indigenous languages spoken. Refugees often don't apply for discount service due to lack of social security number and fear of their immigration status. Another barrier involves internet service providers to schedule in-home internet installation for new clients online, providing a barrier for those without internet access. The technicians who install services for the ISPs only speak English, creating confusion for those who may not speak English. Participants suggested ISPs who serve areas with larger non-English populations employ bilingual technicians to better serve their communities when possible. For refugees and asylum-seeking individuals, finding affordable devices is an added challenge.

Opportunities

- Using the model of tech literacy specialist position for other communities
- Incentivizing ISPs to employ bilingual, and refugee populations to help with workforce and translation services

Veterans

The PPMC hosted two virtual focus groups inviting providers from across Kansas. The results below reflect two individuals' feedback. One serves Veterans in Western Kansas, the other in Wichita.

Highlights

The Veterans Administration provides case managers who help clients get access to the internet in their homes. Medical appointments through the Veterans Administration

are often Telemed, for those who qualify, and have reliable affordable access. In Western Kansas no highlights were noted for Veterans. For clients who live in Wichita, the following provide significant resources for necessities:

- United Methodist Open Door
- Catholic Charities
- Interfaith Ministries

Challenges

Access to employment often relies on online applications; this presents a significant barrier for many Veterans. Some of whom are homeless with no access to technology, and those who lack basic computer literacy. Many in this group are on a limited and fixed income, limiting access and affordability and devices.

In Western Kansas the challenges for Veterans are much greater. The lack of affordable, reliable internet prevents access to medical appointments, jobs, and other basic resources.

Basic computer literacy classes would benefit the older adult Veterans who may not recognize how lack of connectivity affects connectivity to community, as well as basic resources. One participant said, "If they feel like they can learn something productive, it will snowball into something bigger and bigger. Gather resources and facilitate training on basic tech to Veterans."

Survey



A total of 870 survey responses were received during late February to April 2023. After disqualifying responses under 50 percent complete, the PPMC analyzed the 680 remaining responses. Fifty Kansas counties are represented in the data.

Respondents had the option to take the survey online or on paper. The survey was offered in three languages: English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. The overwhelming majority of respondents took the survey in English. For most survey questions, respondents were allowed to select all responses which apply to their particular situation.

Promotions of the survey included videos in Spanish, Vietnamese and ASL, in addition to English. Several distribution methods were used. Focus group participants from across the State were strongly encouraged to take the survey after participating in an event. Links and QR codes to the survey were also distributed via social media, several Kansas association listservs, and the Commerce Community Connection newsletter. [E11]

Survey Findings

Access

Almost all (95 percent) of respondents reported they have access to the internet at work or home.

Respondents who said they had no internet access at work or home were asked why it was not available.

- 80% said there's no service in their area
- 26% said they cannot afford it
- 13% said they are not sure how to use it

- 10% said they do not have equipment

Public Internet Use

Respondents without access at home or work were asked if they can access the internet in a public location. Over half (57 percent) access the internet at a library.

Other public places where respondents access the internet are:

- Work (40%)
- Coffee shop or restaurant (32%)
- School (15%)
- Community center (4%)

Six percent of respondents reported they are housebound with no public access to the internet.

There are challenges to using the internet in a public location. The biggest challenge for respondents is lack of privacy (82 percent). Reliable internet availability (72 percent) is another significant challenge. A quarter (25 percent) of respondents said there are not enough computers. Eleven percent of respondents indicated either they need help once they get on the internet, or they do not always have a ride to the location.

Quality of Life

The majority of respondents agree better access to the internet would improve quality of life. More respondents think better access would improve their community's quality of life (93 percent), compared to their own (89 percent).

Assistance

Many respondents (71 percent) said they have some place to go when they need help using the internet. Retail stores are where most respondents (65 percent) go for help.

Other common places include

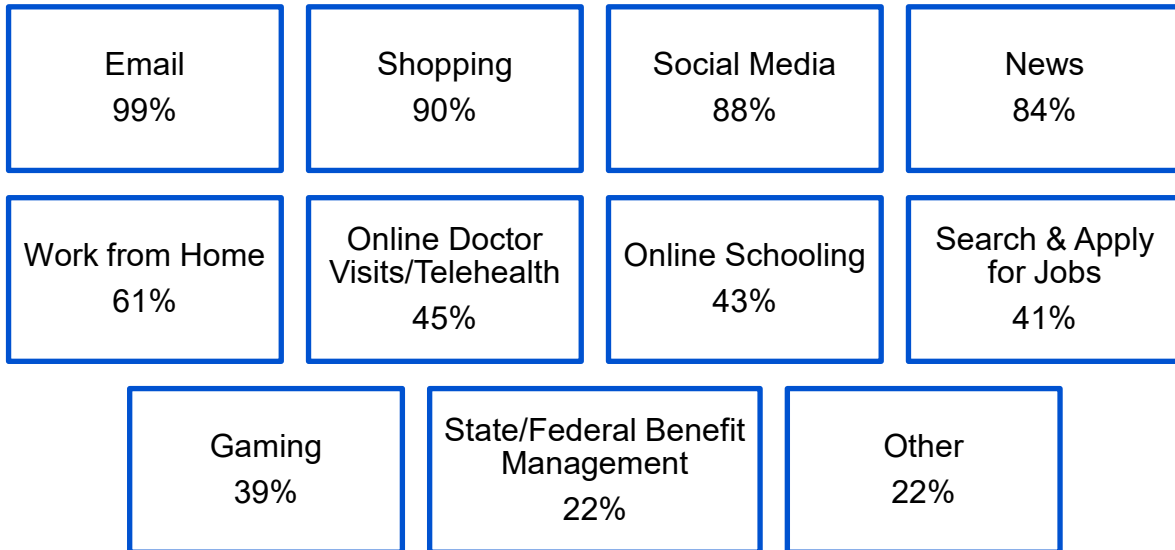
- YouTube or Google (43%)
- Library (2%)

- School (15%)
- Community center (13%)
- Church (8%)
- Friends or family (4%)

About a third (29 percent) of respondents said they have no place to go when they need help.

Internet Use

All respondents were asked about different ways they use the internet.



A large number of respondents indicated “other” uses. When asked to specify, some common responses were:

Streaming
Accessing information
Finding forms and paperwork related to healthcare, taxes, etc.
Attending church
Banking and finance management
Paying bills, fines, etc.
Running a business
Connecting with family and friends
Checking the weather and alerts
Attending school

Most (66 percent) respondents have four or more ways to use the internet. Just over a quarter (27 percent) have two or three ways. Only a few (5 percent) have just one way to use the internet.

Respondents are confident they know how to use the internet and computers. The overwhelming majority agree they know how to use the internet (95 percent) and computers (94 percent).

Time Spent on the Internet

A large majority of respondents (80 percent) said the internet gets used for four or more hours a day at their home or business. Few (15 percent) respondents indicated daily use of two to four hours. Even fewer (5 percent) said zero to two hours.

Service Levels

The most common (29 percent) service level for respondents reported having was between 25 and 100 MBS download/3MBS upload. A quarter of respondents have better than 100 MBS download/3 MBS upload. Fewer (19 percent) have under 25 MBS download, 3 MBS upload. Over a quarter of respondents (27 percent) did not know their service level.

Cost

Most respondents (62 percent) pay between \$50.00 and \$99.99 per month for their internet. Others pay:

21%	\$100.00 - \$149.99
8%	\$0.00 - \$49.99
4%	\$150.00 - \$199.99
1%	\$200.00 - \$249.99
1%	\$250.00+

The median cost for internet service reported was \$101 per month. Respondents who reported an income less than \$20,000 per year reported paying on average \$54 per month for internet access. Those who reported earning between \$20,000 and \$99,000 per year reported paying an average of \$86 per month. Those who reported earning over \$100,000 per year reported paying the most, at an average of \$132 per month.

Training

Respondents were asked whether training could help them use technology better.

Some respondents indicated the training on the following would be helpful:

- Online doctor visits (telehealth) (26%)
- Work from home (19%)
- State or Federal benefit management (18%)
- Social media (16%)

Respondents were also asked about training for shopping, news, online schooling, email, searching & applying for jobs, and gaming. Less than 15 percent of respondents indicated training in these areas would be helpful.

Demographics

Covered Populations

About a third (28 percent) said they did not identify as a covered population. The remaining 72 percent of respondents did:

46%	Aging
42%	Rural Inhabitant
11%	Low-Income Household
9%	Disabled
8%	Veteran
7%	Racial and/or Ethnic Minority
4%	LGBTQI+
3%	English is a Second Language

No respondents identified as incarcerated.

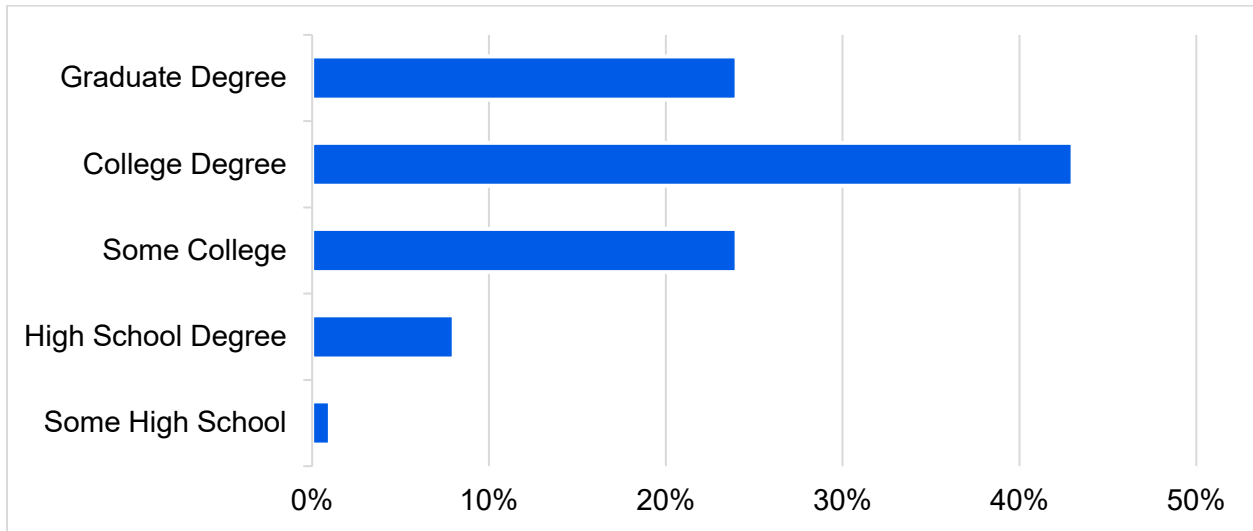
Gender

Most respondents (62 percent) identified as female. Almost all other respondents (35 percent) identified as male. Less than one percent identified as nonbinary. Two percent of respondents preferred not to answer the question.

Education

Less than half of respondents (43 percent) have a college degree. About a quarter of respondents have either completed some college (24 percent) or have a graduate degree (24 percent). Few respondents have a high school degree or less (9 percent).

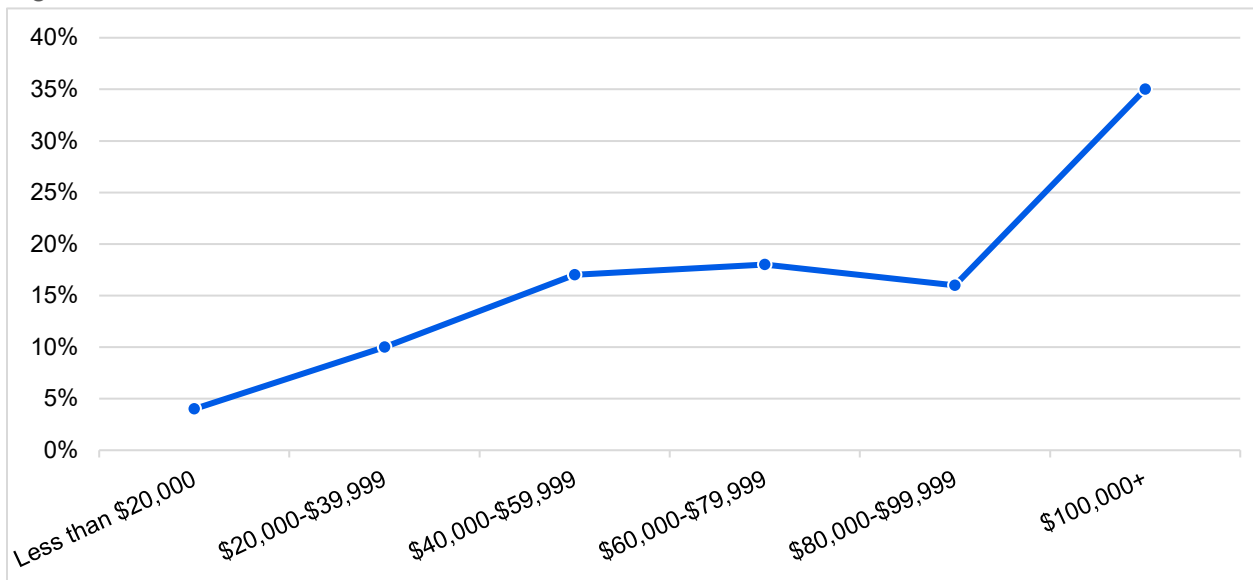
Figure 1: Education Level



Income

Most survey respondents (35 percent) indicated their total household income is more than \$100,000 annually. Taken together, about half of respondent households (51 percent) make between \$40,000 and \$99,999 annually. Fourteen percent of respondent households make \$39,999 or less.

Figure 2: Annual Total Household Income



Location

Respondents were asked to provide their zip code and address. Many (86 percent) provided their zip code. Eighty-three unique zip codes were provided, representing 50 different Kansas counties.

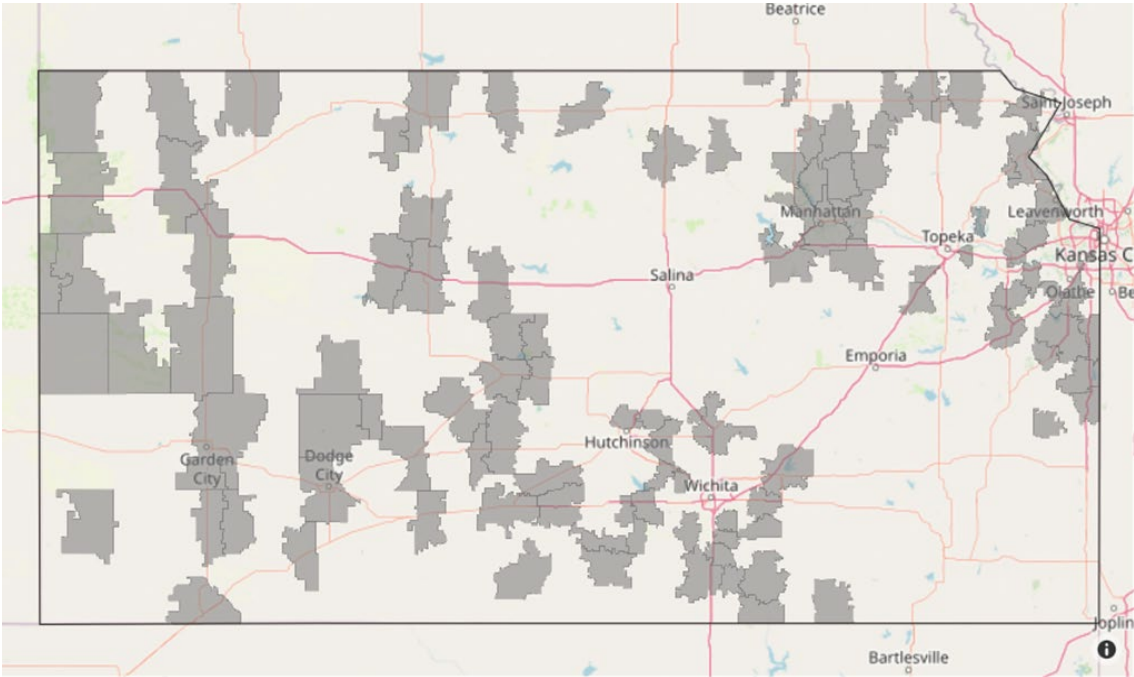
Zip codes with the highest participation included:

- 66502 | Riley County (14 respondents)
- 66701 | Bourbon County (8 respondents)
- 66801 | Lyon County (8 respondents)
- 67901 | Seward County (8 respondents)
- 67801 | Ford County (6 respondents)

Notably, there were no responses recorded in Salina or the greater Southeast Kansas area. Salina was the last roadshow focus group. Survey analysis had already begun, so any responses would not be included in the analysis. The lack of responses in the greater Southeast may be partially attributed to the fact that Emporia was the first focus group of the roadshow and the survey had not yet been opened.

Zip codes with one or more survey response(s) are shaded grey in the map below.

Figure 3: Kansas Zip Codes Represented by Survey Participants [E12]



Recommendations for KOBD

The Kansas Office of Broadband Development can take several recommended steps to improve digital access statewide. Feedback in this section is generated from a focus group question asked to all participants. Below are the specific repeatable recommendations.



Recommendations

1. Fund grants that prioritize underserved communities
 - a. Clarify grant requirements for applicants
 - b. Provide grant writers for underserved communities
 2. Serve as a statewide advocate for rural and underserved areas, promoting their needs and concerns
 - a. Collaboration with the legislature to allow USF to be directed to internet service providers, improving access for rural Kansans; the same approach can be taken for cellular infrastructure
 - b. Eliminate regulations to achieve greater good
 3. Community Education
 - a. Provide training for individuals and organizations
 - b. Provide tech training for library staff
 4. Continue planned buildouts-outs
- Infrastructure Development
- a. Prioritize fiber and collaborate with cell carriers for increased impact
 - b. Implement last-acre and door-to-door fiber
5. Enhance marketing and continue robust outreach to engage all voices
 6. Establish a poll sharing policy
 7. Support small ISPs that don't have the cash flow for large capital investment
 8. Prioritize serving rural areas first
 9. Cull ISP providers together by region

10. Use shovel-ready programs like KC Digital Drive and MARC
Streamline ACP process
11. Expedite agreement with KS DCF to quickly enroll families who already qualify
for assistance

Conclusion

This project included important takeaways. Residents of Kansas are passionate and willing to engage. The need for increased fiber infrastructure across the State is great. Digital literacy and access to devices, though important, needs to come after important infrastructure is built. This project built trust with the Kansas Office of Broadband Development and community influencers from every region. The opportunity to build on this trust through continued communication and progress with communities and stakeholders will be the key to success.

Appendix

Roadshow Focus Group includes 6 questions.

At each KOBD Roadshow location (26 total cities) the PPMC asked the listening audience the same six focus group questions listed below:

1. This topic can be confusing. When we say digital access, what does that mean to you?
2. Tell us about a time when you or your community were impacted because they were unable to access the internet or devices or did not know how to use them.
 - a. Who is most impacted in your opinion?
 - b. What is the current loss to your community?
3. Tell us about what is going well for digital access in our community. What are resources, assets or knowledge that we can build upon?
4. What would be the benefits to your community if everyone had access to the internet and devices and knew how to use them? In your view, what would it look like for these problems to be solved?
5. How can KOBD help?
6. Is there any other feedback you would like to provide at this time?

Covered Population Focus Group Questions

The PPMC conducted seven Virtual Focus Groups/Listening Sessions over Zoom and asked the same group of questions listed below to representatives serving covered populations:

1. Is using a computer new to your clients? What help or services are provided?
2. Do your clients have broadband connection at home? Where do they go, if not? If those places are not open- where else?
3. Many people experienced issues with broadband connection during the height of Covid closures. What was that like for those you serve?

Are their resources you have found to make the cost of an internet connection more affordable? Or programs that help with purchasing a computer?

4. What programs do your clients depend on for support (food bank, nonprofits, churches, etc.)? Do these organizations have resources for you to use for computer training or broadband affordability?
5. Is there any other feedback you would like to provide at this time?

Digital Inclusion Assets in Kansas

Prepared for the Kansas Office of Broadband Development
May 2023

Institute for Policy & Social Research
The University of Kansas

Report by:
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The Institute for Policy & Social Research at the University of Kansas partnered with the Kansas Office of Broadband Development and Solarity to survey the Kansas digital landscape and assess available resources that promote internet access and equity.

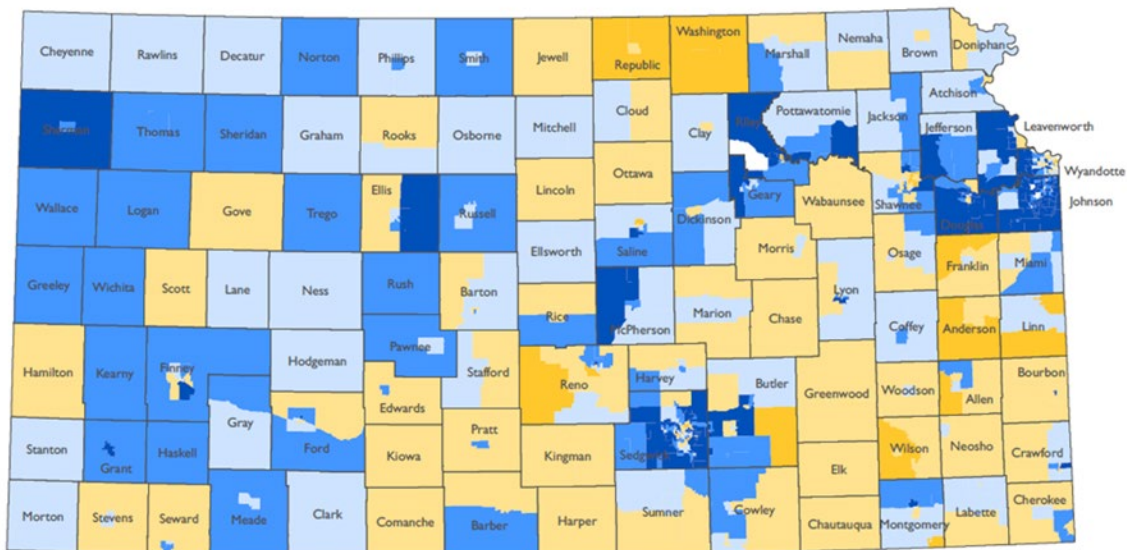
Internet availability and access has become a pressing issue for researchers and policy makers in Kansas and the United States as a whole. Current initiatives in Kansas include the Broadband Acceleration Grant Program administered by the Kansas Office of Broadband Development, which awards funding to internet providers in targeted areas for infrastructure development. Researchers have been assessing the role of organizations such as libraries and nonprofits in promoting digital access and literacy among underserved populations. In the Kansas City area, Mid-America Regional Council has compiled an in-depth catalog of regional digital access organizations as part of their 2023 *Kansas City Regional Digital Equity Action Plan*.

This report outlines the main findings of the Kansas Digital Inclusion Asset Mapping Survey and discusses policy recommendations based on these insights. This report will first examine public data to assess the need for digital equity infrastructure and contextualize our data. Then, we will present the main takeaways from our survey. Finally, we will discuss conclusions and policy recommendations based on our survey and additional data.

Barriers to Access

Although a majority of households in Kansas have broadband internet subscriptions, Census Bureau data show geographic disparities in the share of households with connections at the

Percent of Households with Broadband in Kansas, by Census Tract, 2017-21



Source: Institute for Policy & Social Research, The University of Kansas; data from U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 American Community Survey.

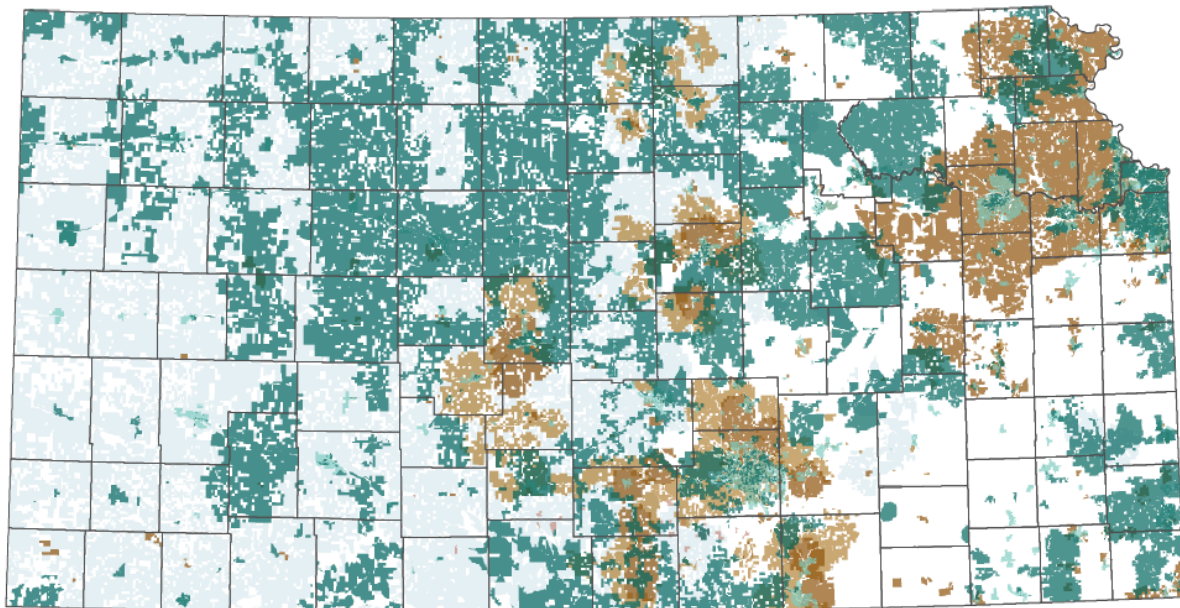
Map 1- Percent of Households with Broadband in Kansas, by Census Tract, 2017-21

Census tract level (Map 1, Percent of Households with Broadband in Kansas, by Census Tract, 2017-21, above). Areas with relatively low rates of home broadband connections occur in both rural and urban areas around the state. This means that policy makers and organizations promoting digital access must address diverse barriers to internet access.

Availability of Services

Households may lack a broadband connection for various reasons. In some parts of Kansas, there are simply no providers that offer broadband internet. Map 2 (Broadband Availability in Kansas, 2022, below) shows the types of services available across the state at speeds of 100 Megabits per second (Mbps) download and 20 Mbps upload by connection technology according to the Federal Communications Commission as of June 30, 2022. This 100/20 speed benchmark was established by the Kansas Office of Broadband in 2023 as the minimum to be considered a *broadband* internet connection. Note that large portions of Southeast Kansas and parts of the Flint Hills lack a single provider offering broadband speed internet and residents in a large part of western Kansas rely on satellite providers for internet access.

Broadband Availability in Kansas, 2022



Source: Institute for Policy & Social Research, The University of Kansas; data from Federal Communications Commission.

Providers reporting 100/20 Mbps or faster service as of June 30, 2022.

Technology Type

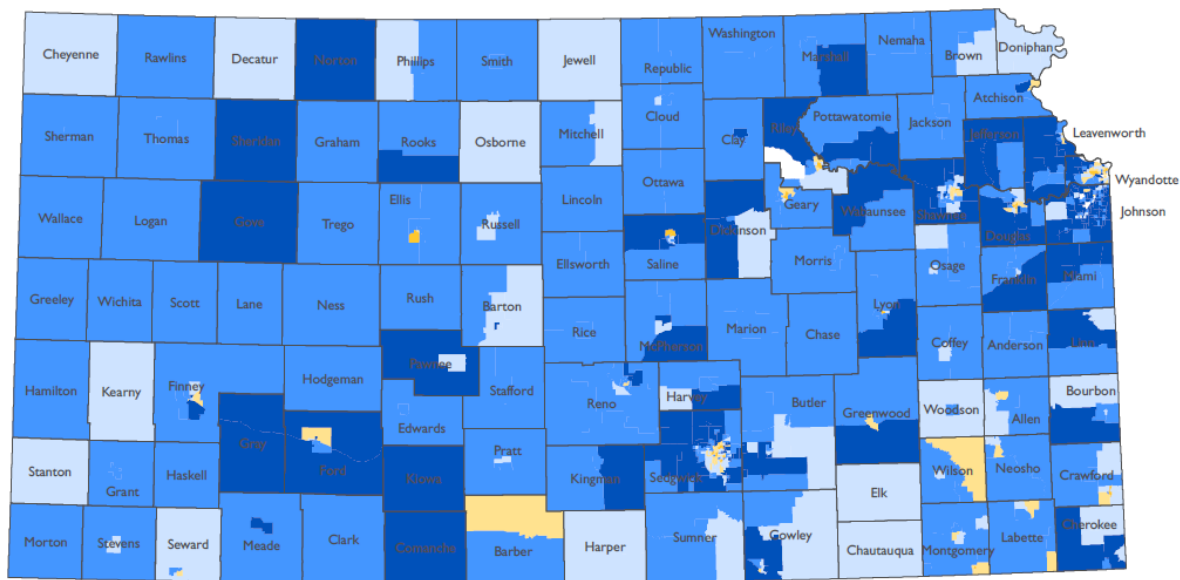
- Optical Carrier/Fiber
- Coaxial Cable
- Licensed Terrestrial Fixed Wireless
- Unlicensed Terrestrial Fixed Wireless
- Copper Wire
- Non-geostationary Satellite

Map 2 - Broadband Availability in Kansas, 2022

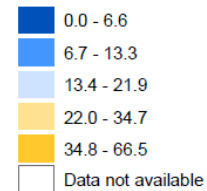
Affordability

The affordability of internet services is another potential barrier to digital inclusion. Map 3 (Percent of People in Poverty in Kansas by Census Tract, 2017-21, below) shows the percentage of people living in poverty by Census tract in Kansas. Several of the urban Census tracts with low broadband subscription rates highlighted in Map 1 also have higher-than-average poverty rates. This is true of parts of the Topeka, Kansas City, Lawrence, and Wichita metropolitan statistical areas. Given the cost of internet connectivity, resources to support these populations are of particular concern.

Percent of People in Poverty in Kansas, by Census Tract, 2017-21



Source: Institute for Policy & Social Research, The University of Kansas; data from U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 American Community Survey.

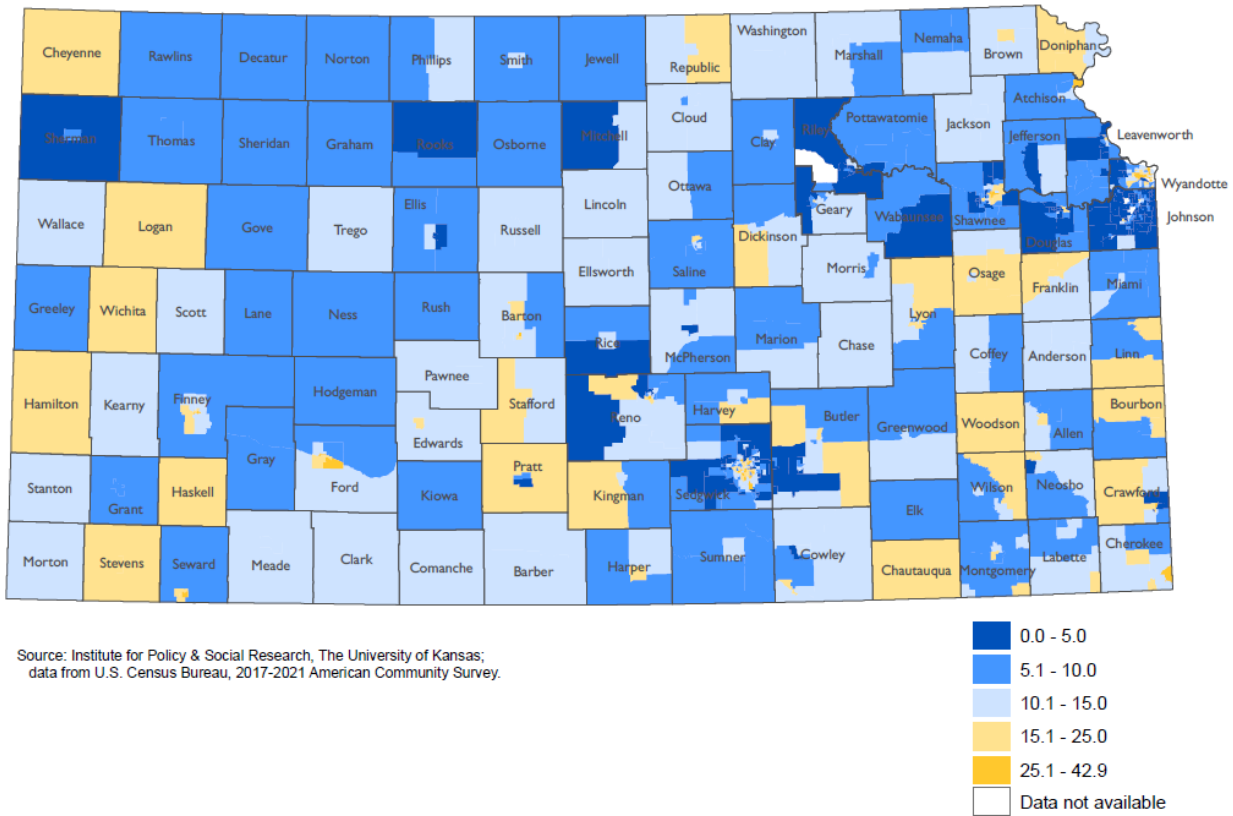


Map 3 - Percent of People in Poverty in Kansas, by Census Tract, 2017-21

Digital Devices and Access

Some households rely entirely on cell phones to access the internet. Map 4 (Percent of Households with Smartphone Only Internet Access in Kansas, by Census Tract, 2017-21, below) illustrates the share of households that rely on smartphone connections. Cellular connections are typically slower and less reliable than home Wi-Fi (see *Broadband in Kansas* in Additional

Percent of Households with Smartphone Only Internet Access in Kansas, by Census Tract, 2017-21



Map 4 - Percent of Households with Smartphone Only Internet Access in Kansas, by Census Tract, 2017-21

Resources), and smartphones are less efficient at accessing the internet than home computers. These households may rely on smartphone connections because other services and/or devices are not available or financially feasible. These households may also rely on cellular because of individual household priorities regarding internet availability and use.

The Kansas Digital Inclusion Asset Mapping Survey

The goal of this survey was inventory the Kansas digital inclusion landscape. The survey instrument was adapted from a template offered by the National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA) and collected information from 55 organizations with digital inclusion efforts in Kansas.

Survey Respondents

Libraries were by far the largest group of respondents to the survey, followed by internet service providers and national nonprofits (Figure 1, Respondents by Type of Organization, below).

Our survey reached respondents in several rural and micropolitan areas of the state, as well as in Topeka, Kansas City, and Wichita (Map 5, below). We received no responses from organizations in the twelve counties that make up the Southeast Kansas region. The previously mentioned Mid-America Regional Council report focused on the counties that make up the

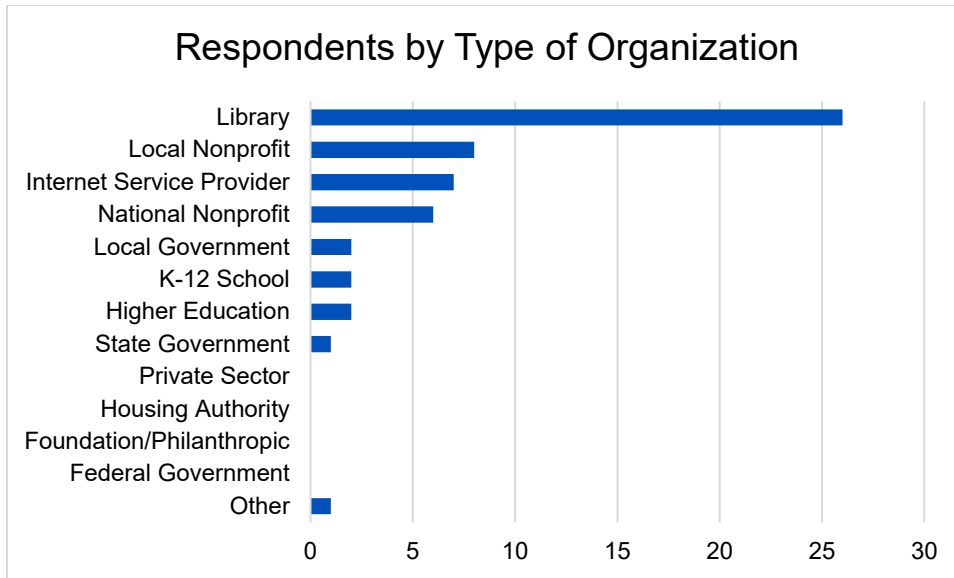
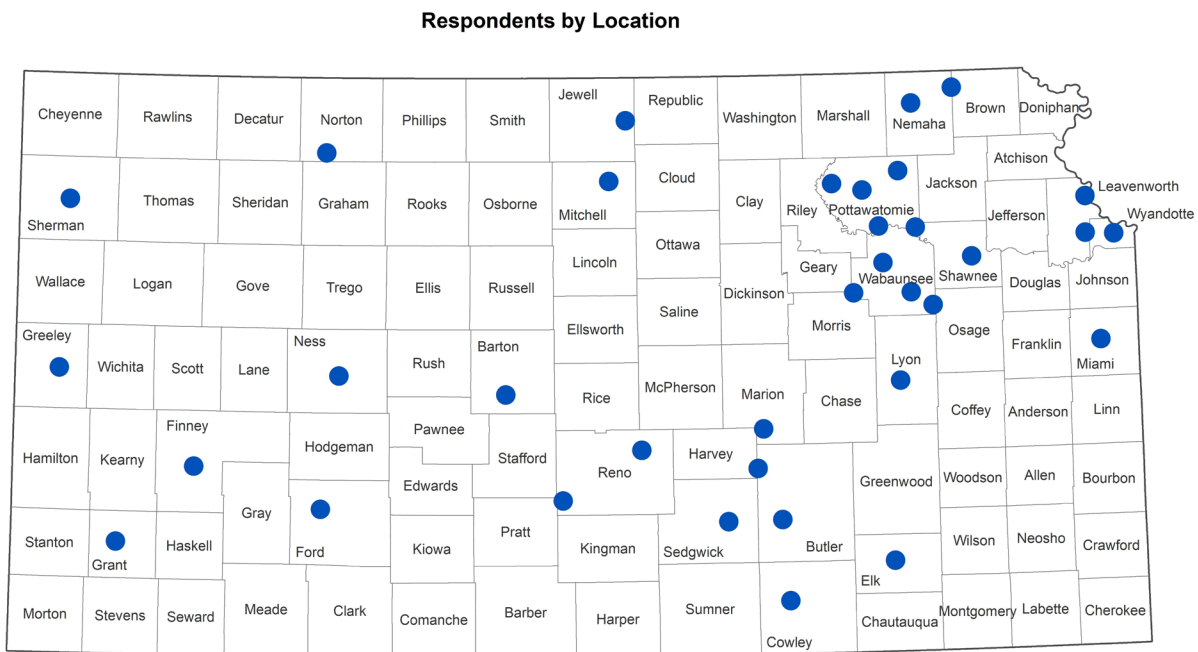


Figure 1 - Respondents by Type of Organization

Kansas City Metropolitan Area and compiled a more exhaustive inventory of digital access organizations serving the metro area.



Not shown are respondents in Kansas City, MO and Charlotte, NC that provide services in Kansas.

Map 5 - Respondents by Location

Service Availability

We asked respondents about the times and days of the week that services are typically available. Three organizations indicated services were available 24/7. Of the survey respondents that gave specific hours of operation, the most common time of the week available for service was noon-5pm on Wednesdays (Figure 2, Hours of Operation for Survey Respondents). Organizations surveyed were least likely to be open on Sundays, and were generally available during the regular 8-5pm work day. Notably, some organizations listed hours after 5 pm on weekdays, which may be helpful for recipients who work or have other obligations during the day.

Hours of Operation for Survey Respondents

		Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
One or more hours within:	8AM -Noon	1	38	37	39	34	40	16
	Noon - 5PM	5	41	40	43	37	39	13
	After 5PM	1	19	15	21	16	8	3

Figure 2 - Hours of Operation for Survey Respondents

Target Populations Served

Our survey also asked organizations about the populations they target for internet accessibility. Their responses are shown in Figure 3 (Target Populations Served, below). Note that respondents could select more than one target population.

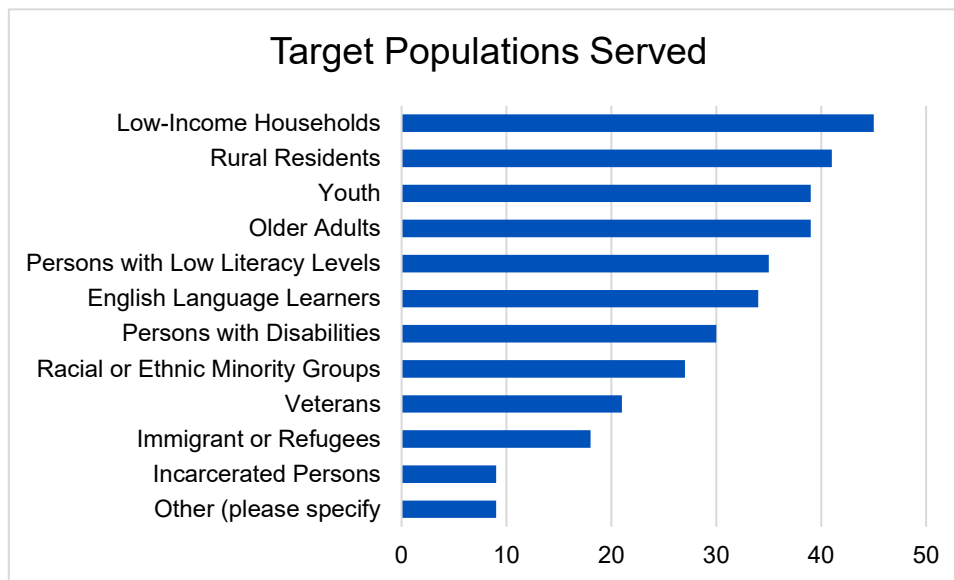


Figure 3 - Target Populations Served

Low-income households were the most commonly identified target population, followed by rural residents. These initiatives correspond with groups identified in the ACS data mentioned earlier in this report. Other target populations include youth, older adults, persons with low literacy levels, English language learners and persons with disabilities. We also asked respondents about services in languages other than English (not shown in figures). Twenty respondents indicated they provide Spanish language services, one provides American Sign Language, one provides services in 47 different languages, and one can provide services in 50 languages with two days’ notice.

Services Provided

Services provided by respondents are shown in Figure 4 (Digital Inclusion Services Provided by Respondents, below). Note that respondents could select multiple services.

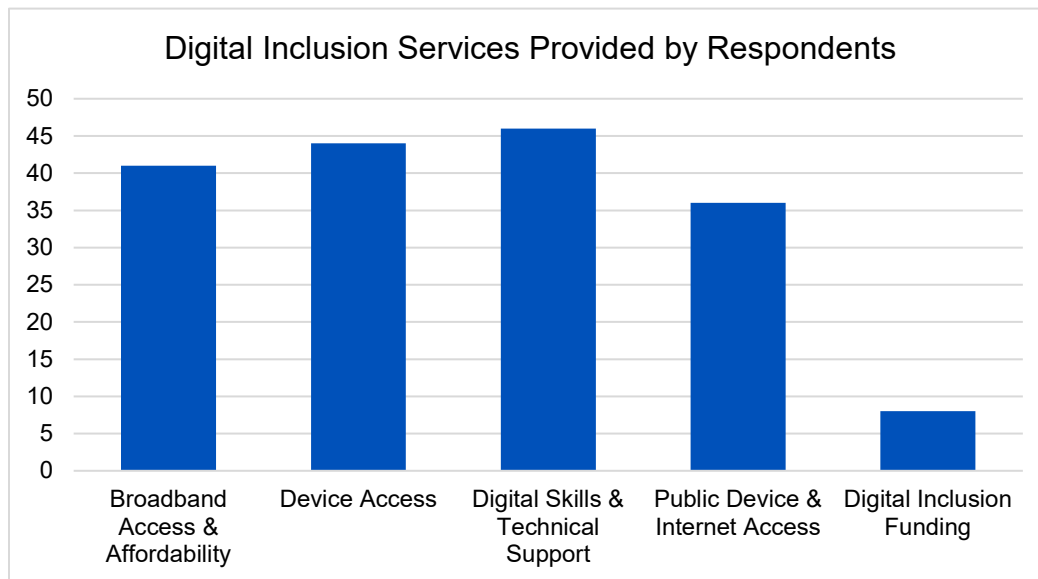


Figure 4 - Digital Inclusion Services Provided by Respondents

The most common digital inclusion service provided among our respondents was digital skills and technical support with 46 respondents, closely followed by device access with 44 respondents. Other services provided include broadband access and affordability, public device and internet access, and digital inclusion funding.

Forty-one organizations indicated they provide access to the internet or assist Kansans with the cost of accessing the internet. Nearly half provide broadband service via fiber and roughly one-third provide mobile wireless.

We asked the respondents who provide device access what types of devices they offer. The most common responses were laptops, followed by desktops and tablets (Figure 5, Types of Devices Offered, below). Most frequently these are new devices though some organizations reported providing refurbished equipment.

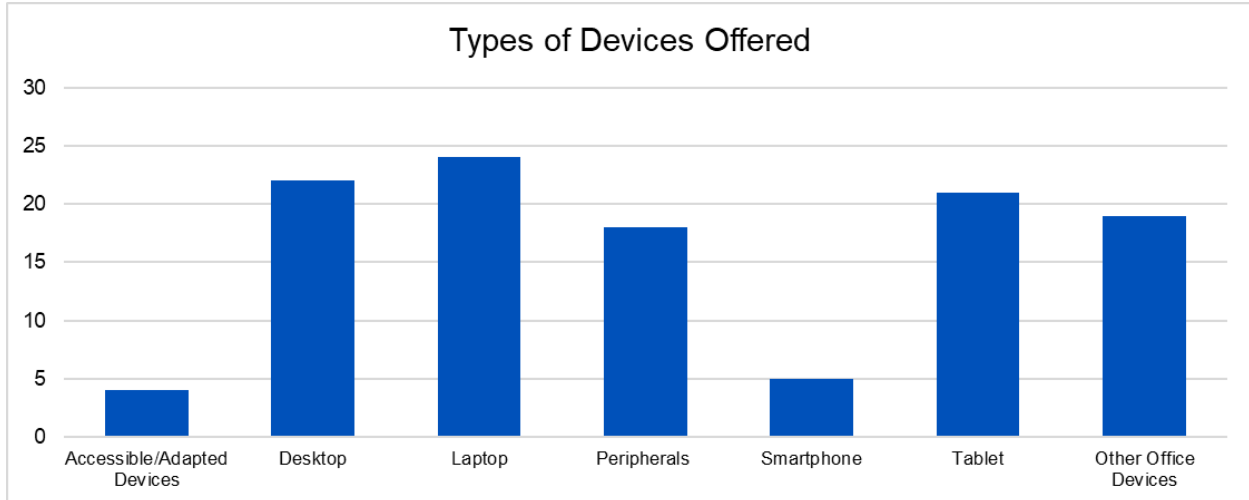


Figure 5 - Types of Devices Offered

Of the forty-six organizations providing digital skills and technical support, the majority indicated they offered services on a one-on-one basis and in-person (Figure 6, Format of Training/Support Offered and Interaction Method of Training/Support Offered, below). When asked about the instruction type, twenty-seven organizations reported offering digital skills using paid instructors. Often this instruction is offered at no cost.



Figure 6 - Format of Training/Support Offered and Interaction Method of Training/Support Offered

When asked about the types of digital skills, organizations frequently reported offering training in key software packages such as Microsoft Office products and Google Drive (Figure 7, Digital Skills Offerings, below).



Figure 7 - Digital Skills Offerings

Organizations with the critical role of providing technical support often reported offering support with computer operations, key software, and connecting virtually using video calls or chats (Figure 8, Technical Support Services Offered, below).

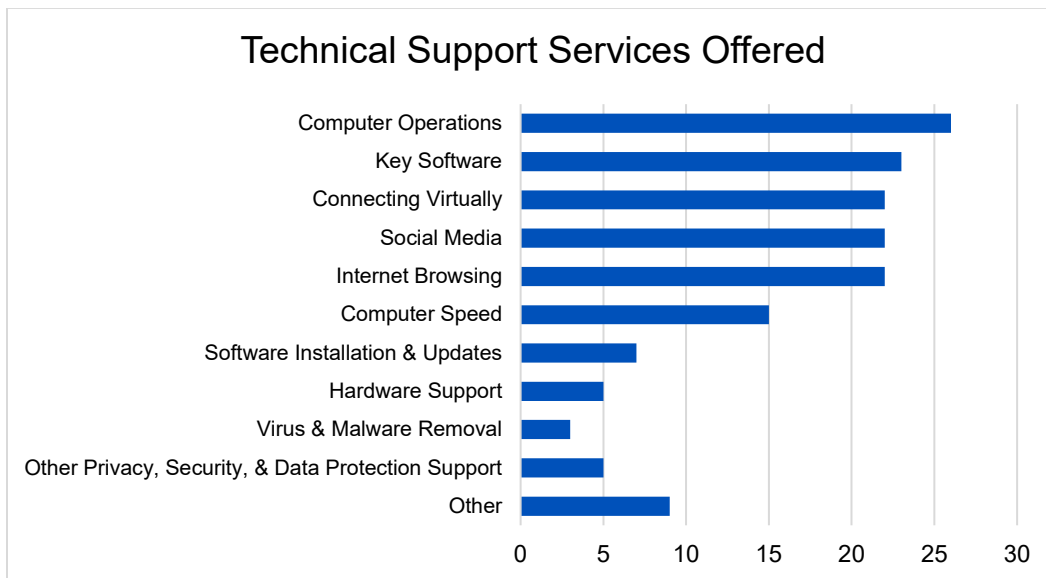


Figure 8 - Technical Support Services Offered

Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

Further investigation is needed: A coordinated approach to digital asset mapping, with clear communication between investigators and state agencies, as well as a publicly accessible inventory tool for crowd sourcing asset mapping, would better inform policy makers and the public about Kansas’ digital inclusion assets.

Digital access organizations are an important resource: the organizations we surveyed provide a variety of needed services to underserved populations. We found organizations in areas of the state with significant barriers to internet access providing key services such as technical support and device access. These initiatives address the challenges many Kansans face.

Internet use should not be a mandatory aspect of government and community participation: although we identified a variety of organizations that provide digital access services, there are still significant barriers to digital access. Furthermore, our investigation suggests that some Kansans do not want to spend the time and money necessary for digital participation. Policy makers at all levels should be careful not to make non-digital engagement more costly to residents in terms of money, time, or travel.

Additional Resources:

The Kansas Office of Broadband Development:

<https://www.kansascommerce.gov/officeofbroadbanddevelopment/>

Mid-America Regional Council. 2023. *Kansas City Regional Digital Equity Action Plan*. Available from: <https://www.marc.org/economy/broadband-and-digital-equity>

Ginther, Donna K., Germaine Halegoua, Xan Wedel, Thomas Becker, Genna Hurd, and Walter Goettlich. 2023. *Broadband in Kansas: The Challenges of Digital Access and Affordability*. The University of Kansas: Institute for Policy & Social Research. Available from:

<https://kuscholarworks.ku.edu/handle/1808/34031>

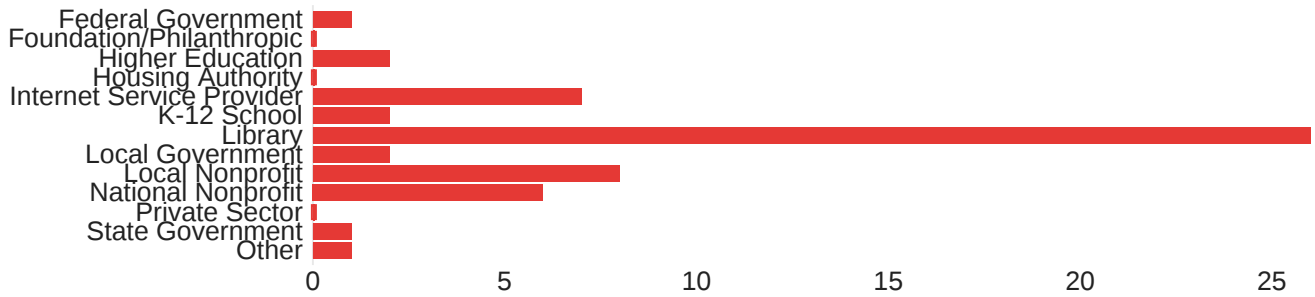
National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA), Asset Mapping for Digital Inclusion:

<https://www.digitalinclusion.org/asset-mapping/>

Q1 - Organization Name * Name of the organization offering digital inclusion services.

Q2 - Program Name Name of the program offering digital inclusion services.

Q3 - Organization Type * Broad sector or purpose that best describes the organization.



Field	Min	Max	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance	Responses
Organization Type * Broad sector or purpose that best describes the organization.	1	13	7	2	4	56

Field	Choice Count
Federal Government	1
Foundation/Philanthropic	0
Higher Education	2
Housing Authority	0
Internet Service Provider	7
K-12 School	2
Library	26
Local Government	2
Local Nonprofit	8
National Nonprofit	6
Private Sector	0
State Government	1
Other	1
Total	56

Q4 - NAICS Code (optional) North American Industry Classification System code for your organization. A searchable list of NAICS codes can be found here: <https://www.census.gov/naics/?58967?yearbck=2022>

Q5 - SIC Code (optional) Standard Industrial Classification system code for your organization. A searchable list of SIC codes can be found here: <https://www.osha.gov/data/sic-manual>

Q6 - Website Website address for the organization/program.

Q7 - Street Address Address number and street name of the organization/program.

Q8 - Address 2 Additional address information such as apartment, suite, or unit number.

Q9 - City City in which the organization/program is located.

Q11 - Zip Code USPS zip code for the organization/program.

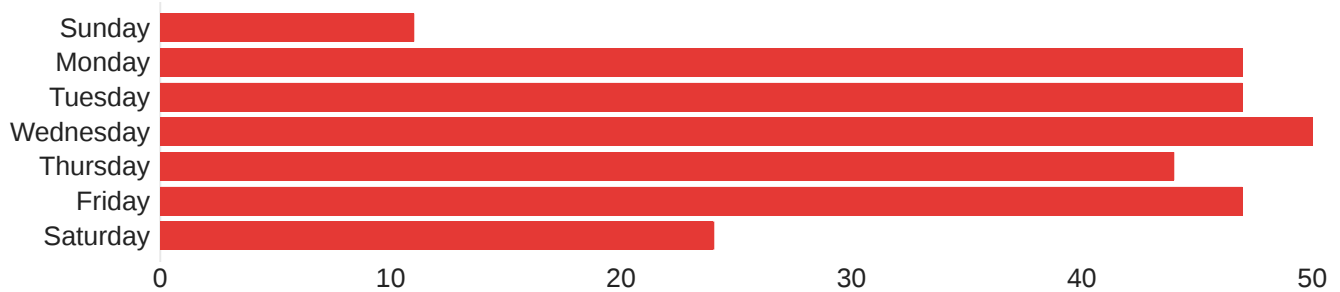
Q12 - Geographic Service Area Name of the area served by the organization/program.

Q13 - Contact Name Name of the primary contact person for the digital inclusion services provided by the organization/program.

Q14 - Contact Email Email address for the primary contact person.

Q15 - Contact Phone Telephone number for the primary contact person.

Q16 - Days of Operation Days of the week that the organization/program is open to the public (check all that apply).

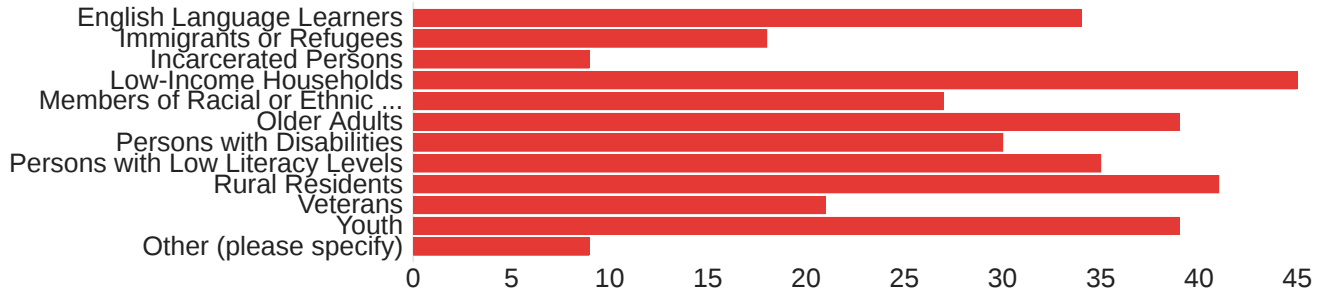


Field	Choice Count
Sunday	11
Monday	47
Tuesday	47
Wednesday	50
Thursday	44
Friday	47
Saturday	24
Total	270

Q17 - Hours of Operation Hours of the day that the organization/program is open to the public.

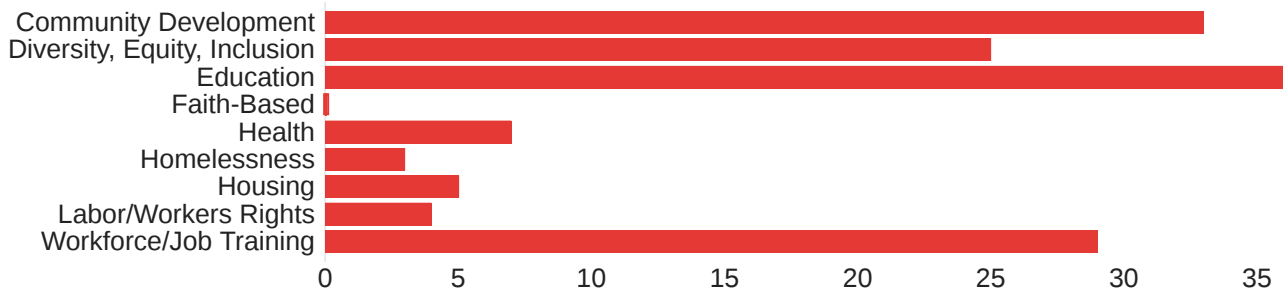
Q18 - Languages Supported (Other than English) Languages in which digital inclusion services are offered by the organization/program.

Q19 - Target Population(s) Historically underserved groups toward whom the organization/program focuses its digital inclusion services (check all that apply).



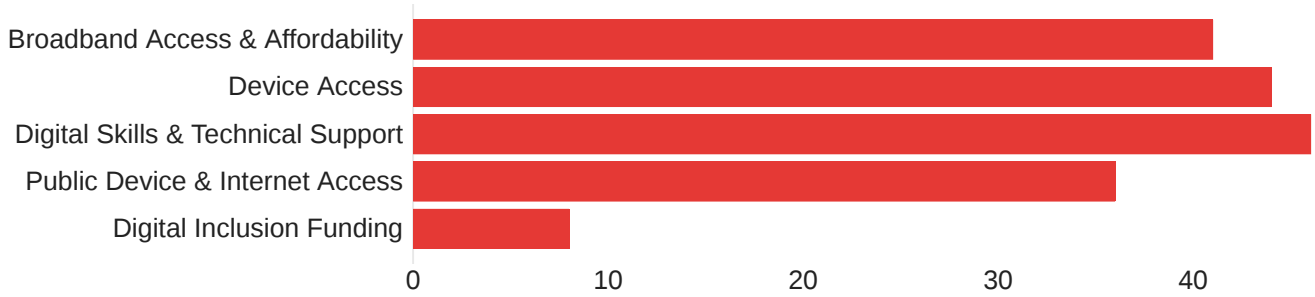
Field	Choice Count
English Language Learners	34
Immigrants or Refugees	18
Incarcerated Persons	9
Low-Income Households	45
Members of Racial or Ethnic Minority Groups	27
Older Adults	39
Persons with Disabilities	30
Persons with Low Literacy Levels	35
Rural Residents	41
Veterans	21
Youth	39
Other (please specify)	9
Total	347

Q20 - Issue Focus Primary issue focus, if any, of the organization's work (check all that apply).



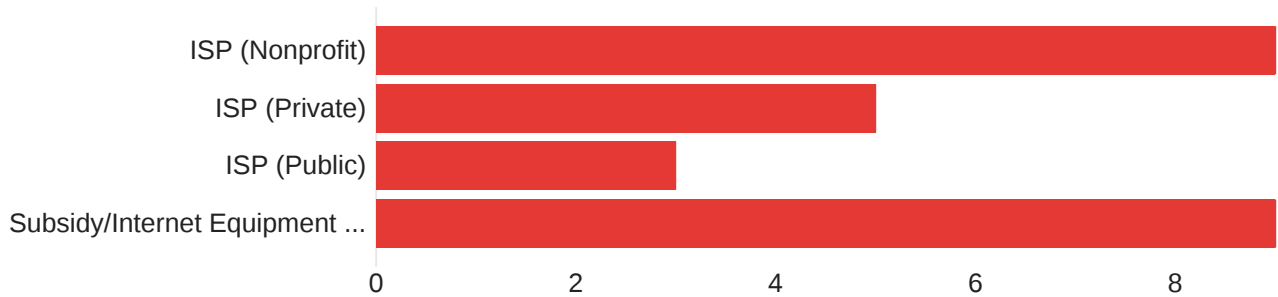
Field	Choice Count
Community Development	33
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion	25
Education	37
Faith-Based	0
Health	7
Homelessness	3
Housing	5
Labor/Workers Rights	4
Workforce/Job Training	29
Total	143

Q21 - Digital Inclusion Needs Category * Categories of digital inclusion services for which the organization/program delivers services (check all that apply).



Field	Choice Count
Broadband Access & Affordability	41
Device Access	44
Digital Skills & Technical Support	46
Public Device & Internet Access	36
Digital Inclusion Funding	8
Total	175

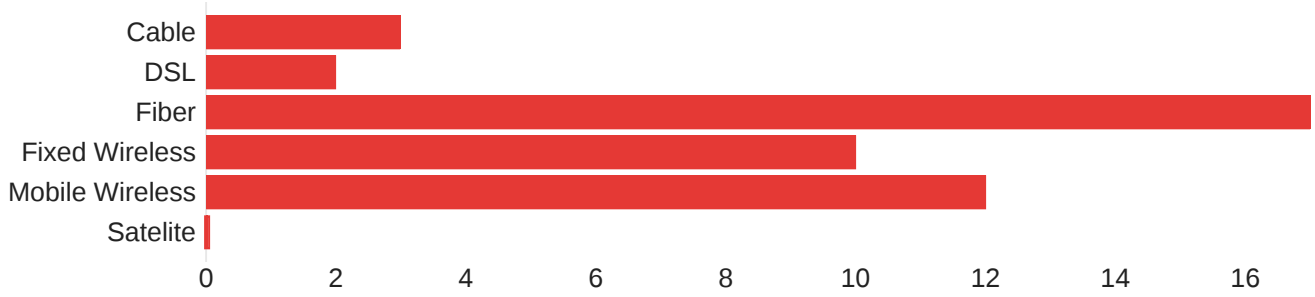
Q22 - Organization Sub-Type More specific description of the organization providing broadband access & affordability.



Field	Min	Max	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance	Responses
Organization Sub-Type More specific description of the organization providing broadband access & affordability.	1	4	2	1	2	26

Field	Choice Count
ISP (Nonprofit)	9
ISP (Private)	5
ISP (Public)	3
Subsidy/Internet Equipment Provider	9
Total	26

Q23 - Service Type Type(s) of broadband service (i.e., technology) offered by the organization/program (check all that apply).



Field	Choice Count
Cable	3
DSL	2
Fiber	17
Fixed Wireless	10
Mobile Wireless	12
Satellite	0
Total	44

Q24 - Coverage Area Geographic are served by the broadband service or subsidy.

Q25 - Min Speed (Down/Up) Minimum bandwidth in Mbps (download and upload) available through the broadband service or subsidy.

Q26 - Max Speed (Down/Up) Maximum bandwidth in Mbps (download and upload) available through the broadband service or subsidy.

Q27 - Cost Cost, if any, for the broadband services offered by the organization/program.

Q28 - Discount Service Offering? Indicates whether or not discounted or subsidized broadband service is offered by the organization/program.



Field	Min	Max	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance	Responses
Discount Service Offering? Indicates whether or not discounted or subsidized broadband service is offered by the organization/program.	1	2	1	0	0	24

Field	Choice Count
Yes	18
No	6
Total	24

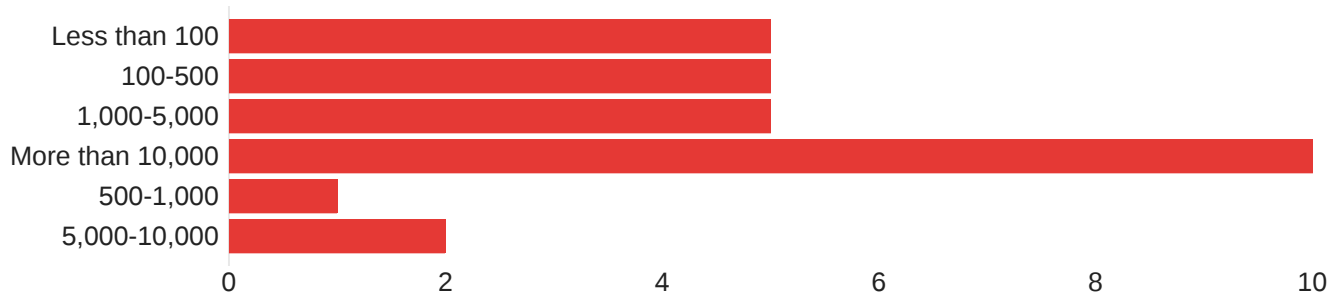
Q29 - Discount Offer Cost/Subsidy Amount Cost, if any, of the discount broadband service or amount of the subsidy available through the organization/program.

Q30 - Discount Offer Speed (Down/Up) Bandwidth in Mbps (download and upload) available through the broadband service or subsidy.

Q31 - Eligibility Criteria for Discount Offering or Subsidy Criteria used to determine who qualifies to participate in the discount offer or subsidy program.

Q32 - Eligible Providers (For Subsidy Programs) Some subsidy programs are limited to specific providers. If a subsidy is open to specific providers, they should be listed here.

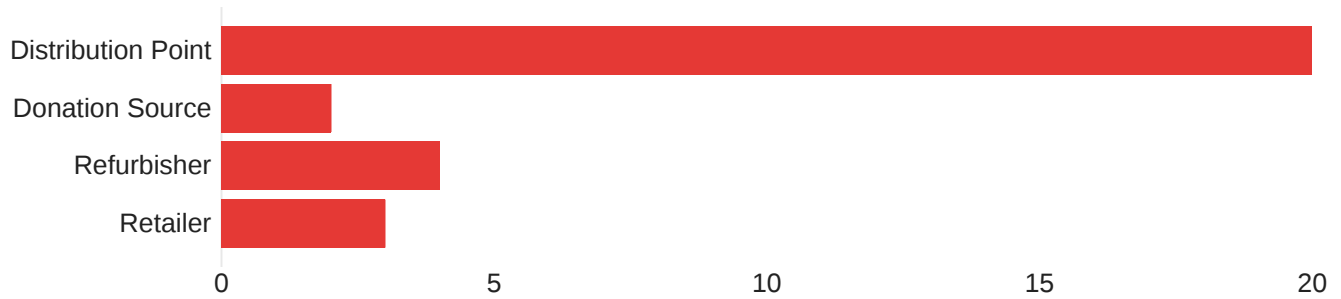
Q33 - Number of Customers/Recipients Last Year General measure of the scale of the organization/program based on the number of customers of recipients served with broadband access & affordability services in the last year.



Field	Min	Max	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance	Responses
Number of Customers/Recipients Last Year General measure of the scale of the organization/program based on the number of customers of recipients served with broadband access & affordability services in the last year.	1	8	3	2	4	28

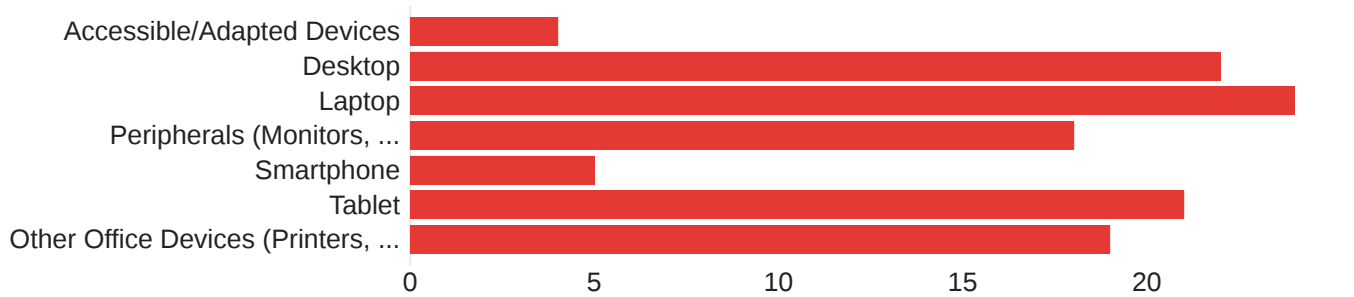
Field	Choice Count
Less than 100	5
100-500	5
1,000-5,000	5
More than 10,000	10
500-1,000	1
5,000-10,000	2
Total	28

Q34 - Organization Sub-Type More specific description of the organization providing device access services (check all that apply).



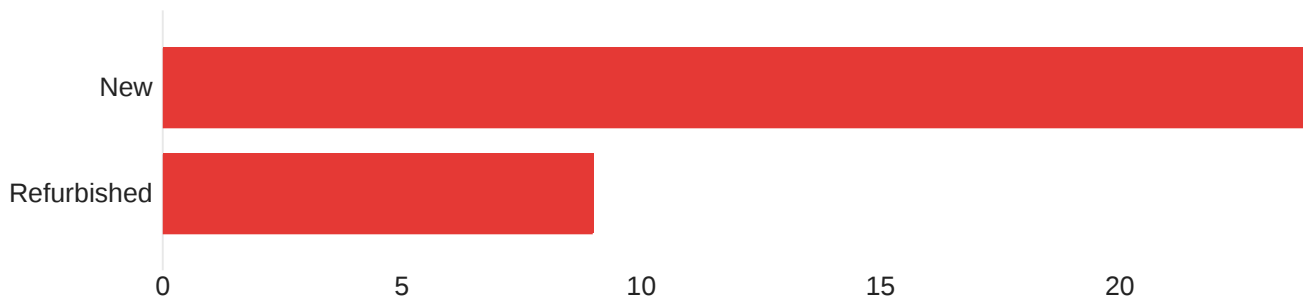
Field	Choice Count
Distribution Point	20
Donation Source	2
Refurbisher	4
Retailer	3
Total	29

Q35 - Device Types Types of digital devices available to users through the organization/program (check all that apply).



Field	Choice Count
Accessible/Adapted Devices	4
Desktop	22
Laptop	24
Peripherals (Monitors, Keyboards, Mice, Webcams, etc.)	18
Smartphone	5
Tablet	21
Other Office Devices (Printers, Scanners, etc.)	19
Total	113

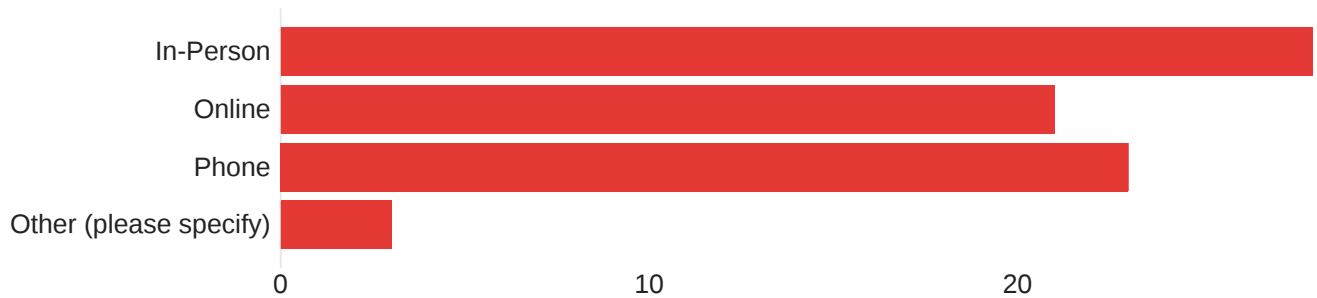
Q36 - Condition Indicates whether the organization/program provides new digital devices, refurbished devices, or both (check all that apply).



Field	Choice Count
New	24
Refurbished	9
Total	33

Q37 - Cost Cost, if any, of the digital devices offered by the organization/program.

Q38 - Interaction Method Ways in which customers can connect with the organization/program offering devices (check all that apply).

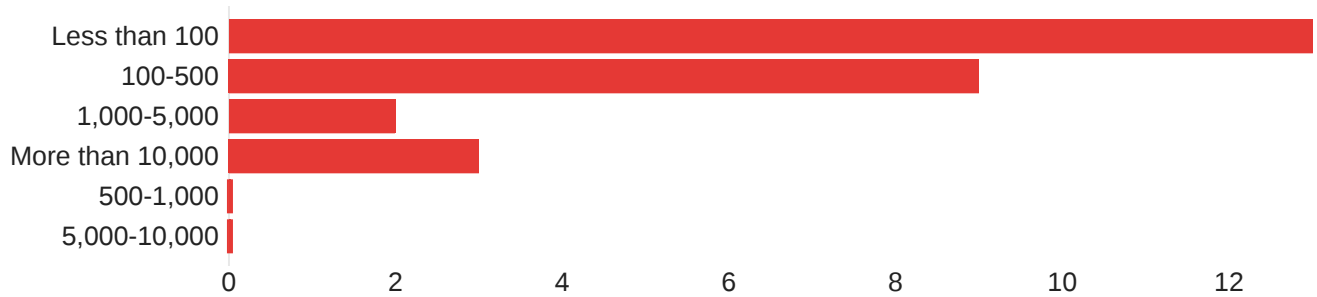


Field	Choice Count
In-Person	28
Online	21
Phone	23
Other (please specify)	3
Total	75

Q39 - Eligibility Criteria Criteria used to determine who qualifies to purchase or receive a device through the organization/program.

Q40 - Existing Device Donation Partners Established partners with which the the organization/program works to source or provide devices.

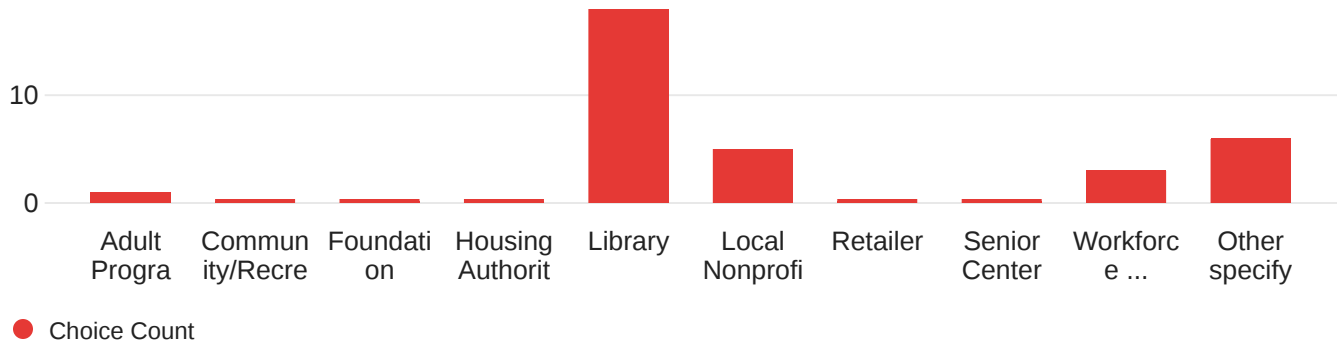
Q41 - Number of Devices Provided General measure of the scale of the organization/program based on the number of devices provided in the last year.



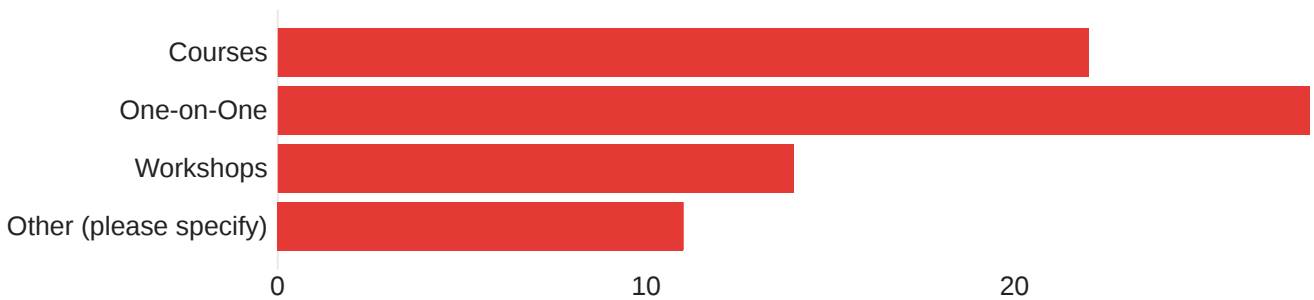
Field	Min	Max	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance	Responses
Number of Devices Provided General measure of the scale of the organization/program based on the number of devices provided in the last year.	1	4	2	1	1	27

Field	Choice Count
Less than 100	13
100-500	9
1,000-5,000	2
More than 10,000	3
500-1,000	0
5,000-10,000	0
Total	27

Q42 - Organization Sub-Type More specific description of the organization providing digital skills and technical support services.

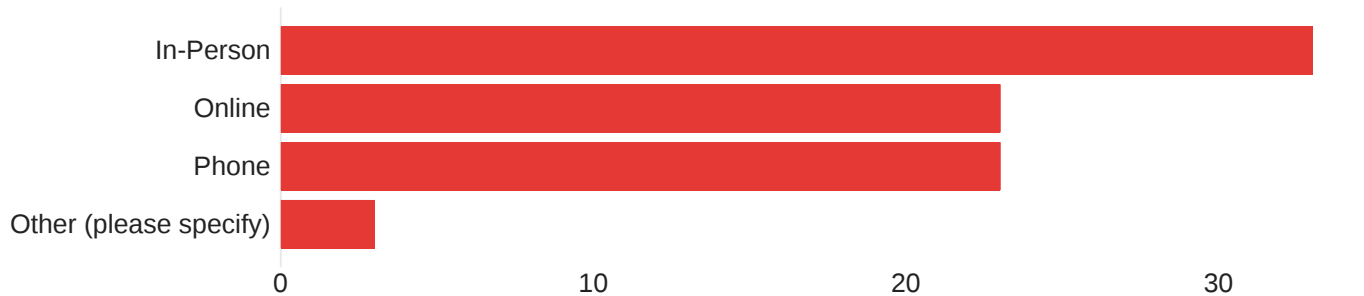


Q43 - Training/Support Format Delivery format for the digital skills training or technical support that is offered by the organization/program (check all that apply).



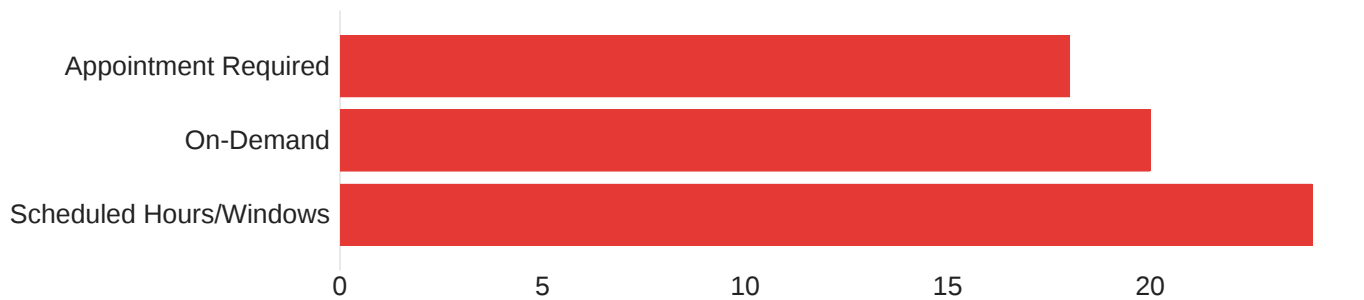
Field	Choice Count
Courses	22
One-on-One	28
Workshops	14
Other (please specify)	11
Total	75

Q44 - Interaction Method Ways in which customers can connect with the organization/program offering digital skills or technical support services (check all that apply).



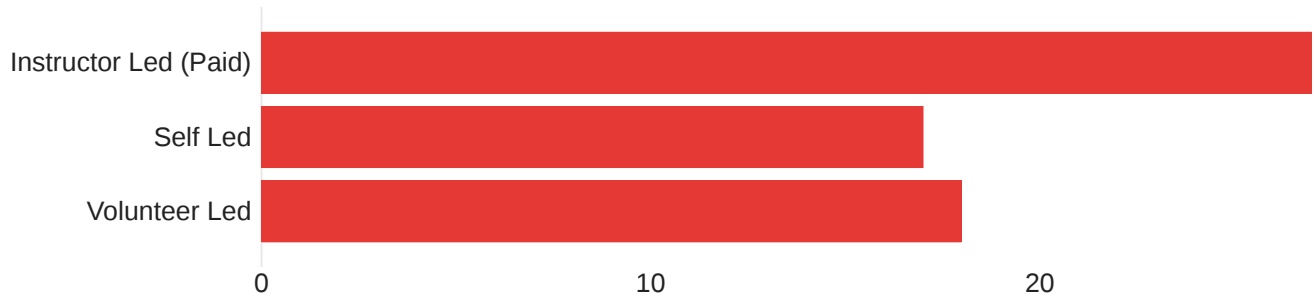
Field	Choice Count
In-Person	33
Online	23
Phone	23
Other (please specify)	3
Total	82

Q45 - Availability Indicator of how readily available the digital skill or technical support services are (check all that apply).



Field	Choice Count
Appointment Required	18
On-Demand	20
Scheduled Hours/Windows	24
Total	62

Q46 - Instruction Type Person responsible for leading or delivering the digital skills or technical support services (check all that apply).

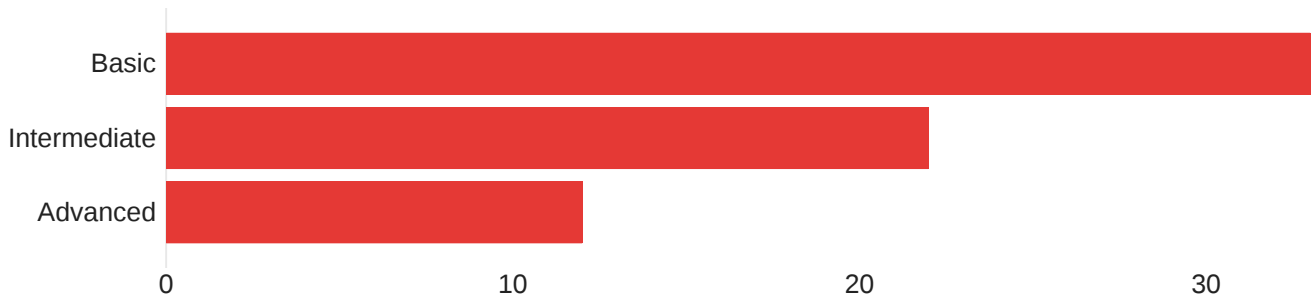


Field	Choice Count
Instructor Led (Paid)	27
Self Led	17
Volunteer Led	18
Total	62

Q47 - Cost Cost, if any, for the digital skills or technical support services offered by the organization/program.

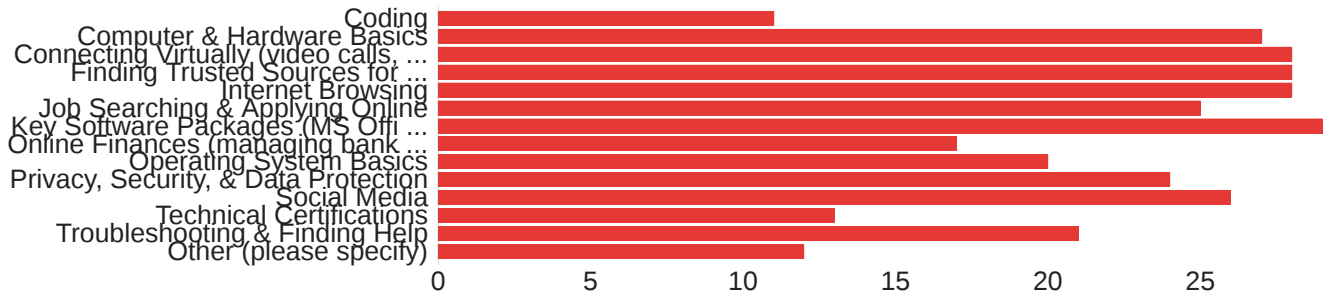
Q48 - Eligibility Criteria Criteria used to determine who qualifies to participate in the digital skills or technical support services through the organization/program.

Q49 - Target Skill Level General skill level of user who would most benefit from the digital skills or technical support services offered, or for whom the services are intended (check all that apply).



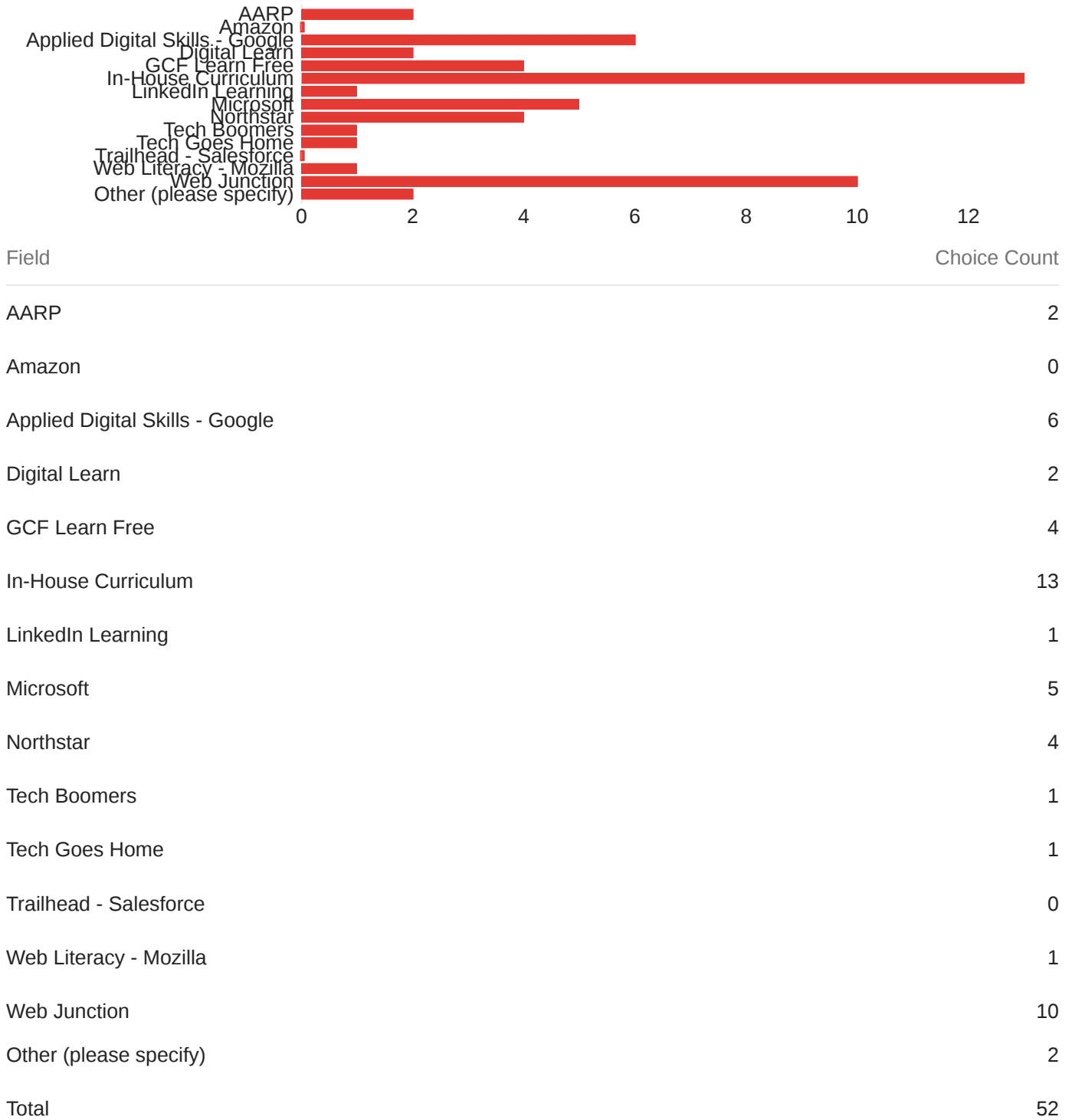
Field	Choice Count
Basic	33
Intermediate	22
Advanced	12
Total	67

Q50 - Digital Skill Offerings Categories of digital skills covered in the trainings offered by the organization/program (check all that apply).

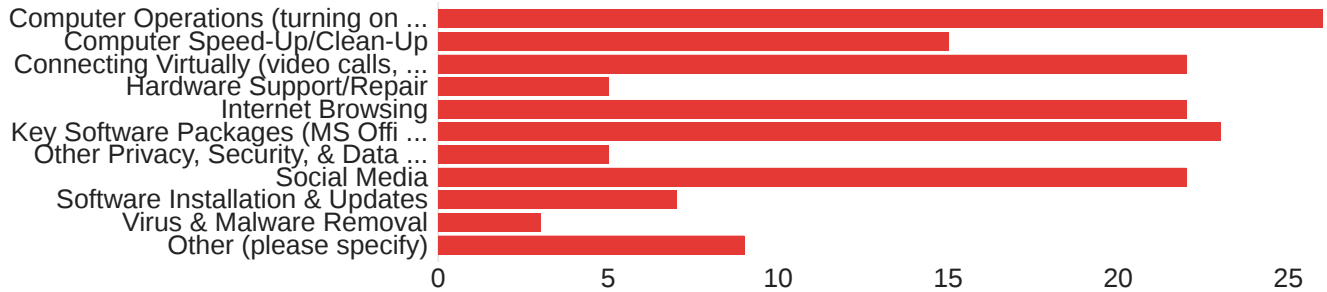


Field	Choice Count
Coding	11
Computer & Hardware Basics	27
Connecting Virtually (video calls, chat, etc.)	28
Finding Trusted Sources for Additional Learning	28
Internet Browsing	28
Job Searching & Applying Online	25
Key Software Packages (MS Office, Google Drive, etc.)	29
Online Finances (managing bank accounts, shopping, etc.)	17
Operating System Basics	20
Privacy, Security, & Data Protection	24
Social Media	26
Technical Certifications	13
Troubleshooting & Finding Help	21
Other (please specify)	12
Total	309 ₃₀

Q51 - Curriculum Established curriculum, if any, that is used for the digital skills trainings offered by the organization/program (check all that apply).

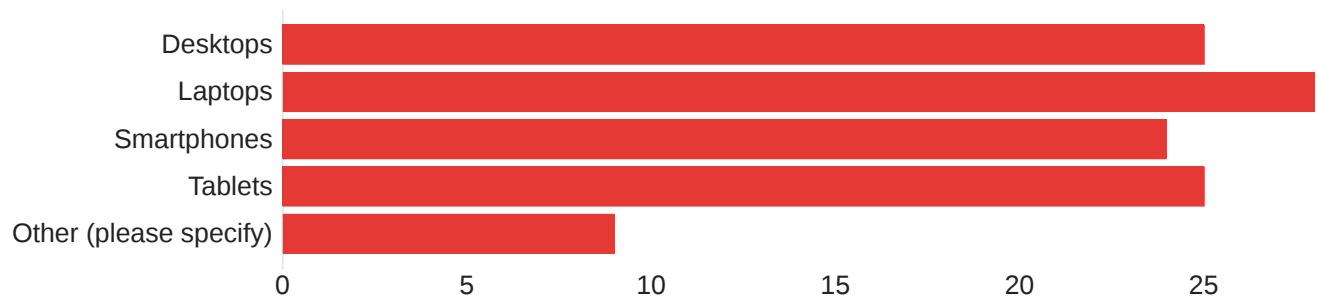


Q52 - Tech Support Services Offered Categories of technical support offered by the organization/program (check all that apply).



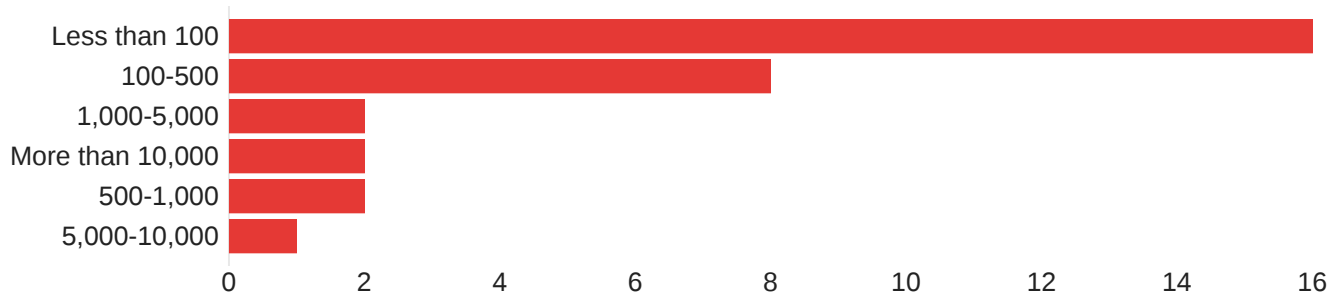
Field	Choice Count
Computer Operations (turning on and logging in, connecting to Wi-Fi, etc.)	26
Computer Speed-Up/Clean-Up	15
Connecting Virtually (video calls, chat, etc.)	22
Hardware Support/Repair	5
Internet Browsing	22
Key Software Packages (MS Office, Google Drive, etc.)	23
Other Privacy, Security, & Data Protection Support	5
Social Media	22
Software Installation & Updates	7
Virus & Malware Removal	3
Other (please specify)	9
Total	159

Q53 - Devices Supported Types of devices for which technical support services are offered by the organization/program (check all that apply).



Field	Choice Count
Desktops	25
Laptops	28
Smartphones	24
Tablets	25
Other (please specify)	9
Total	111

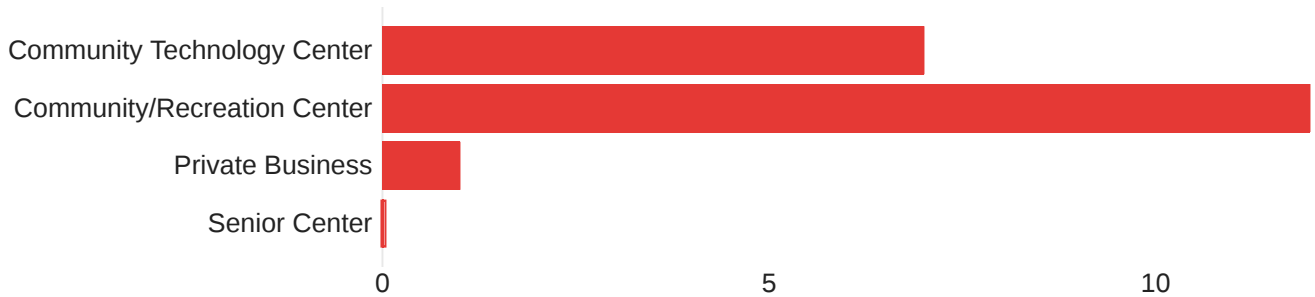
Q54 - Number of Training/Support Recipients Last Year General measure of the scale of the organization/program based on the number of customers or recipients served with digital skills training or technical support services in the last year.



Field	Min	Max	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance	Responses
Number of Training/Support Recipients Last Year General measure of the scale of the organization/program based on the number of customers or recipients served with digital skills training or technical support services in the last year.	1	6	2	1	2	31

Field	Choice Count
Less than 100	16
100-500	8
1,000-5,000	2
More than 10,000	2
500-1,000	2
5,000-10,000	1
Total	31

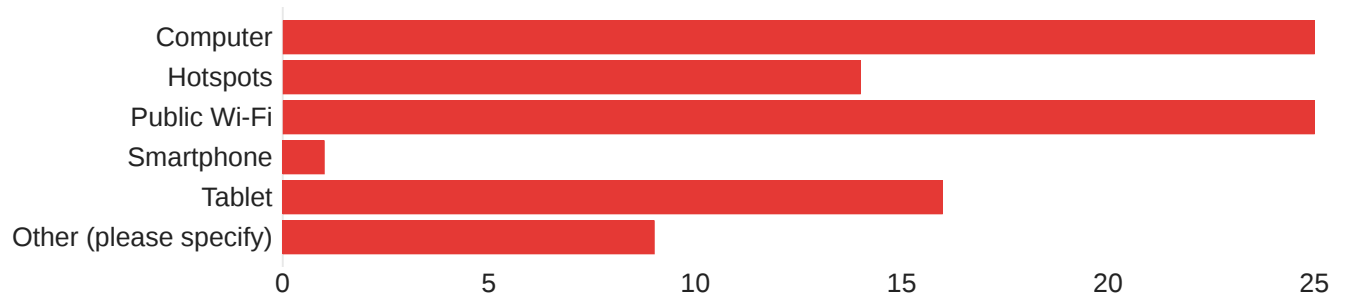
Q55 - Organization Sub-Type More specific description of the organization providing public device & internet access services.



Field	Min	Max	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance	Responses
Organization Sub-Type More specific description of the organization providing public device & internet access services.	1	3	2	1	0	20

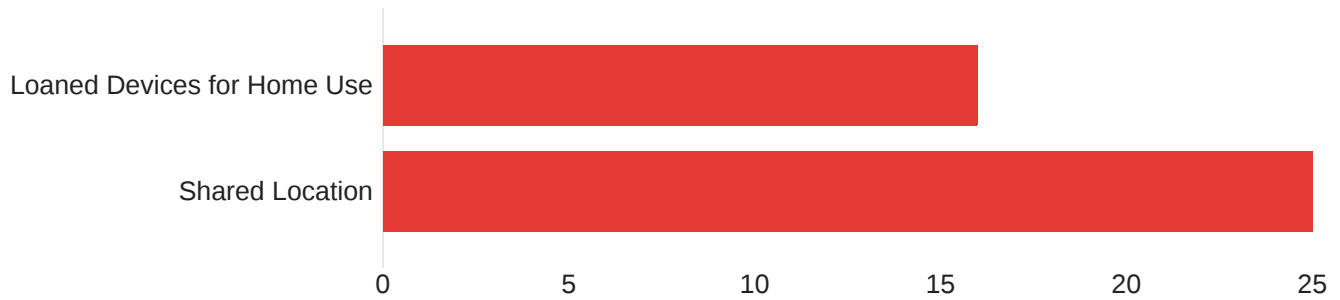
Field	Choice Count
Community Technology Center	7
Community/Recreation Center	12
Private Business	1
Senior Center	0
Total	20

Q56 - Technology Available Types of public computing resources provided by the organization/program (check all that apply).



Field	Choice Count
Computer	25
Hotspots	14
Public Wi-Fi	25
Smartphone	1
Tablet	16
Other (please specify)	9
Total	90

Q57 - Type of Access Indicator of whether the public devices or internet access are available at a shared public location (e.g., on-site public WIFI, computer lab) or if they can be taken home by users (check all that apply).



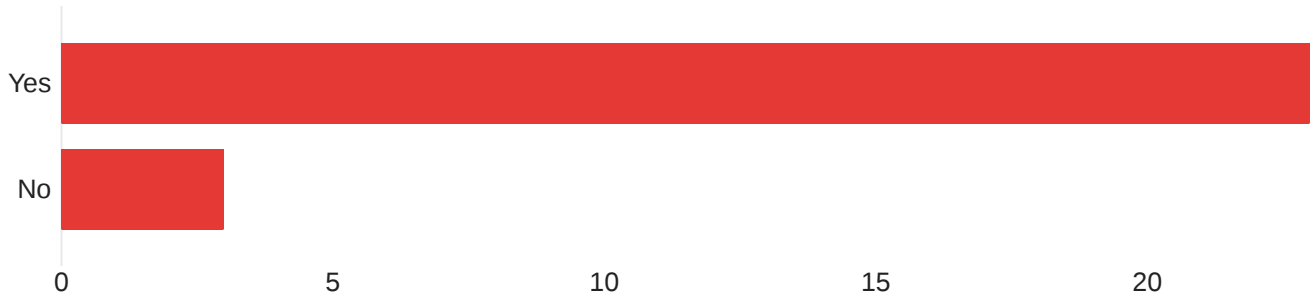
Field	Choice Count
Loaned Devices for Home Use	16
Shared Location	25
Total	41

Q58 - Cost Cost, if any, for use of the public devices or internet access offered by the organization/program.

Q59 - Terms of Use Terms of use, if any, to which users must agree in order to use the public devices or internet access provided by the organization/program.

Q60 - Eligibility Criteria Criteria used to determine who qualifies to use the public devices or internet access through the organization/program.

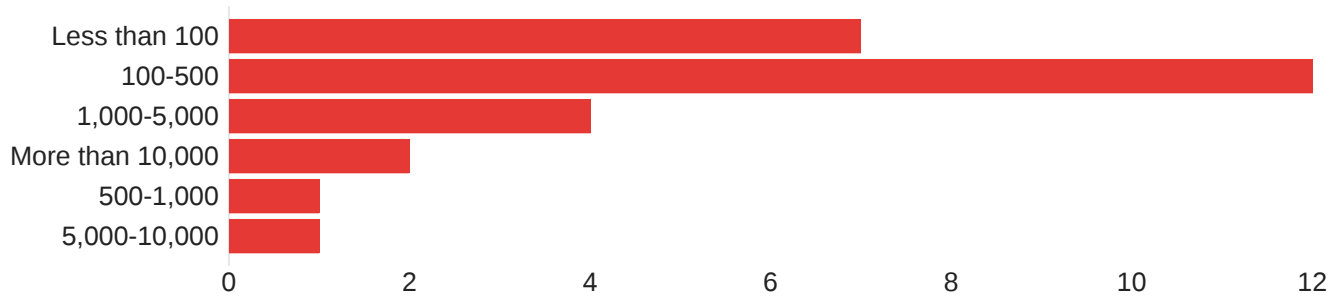
Q61 - Tech Support Available? Indicator of whether or not technical support is available to users of the public devices or internet access offered by the organization/program.



Field	Min	Max	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance	Responses
Tech Support Available? Indicator of whether or not technical support is available to users of the public devices or internet access offered by the organization/program.	1	2	1	0	0	26

Field	Choice Count
Yes	23
No	3
Total	26

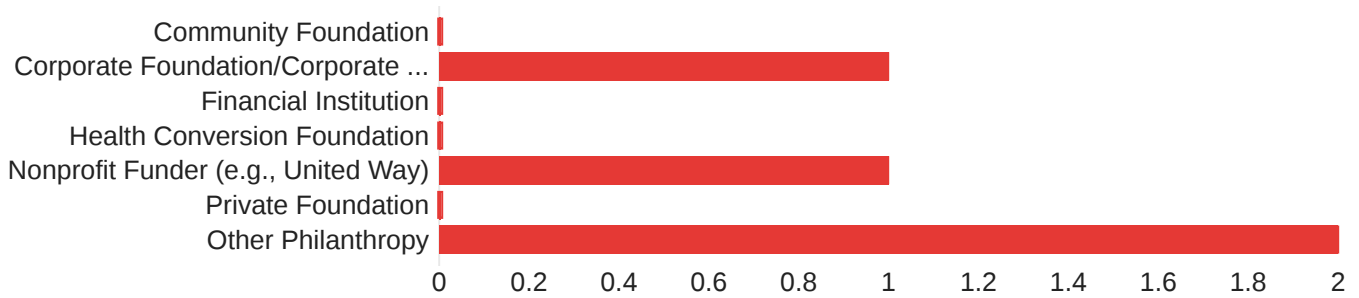
Q62 - Number of Users Served General measure of the scale of the organization/program based on the number of users served with public device or internet services in the last year.



Field	Min	Max	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance	Responses
Number of Users Served General measure of the scale of the organization/program based on the number of users served with public device or internet services in the last year.	1	6	2	1	2	27

Field	Choice Count
Less than 100	7
100-500	12
1,000-5,000	4
More than 10,000	2
500-1,000	1
5,000-10,000	1
Total	27

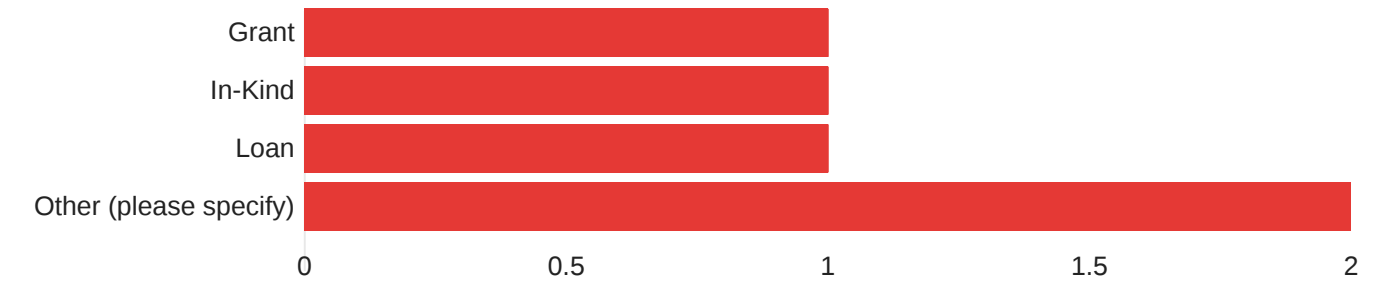
Q63 - Organization Sub-Type



Field	Min	Max	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance	Responses
Organization Sub-Type	2	7	5	2	4	4

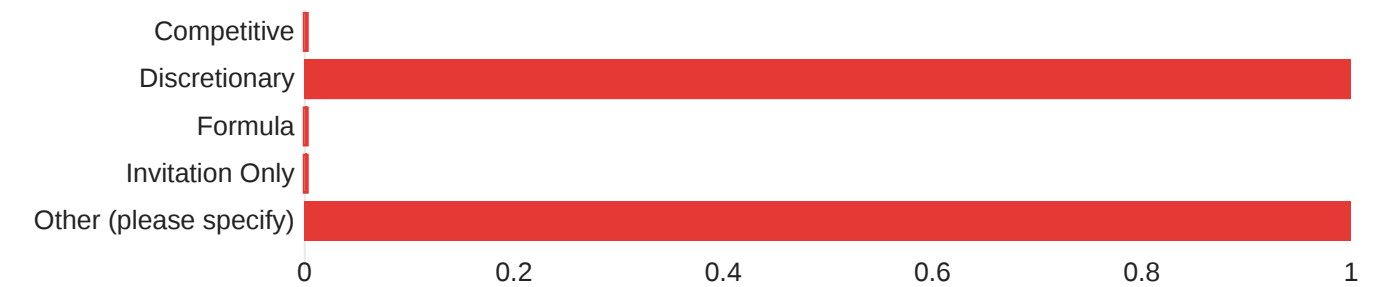
Field	Choice Count
Community Foundation	0
Corporate Foundation/Corporate Social Responsibility Program	1
Financial Institution	0
Health Conversion Foundation	0
Nonprofit Funder (e.g., United Way)	1
Private Foundation	0
Other Philanthropy	2
Total	4

Q64 - Funding Type Type of financial support offered by the organization/program (check all that apply).



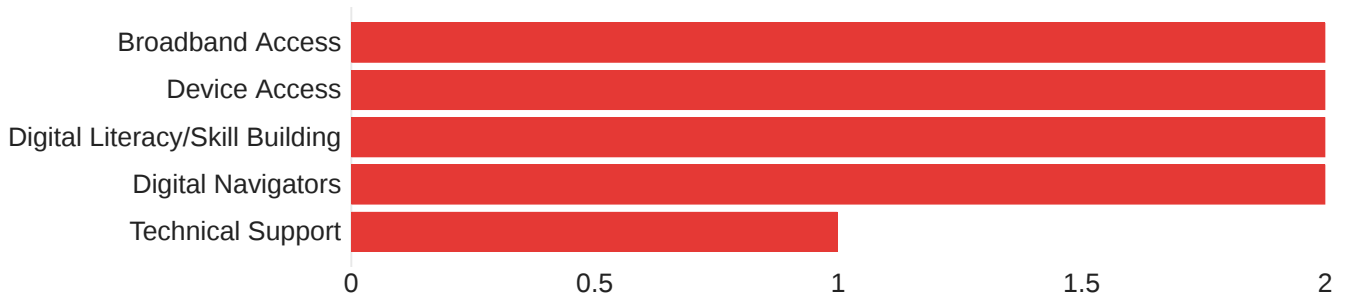
Field	Choice Count
Grant	1
In-Kind	1
Loan	1
Other (please specify)	2
Total	5

Q65 - Application Style Method of applying for and determining recipients of funding offered by the organization/program (check all that apply).



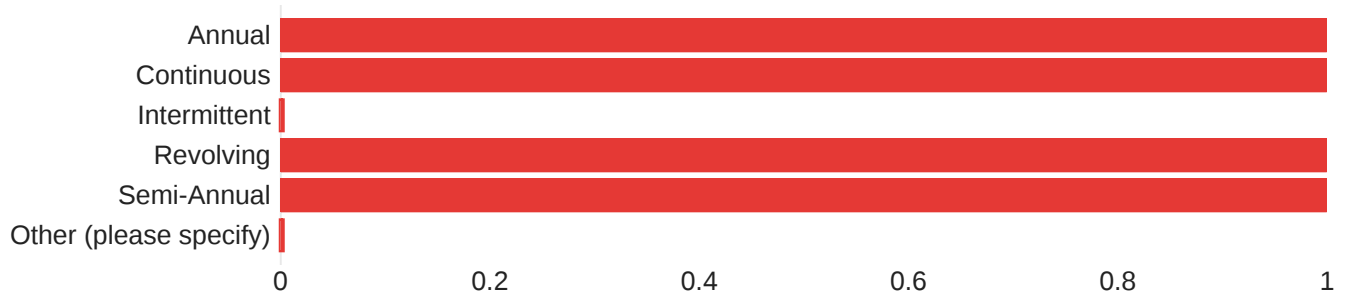
Field	Choice Count
Competitive	0
Discretionary	1
Formula	0
Invitation Only	0
Other (please specify)	1
Total	2

Q66 - Eligible Uses Categories of digital inclusion services for which the funding can be used (check all that apply).



Field	Choice Count
Broadband Access	2
Device Access	2
Digital Literacy/Skill Building	2
Digital Navigators	2
Technical Support	1
Total	9

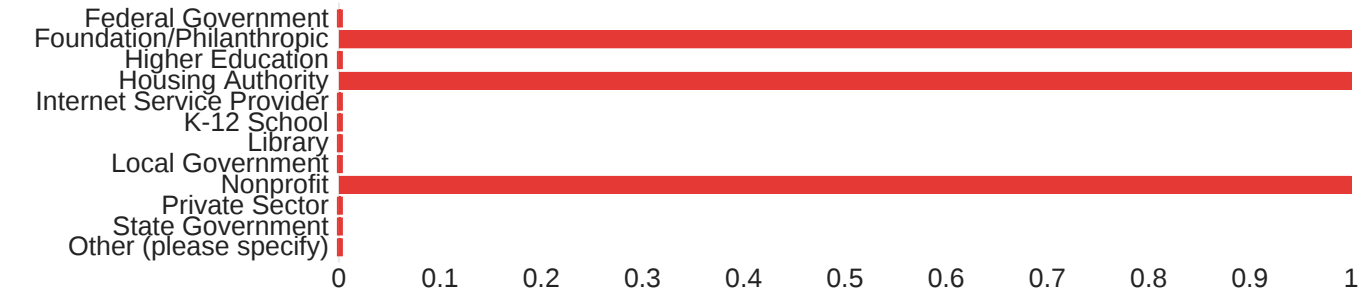
Q67 - Funding Schedule Frequency of availability for the funding offered by the organization/program (check all that apply).



Field	Choice Count
Annual	1
Continuous	1
Intermittent	0
Revolving	1
Semi-Annual	1
Other (please specify)	0
Total	4

Q68 - Next Application/Funding Window Important dates or timeframes, if known, for upcoming funding opportunities offered by the organization/program.

Q69 - Eligible Applicants Organization types that are eligible to apply for the funding offered by the organization/program (check all that apply).



Field	Choice Count
Federal Government	0
Foundation/Philanthropic	1
Higher Education	0
Housing Authority	1
Internet Service Provider	0
K-12 School	0
Library	0
Local Government	0
Nonprofit	1
Private Sector	0
State Government	0
Other (please specify)	0
Total	3

Q70 - Total Funding Available Total amount of the funding pool offered by the organization/program.

Q71 - Maximum Award Maximum amount an application or recipient may be awarded from the funding offered by the organization/program.

Summary

Kansas Department of Agriculture used the focus group questions in an on-line survey for members to collect information from growers and others involved in agriculture across Kansas. They received 112 fully complete surveys. The following is information from this survey.

Highlights

Several respondents are putting hope in Starlink, many noted they are on a waiting list.

Rural communities are accustomed to working together, helping write grants and get access to resources when possible. Community resources in rural areas are Grain and Electric Cooperatives, senior centers, and libraries.

Challenges

Reliable and affordable broadband access is integral for the work that growers and others in agriculture. Everything from livestock auctions, sales, marketing, market trading, invoicing and other basic business activities rely on connectivity. Many noted they would be able to sell more if their internet connection was better.

Farm equipment relies on GPS or other mapping connections, if there is no access to GPS in the area it limits the productivity of the farm. Sustainability efforts often rely on technology and access to the internet. growers in Kansas can not stay viable without last mile connectivity. Many noted that they will not be able to continue their business unless things improve.

Organizations for follow up-free Wi-Fi

In general coffee shops, McDonalds and libraries were noted for offering free Wi-Fi. One participant noted it isn't optimal for conducting business on an unsecured network. Specific locations and businesses mentioned are:

- Garden City airport
- Larkrise Coffee in Hamilton Ks
- Hays Recreation Center
- Fort Hays State University
- Uniontown Community Center

Opportunities

- Work with service providers locally to get reliable, affordable internet
- Reducing weather related disruptions
- Set up a fully networked infrastructure by partnering with organizations and companies
- With internet across the state better monitor the water crisis and animal management and other efficiencies that urban areas are demanding Ag pay attention to
- Get large ISP's out of the way (AT&T, Cox) as they prioritize urban areas and let rural telecoms come in.

Thank you for assisting the Kansas Department of Agriculture and the Kansas Office of Broadband on broadband issues directly related to agriculture in our state. Your input is valued as agriculture needs a strong voice as the state moved forward with funding opportunities through the Kansas Office of Broadband.

The Kansas Office of Broadband defines Digital Equity as a condition in which all individuals and communities have the information technology capacity needed for full participation in our society, democracy and economy (National Digital Inclusion Alliance).

From an agricultural point of view, when there is mention of digital access, what does that mean to you?

Thinking about production agriculture, ag manufacturing, food, meat processing, agribusinesses and those in local communities, provide an example when you or your community were impacted because there was no/limited access to the Internet or devices. This may include individuals or business who did not know how to use the internet or devices.

Who was most impacted in your opinion?

Who was most impacted in your opinion?

Tell us about what is going well for digital access, in agriculture, in your community

What are the resources, assets or knowledge the Kansas Office of Broadband can build upon?

Where in your town is free Wi-fi offered? Be as specific as possible.

What would be the benefits to agriculture in Kansas, your business and or community if...

Everyone has access to the internet and devices and knew how to use them?

In your view what would it look like for these problems to be solved?

How can the Kansas Office of Broadband help the agriculture Industry in our state?

Is there feedback you would like to provide at this time?

To help us make sure agriculture has been heard from statewide...

What Kansas town do you live in?

Which Kansas County do you reside? (2-letter abbreviation)



Local Coordination Documentation Tracker - Kansas Office of Broadband Development

Purpose of this Resource

The NOFOs for both the Broadband, Equity, Access & Deployment (BEAD) Program and the Digital Equity Act Programs include requirements for local coordination. This tracker is intended to serve as resource that will support applicants in documenting required local coordination and outreach activities for both programs. Use the tabs of this spreadsheet to track stakeholders, activities, local plans, and feedback and comments. Customize the categories to fit your needs as you begin local coordination activities.

Tracker Contents

Tab	Description	Related BEAD NOFO Requirements	Related Digital Equity NOFO Requirements
List of Organizations	Area to document and record each organization and stakeholder group engaged and the purpose of the engagement	<i>Local coordination efforts of each Eligible Entity must include diverse stakeholders from Tribal, rural, suburban, and urban areas to the extent applicable</i>	<i>Each State Digital Equity Plan must include a coordination and outreach strategy that addresses engagement with representatives of each category of covered populations within the State and with the full range of stakeholders within the State</i>
Stakeholder Engagement Tracker	Area to document each meeting held with stakeholder groups, including information on meeting attendees and action items resulting from engagement activities	<i>Each Eligible Entity must document its local coordination and outreach activities by providing a detailed description of their efforts to engage local governments, community groups, union and worker organizations, Tribal Governments, and underrepresented populations</i>	
Local Plans	Area to document any plans submitted to the Eligible Entity or existing plans/programs instituted by municipal, regional, or local governments and/or Tribal Entities, as well as notes on how these plans will be incorporated into the Five-Year Action Plan or State Digital Equity Plan	<i>Each political subdivision and federally recognized Tribe must be given an opportunity to submit its own local broadband plan to the Eligible Entity for consideration in the development of the Eligible Entity's Proposals. Each Eligible Entity must detail how it addressed each submitted plan in each relevant Proposal</i>	<i>Each State Digital Equity Plan must include a description of how local, municipal, regional, and/or Tribal digital equity plans</i>
Public Comment Disclosure	Area to document any comments submitted on the BEAD Five-Year Action Plan or State Digital Equity Plan and notes on how these comments will be addressed	<i>Each political subdivision and federally recognized Tribe must be given an opportunity to comment on the Proposals of the Eligible Entity</i>	<i>Each category of covered populations and the full range of stakeholders within the State must be given opportunities for public comment on the State Digital Equity Plan</i>

Description of Categories

Category	Description
Program	It is recommended that all local coordination, stakeholder engagement, and outreach - including with Tribal and Native Entities - is coordinated early on and completed in tandem for both the BEAD and State Digital Equity Planning Grant Program to fulfill the requirements of both programs. When documenting local coordination activities, applicants should indicate in the tracker if the stakeholder group or the coordination activity is related to a specific program or to both programs.
Organization Type	Organizations and stakeholder groups may include, but are not limited to, community anchor institutions, county and municipal governments, nonprofit organizations, civil rights organizations, educational agencies, workforce development organizations, public housing authorities, Tribal governments, Alaska Native Entities, Native Hawaiian organizations, labor organizations and unions, faith-based organizations, higher education institutions (including HBCUs, MSIs, and community colleges), Internet service providers, public utilities commissions, economic development organizations, and advocacy groups.
Covered Populations	Covered populations for the Digital Equity Act program include: 1) Individuals who live in covered households; 2) Aging Individuals; 3) Incarcerated Individuals, other than individuals who are incarcerated in a Federal correctional facility; 4) Veterans; 5) Individuals with disabilities; 6) Individuals with a language barrier, including individuals who are English learners and have low levels of literacy; 7) Individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group; and 8) Individuals who reside primarily in a rural area

Public Comment Disclosure

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First Name	Last Name	Organization	Title	Email Address	Relevant Section of the Plan	Feedback Provided	Other Comments	Date Submitted	DE Plan Change Log	Written Responses and Actions Taken by State in Response
Brandon	Williams	Not Available	Not Available	brandon.w.9420@gmail.com	1. Section 3: Current State of Digital Equity: Barriers and Assets 2. Section 4: Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement 3. Section 5: Implementation 4. Section 7: Appendices	1. What barriers? https://bestneighborhood.org/mobile-and-cell-kansas/#:~:text=5G%20reception%20covers%20up%20to%2096.55%20of,relationship%20with%20some%20of%20the%20Kansas%20providers 2. The fact that you are using government funding and speaking of stakeholders is vomit worthy. 3. Kind of hard to implement something when corporate already did it. 4. If this was to enable communication, Kelly would reply to her constituents on X.	<i>If there are any digital equity assets that you feel have not been listed in the digital equity plan, please list them here?</i> • Let's start with the fact that Kansas is already covered 95+% covered with 5G https://bestneighborhood.org/mobile-and-cell-kansas/#:~:text=5G%20reception%20covers%20up%20to%2096.55%20of,relationship%20with%20some%20of%20the%20Kansas%20providers <i>Please provide comment on any other section not listed, or provide general comments on the digital equity plan</i> • You could have done all of this on X. I'm greatly disappointed in all of you.	10/3/2023	No additional change	Thank you for participating in our survey for the Kansas Digital Equity Plan. Regarding the use of 5G for broadband, please refer to BEAD Volume 2 of the Initial Proposal, which covers infrastructure deployment and required broadband speeds. The Public Comment portal for BEAD Volume 2 is open until November 12, 2023 and can be found https://www.kansascommerce.gov/officeofbroadbanddevelopment/broadband-equity-access-and-deployment/ .
Lazone	Grays	IBSA	CEO	lazoneg@gmail.com	1. Section 3: Current State of Digital Equity: Barriers and Assets 2. Section 4: Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement	1. Great job identifying barriers and assets in Kansas 2. A group well representative of the state gathered data and information from all sectors of communities.		10/8/2023	No additional change	Thank you for participating in our survey for the Kansas Digital Equity Plan. We appreciate your comment about identifying barriers and assets, and the fact that we gathered data and information from all sectors of the communities. No revisions are needed based on these comments.
Rick	Usher	The Usher Garage	CEO/Founder	rick@ushergarage.com	1. Section 7: Appendix	1. Add LIDO - Leaning Into Digital Opportunity: Seeking to service all of the covered populations in the inventory list		10/16/2023	Adding LIDO (the Usher Garage LLC) to Asset Appendix Asset list	Thank you for participating in our survey for the Kansas Digital Equity Plan. We appreciate your comment about the program Leaning Into Digital Opportunity "LIDO." The Plan will be revised adding this program in the Appendices list for the Kansas Digital Equity Plan.
Kevin	Taglang	Benton Institute for Broadband & Society	Executive Editor	headlines@benton.org			The Benton Institute for Broadband & Society reviewed the Kansas Office of Broadband Development's Digital Equity Strategic Plan and shared a summary of it with our readers (https://www.benton.org/blog/digital-equity-plan-connect-all-kansans). Upon review, we offer 10 Principles for Digital Equity Visions (see https://www.benton.org/sites/default/files/VisionsDigitalEquity.pdf). We hope these principles help the people of South Dakota evaluate both the draft Digital Equity Strategic Plan and the KOBBD's revision of the plan. To that end, we also offer A Checklist for Evaluating Digital Equity Visions (see https://www.benton.org/sites/default/files/DEV_checklist.pdf) Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on the plan; I would be happy to answer any questions or discuss the potential of Kansas' vision for digital equity.	10/27/2023	Plan addition addresses Benton's vision checklist: Current State and Digital Equity Barriers and Assets; Collaboration and stakeholder engagement Added "national practitioners" to 3.1.1 with reference to NDIA and Benton Added reference to 4.3.5 with reference to coalition approaches and Benton's recommendations Added Benton in Appendix Assets	Thank you for participating in our survey for the Kansas Digital Equity Plan. We appreciate your comment about Benton's 10 Principles for Digital Equity Visions. The Plan will be revised to include mention of the checklist, and to clarify how the Plan specifically addresses vision strategy 4 creating digital inclusion coalitions of libraries, community-based organizations, local governments, and housing authorities.
Jill	Kuehny	KanOkla Networks	CEO	jkuehny@kanokla.com	1. Section 3.1.5.5: Current State of Digital Equity: Barriers/Assets 2. Section 5: Implementation	1. ISP Support. Table 2. Kanokla accepts and promotes ACP since its inception. 2. I applaud Strategy 5 to empower Kansans with in-demand workforce skills so they can thrive wherever they live. And that digital equity involves creating opportunities where they have been absent. For all of the assets and resources available, rural areas have an awareness barrier of what's out there. As a cooperative, we exist to improve the lives of our WFH members, our schools, libraries, community colleges, City governments, and agricultural businesses that are adopting technology faster than any other industry currently. We provide troubleshooting consultation for free with our help desk and offer practical solutions with hands-on setup and delivery for all of our members. Implementing digital literacy will have to be human to human, especially with free online courses that they cannot access.	I am a life-long rural community supporter and have long pushed rural connectivity and lifelong skill-building for all ages to promote healthy lifestyles and quality of life in our predominately rural expanses of our state. Our employees love to assist our members in accessing connectivity, show them how to use our app and promote cyber protection and parental controls while utilizing our whole-home Wi-Fi virus-protection with our state-of-the-art router. We promote a "return to rural" to live, work, and play. We are attracting young families and young retiring professionals back to our rural communities that will be a driving force in digital literacy skills in our areas, using volunteers to mentor and teach our elders and young with a higher level of digital awareness to protect both of these vulnerable populations against cyber fraud, theft, and abuse.	10/27/2023	Added Kanokla to 3.1.5.5 table showing providers offering ACP	Thank you for participating in our survey for the Kansas Digital Equity Plan. We appreciate your comment that Kanokla accepted and promotes ACP since its inception and your motto of "return to rural" lifestyle. The Plan is trying to assist rural communities across the state, and we appreciate ISPs like yours that help to further these efforts. No revisions are needed based on these comments.
Bill	Chappuie	Not Available	Not Available	bchappuie@gmail.com	1. Section 5: Implementation	1. Remember not all broadband is a wire, lots of other options for implementation		10/29/2023	No additional change	Thank you for participating in our survey for the Kansas Digital Equity Plan. We appreciate your comment that not all broadband is a wire, lots of other options for implementation. Please refer to the glossary in the Plan, which defines Broadband as "high-speed Internet access that is always on and faster than traditional dial-up access. Broadband includes several high-speed transmission technologies, such as fiber, wireless, satellite, digital subscriber line and cable". No revisions are needed based on these comments.
Ryan	Flickner	Kansas Farm Bureau	Senior Director	flicknerr@kfb.org	1. Section 3: Current State of Digital Equity: Barriers and Assets 2. Section 4: Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement	1. The Kansas Farm Bureau 2023 policy book includes "we support every home, business and agricultural operation in Kansas having access to high-speed communication infrastructure at a reasonable cost. We support a vibrant high-speed broadband network that delivers telemedicine applications, distance learning applications for K-12, higher education and continuing education, and gives libraries the ability to provide interactive content for rural citizens." American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF), representing more than five million agriculturalists nationwide, including Kansas Farm Bureau members, has 2023 policy support, • Broadband programs prioritizing resources for rural communities most in need of connectivity • Requiring companies that win broadband spectrum bids to quickly build out infrastructure or face significant fines for failing to do so. Any fines should be earmarked for broadband infrastructure in underserved rural areas • Communications services should be available at a reasonable cost to all people • Multiple sources and increased levels of funding for developing and expanding broadband and cellular network access to rural areas • Increasing high speed internet access in rural areas through any source, including wireless, by using a combination of tax incentives, grants and/or regulations • Networks should meet and exceed the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) definition for broadband • Increased cooperation among internet providers to improve access to broadband in rural areas through coordination/sharing of either current assets or the installation of necessary infrastructure • Identification of underserved areas in regards to broadband availability and the prioritization of those areas in terms of resource allocation • Increased focus on improving rural cellular networks		10/30/2023	- Added a line to 2.2.2 Economic Development to reinforce KFB position by referencing AFBF policy	Thank you for participating in our survey for the Kansas Digital Equity Plan. We appreciate your comment about the Kansas Farm Bureau 2023 Policy book and the American Farm Bureau Federation policy support. Please refer to page 14 of the Plan for the quote from the Kansas Farm Bureau. No revisions are needed based on these comments.

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First Name	Last Name	Organization	Title	Email Address	Relevant Section of the Plan	Feedback Provided	Other Comments	Date Submitted	DE Plan Change Log	Written Responses and Actions Taken by State in Response
Cerise	Hall	Business Speaks LLC	CEO	cerise@businesspeaks.net	1. Section 3: Current State of Digital Equity: Barriers and Assets	<p>1. 3.1.1 Statewide Equity Assets -Kansas Department of Commerce and Kansas State Department of Ed and local school districts</p> <p>Business Speaks LLC is commenting on low income African American business who bootstrap their business and reliable , affordable secure internet creates a barrier to the digital economy. Great internet accessibility comes with privacy needs of intellectual property, customer privacy and cyberattack preparedness. The current need of removing barriers of existing entrepreneurial opportunities for Kansas small businesses , the Department of Labor recognizes entrepreneurship training in its workforce initiative.</p> <p>Educating our next generation of leaders in entrepreneurial skills training increases our workforce development pool</p> <p>Few editorials to reflect how business owners are America's stakeholder and without adequate internet and digital equity communities are negatively impacted.</p> <p>https://youth.workforcegaps.org/resources/2017/03/02/10/51/Entrepreneurial-Skills-Training</p> <p>https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-03-16/a-new-study-finds-that-black-entrepreneurship-helps-decrease-youth-crime-in-african-american-communities</p> <p>https://advocacy.sba.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Small-Business-Job-Creation-Fact-Sheet-Apr2022.pdf</p> <p>https://www.uschamber.com/small-business/state-of-small-business-now</p>	<p>Barriers an Assets 3.2.1 covered population needs assessment</p> <p>The DEA plan covers the most common digital equity assets however for in demand careers and positioning our labor force to stay local and making Kansas competitive. How can we have a skilled conversation about digital economy and upskilling and not include , entrepreneurs, small business, gig technicians, and for profit entities as a priority stakeholder voice?</p> <p>Here are a few digital equity assets to reimagine for upskilling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Entrepreneurship and small business "for profit businesses" and minority certified businesses https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-03-16/a-new-study-finds-that-black-entrepreneurship-helps-decrease-youth-crime-in-african-american-communities -Fintech -Cyber Security -Block Chain Technology -Tokenization -NFT -Content Creators 	10/30/2023	No additional change	Thank you for participating in our survey for the Kansas Digital Equity Plan. We appreciate your comment, how can we have a skilled conversation about digital economy and upskilling and not include, entrepreneurs, small business, gig technicians, and for-profit entities as a priority stakeholder voice? This Plan is focused on digital equity in connecting Kansans across the state and not intended to focus on the digital economy like NFTs and Block Chain. Please refer to the Roadshow and listening sessions summary in the Plan, where stakeholders of all sectors participated including small business owners and entrepreneurs. Please refer to page 44 of the Plan, where Heartland Black Chamber of Commerce is mentioned as an important asset. No revisions are needed based on these comments.
Bruce	Focke	Not Available	Not Available	ludellite@yahoo.com	1. Section 5: Implementation	<p>1. I doubt that the internet provider in Atwood will attempt going out into the country to provide internet service, unless it is highly profitable for them.</p>	<p>I am 70 years old and live on a farm in Rawlins County 5 miles N.E. of Atwood, or approximately 1 mile S.W. of Ludell. My house is approximately 100 yards off the county road to Ludell. From Atwood to Ludell it is 2 1/2 miles east on highway US 36 to the Ludell turnoff. Then it is approximately 4 miles to Ludell. Now, I am paying Hughesnet \$102.89 for satellite internet for 30 gigabytes per month. If I am not able to get the broadband cable laid to my place, will I be able to get some help paying my monthly internet satellite bill? Thank you.</p> <p>Bruce Focke 24117 Ludell Road Ludell, KS 67744 Phone: 785-443-0230</p>	10/30/2023	No additional change	Thank you for participating in our survey for the Kansas Digital Equity Plan. We appreciate your comment about paying HughesNet \$102.89 for satellite internet for 30 gigabytes per month. If I am not able to get the broadband cable laid to my place, will I be able to get some help paying my monthly internet satellite bill? No revisions are needed based on these comments, but the Affordable Connectivity Program is an FCC benefit program that helps ensure that households can afford the broadband they need for work, school, healthcare and more. The benefit provides a discount of up to \$30 per month toward internet service for eligible households and up to \$75 per month for households on qualifying Tribal lands. Feel free to sign up and enroll at https://www.getinternet.gov/apply
Karisa	Tashjian	Digitunity	Director of Program	karisa@digitunity.org	<p>1. Section 4: Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement</p> <p>2. Section 5: Implementation</p>	<p>1. <i>Ecosystem approach:</i> To ensure that all Kansans have the ability to obtain a free or low cost computer, establishing a robust supply of applicable devices through accessible, resilient, community-level distribution systems is critical. Systems thinking is required, with active involvement from a diverse range of actors and stakeholders. Digitunity's Methodology for a Sustainable Device Ecosystem provides a framework for addressing this issue on a large scale. The draft plan identifies several components of a device ecosystem and through intentional coordination and a holistic approach, this will lead to maximum impact, leveraging of additional resources, and reducing duplication.</p> <p><i>Public-private partnerships:</i> The role that the business and philanthropic community can play in a device ecosystem is often transformative. They can play key roles in supporting a robust supply of free and low cost devices that can be made available for Covered Populations. We recommend development of a strategy to engage them in this plan.</p> <p>2. <i>Kudos!</i> We're happy to see the inclusion of the goal of expanding "access to affordable devices with accommodating technical support" as well as acknowledging that "mobile devices do not provide users with the full digital experience allowed by personal computing devices."</p> <p><i>Supply is critical:</i> Generating a robust and ongoing supply of technology to be refurbished is necessary for a sustainable device ecosystem. This supply can be generated through donations from individuals, corporations, government and other organizations. In December 2022, Digitunity helped to pass the federal Computers for Veterans and Students Act which will soon direct repairable, out of service federal computers to nonprofit technology refurbishers. Kansas can be a potential beneficiary of this program. Efforts such as a statewide campaign for businesses donations will be extremely helpful to the state's efforts. Digitunity has deep knowledge on generating</p>	<p>If there are any digital equity assets that you feel have not been listed in the digital equity plan, please list them here:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Looking at the need for supply for the device component of the plan, it will be helpful to understand the current supply of technology in the state as well as key businesses that could be approached for donating their technology. We'd also be interested to understand which organizations work directly with the Covered Populations and could be considered as deployment sites for devices. <p>Please provide comment on any other section not listed, or provide general comments on the digital equity plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digitunity has developed and utilized a longstanding online technology donation matching platform that connects the supply of new and refurbished devices to vetted community organizations for deployment. We'd be happy to share more about this with the state and how it can be used to connect various parts of your ecosystem, gather and integrate data, and make the process efficient. 	11/2/2023	Adding supply shortage, refurbishment, and workforce opportunity language to introduction section under devices # 5.	<p>Thank you for participating in our survey for the Kansas Digital Equity Plan. We appreciate each of your following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public-private partnerships: We recommend development of a strategy to engage them in this plan. Public-private partnerships are key stakeholders in the distribution of the Plan. No revisions are needed based on these comments. Please refer to section 2.2.1 Funding Partners and Recipients: "...funding critical digital inclusion programs, like distribution of devices, digital navigators, and outreach on affordability and adoption, is an appropriate concurrent step....Facilitating sustainable, productive partnerships with all types of organizations from schools, foundations, libraries, and public-private partners to labor unions, associations, and other non-traditional entities is a key function KOBDD will perform." Supply and Refurbishing: In December 2022, Digitunity helped to pass the federal Computers for Veterans and Students Act which will soon direct repairable, out of service federal computers to nonprofit technology refurbishers. Digitunity stands ready to assist, leveraging the role we play in administering a national practitioner network that includes 90 nonprofit refurbishers. Digitunity can support both with technical knowledge of refurbishing as well as our deep familiarity of the wide range of business models and practices found within our practitioner network. Support for device deployment: For deployment, we highly recommend that trusted community organizations with specific training and support regarding device deployment be engaged to help residents obtain and use devices. Technical support: We recommend looking at device supply sources as the first stop for technical support. The Plan will be revised to include language about the device supply shortage, refurbishment, technical support and support of device deployment within the Introduction Section under #5 Devices. Please refer to the Digital Assets and Resources list in the Plan; feel free to share the organization names and contact information of any missing nonprofits that are working specifically in Kansas, so they can be added.
Karly	Werner	Comcast Cable communications	Not Available	karly_werner@cable.comcast.com			<p>Comcast Cable Communications, on behalf of its subsidiaries (together, "Comcast") submits these comments in response to the Kansas Office of Broadband Development ("KOBDD") Draft Digital Equity Plan ("Plan" or "Draft Plan"). Comcast appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Plan and work with the KOBDD to help achieve the goal of universal broadband connectivity, services, and digital skills for all.</p> <p>The Plan cites U.S. Census data stating that 10 percent, or 115,885 Kansans, do not have a broadband subscription and paints a big picture for a digitally equitable future - that where you live is not a determinant of how you participate in the digital economy. Census data also suggests that an even greater number—more than 136,000 Kansans—have only a mobile connection and no other connection available in their homes. These under connected households may not be able to fully take part in a digital society. Additionally, the Plan "developed by Kansans for Kansans," recognizes the road to close the digital divide requires strong partnerships, including public-private partnerships, and financial resources. The Draft Plan provides "the creation and nurturing of partnerships is a key contributor to the success of digital equity efforts." Comcast fully agrees with this vision and philosophy, we recognize the critical roles that the public, private, and non-profit sectors must play to ensure that digital equity efforts are successful, and are committed to digital equity efforts for every community Comcast serves in Kansas.</p> <p>As the KOBDD identifies throughout the Plan, achieving success in digital equity aligns with other State agencies' plans and goals for the agricultural sector, educational outcomes, health outcomes, deliveries of essential services, and civic and social engagement. We support this notion; gains made in increased broadband adoption, digital literacy, skills, and cybersecurity protections will yield benefits across the State and in every sector. That is why it is critical to make strategic investments in programs that have demonstrated results, create a forum for sharing best practices and key learnings, and bring together practitioners and partners for long-term and sustainable initiatives across the State.</p>	11/2/2023	<u>Boys & Girls Club of Greater Kansas City - Olathe Unit</u> added as a asset/program "Lift Zone"	Thank you for participating in our survey for the Kansas Digital Equity Plan. We added Boys & Girls Club of Greater Kansas City - Olathe Unit to our asset and program list. We appreciate your comment that Comcast encourages Kansas to focus on digital equity efforts that will be the most impactful, including digital navigators, digital skills training programs, and partnerships. Please refer to the Need's Assessment found in Section 3.2. of the Plan, where this kind of support is encouraged. No revisions are needed based on these comments.

Public Comment Disclosure

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First Name	Last Name	Organization	Title	Email Address	Relevant Section of the Plan	Feedback Provided	Other Comments	Date Submitted	DE Plan Change Log	Written Responses and Actions Taken by State in Response
Robert	Gibson	Health Forward Foundation	Impact Strategist - Policy	rgibson@healthforward.org	<p>1. Section 3: Current State of Digital Equity Barriers and Assets</p> <p>2. Section 4: Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement</p>	<p>1. Section 3.1.2 & 3.1.5: Existing Digital Equity Plans and Broadband Affordability Assets. There is a significant need for Kansans to have increased access to high-speed internet and broadband services. About 1 million Kansans lack adequate internet connectivity (https://news.ku.edu/2022/03/23/speed-test-surveys-show-1-million-kansans-may-have-inadequate-internet). Furthermore, Kansans of color lack adequate internet access at higher rates (https://www.khi.org/articles/variations-in-internet-access-across-kansas/) than their white counterparts. Consequently, while programs such as the Affordable Connectivity Program already exist to help residents gain access to broadband services through independent service providers, the cost associated with these programs still excludes many families. 1 Gbps/1Gbps monthly package plans generally range from \$90 to \$120. Additionally, monthly service costs for 100 mbps/200mbps start at \$60 dollars and can cost up to \$90 in some areas. Even the \$60 plan is not affordable for many older adults and families that live in rural areas. Any considerations that can make these programs more affordable by decreasing costs below \$90 and \$60, respectively, would increase the likelihood that more families can utilize these services.</p> <p>2. Section 4.1: Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement- Utilizing community-based organizations (CBO's) for outreach. We applaud the Kansas Office of Broadband Development for its efforts to gain insights and understanding about residents' needs, especially within historically excluded communities. Given the significant opportunities for investment, we encourage a continuous process of engagement with, and in, communities to ensure their buy-in and adjust as BEAD and other dollars get to work.</p> <p>The University of Kansas has a robust toolbox for gathering community feedback (https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/maintain/maintain-quality-performance/feedback-from-clients/main). Also, we highly recommend that the people leading engagement and community interaction be from the communities for</p>	<p>We welcome the opportunity to connect with you further. Members of our staff have decades of experience in digital equity as the former Regional HUD Administrator and co-author of the Kansas City, Missouri, 2017 Digital Equity Strategic Plan. We welcome the opportunity to be in thought partnership with your office and leverage resources toward our shared goals. Additionally, please refer to the list of community-based organizations and community anchor institutions (CBOs/CAIs) we have submitted; these organizations would be excellent partners and conduits for community engagement and program delivery. We look forward to continued partnership on broadband development and deployment to ensure a more economically vibrant, healthy, and equitable Kansas for all.</p> <p>If there are any digital equity assets that you feel have not been listed in the digital equity plan, please list them here</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community support organizations: The Eligible Entity included any organizations that facilitate greater use of broadband service by vulnerable populations, including low-income individuals, unemployed individuals, and aged individuals. The Eligible Entity included senior centers and job training centers in this category. The Department of Labor maintains a database of "American Job Training" training centers, established as part of the Workforce Investment Act, and reauthorized in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act of 2014. The database can be accessed at the American Job Center Finder6. The National Council on Aging (NCOA) helped identify senior centers7. Community Support Organization Type Address 1 Address 2 City State Zip Zip+4 County Explanation: Provide a brief explanation of how the institution facilitates greater broadband use and the population it serves Broadband Availability - The highest available broadband service speed of the CAIs (Mbps) The Broadband need of the location, denoted in Mbps download speeds (ie 50 Mbps; 1000 Mbps; etc) Comments Catholic Charities of NE Kansas 600 Minnesota Ave. Kansas City KS 66101 Wyandotte County Provides grants and emergency funding to families who struggle to pay for internet/broadband services <p>If there are any digital equity assets that you feel have not been listed in the digital equity plan, please list them here</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local newsrooms including local newsrooms reaching covered populations, such as rural weekly newsrooms, nonprofit newsrooms, members of the Black and Latino/Hispanic press as well as hyperlocal digital-only outlets that are filling critical information gaps among Kansas residents. These outlets will be critical partners to increasing awareness of broadband resources, but also components of digital equity themselves as they pursue objectives that enhance the civic and economic participation of Kansas residents. 	11/2/2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cross Lines added in DE Equity Asset Inventory. Not added to programs as I am unable to confirm devices provided as mentioned based on official website. Village Initiative: Added as a asset/program - For Justice-Involvement Savonburg Public Library: Added as a asset Humboldt Public Library: Added as a asset/program Moran Public Library: Added as a asset/program Thrive Allen County: Added as a asset/program Hope Unlimited: Added as a asset Southeast Kansas Mental Health Center: Added as a asset Community Health Center of Southeast Kansas: Added as a asset 	<p>Thank you for participating in our survey for the Kansas Digital Equity Plan. The Plan acknowledges the lack of connectivity. No revisions are needed based on these comments. Please refer to section 3.2.: "Of the 1.1 million locations in Kansas, 87,489 remain unserved (8.2%) and 57,316 remain underserved for a total of 144,805 (12.0% of BSLs) without qualifying broadband service."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any considerations that can make these programs more affordable by decreasing costs below \$90 and \$60, respectively, would increase the likelihood that more families can utilize these services. <p>The Plan acknowledges that affordability is an important part of digital opportunity. No revisions are needed based on these comments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 4.1: Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement- Utilizing community-based organizations (CBO's) for outreach. Also, we highly recommend that the people leading engagement and community interaction be from the communities for which input is sought. <p>Please refer to the Roadshow and listening sessions summary in the Plan, where stakeholders of all covered populations. No revisions are needed based on these comments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lastly, we also recommend that significant dollars from the Broadband, Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Initial Planning grant, DEA Planning grant, Affordable Connectivity Program Outreach Program, and other funding sources mentioned in the DE plan go directly to community-based organizations (CBOs) to help with this work. <p>The Plan acknowledges the importance of community-based organizations in digital opportunity. Digital Equity funding will be allocated in accordance with the NOFO and NTIA guidelines. No revisions are needed based on these comments.</p>
Anna	Brugmann	Rebuild Local News	Not Available	annabrugmann@rebuildlocalnews.org	<p>1. Section 3: Current State of Digital Equity Barriers and Assets</p> <p>2. Section 5: Implementation</p>	<p>1. We collectively applaud your detailed and ambitious efforts to bring universal broadband to the Sunflower State. However, we ask that you call out local news organizations as trusted partners in advancing digital equity programs as well as in your inventories as trusted partners and/or anchor institutions. As news organizations, our members are not only invested in these efforts as they work to inform their communities, but are, themselves, key partners in advancing the objectives of universal broadband and digital equity.</p> <p>We encourage the Kansas Office of Broadband Deployment to consider the role news organizations play in advancing digital literacy, adoption and access programs. For example, Lindsey Young is the co-publisher of Harvey County Now, a paper based in Newton, Kansas that serves the surrounding rural area. She developed an online learning program that teaches community members how to be local reporters, including the digital skills journalists need, but that citizens also need to vet and find critical information online. Similarly, the Wichita Foundation is launching a program that will train community members to report on public meetings. The program will build digital and information skills while also facilitating opportunities for Wichita residents to be active civic participants, all of which are key elements of digital equity. These programs could be scaled throughout Kansas, or even slightly adapted to incorporate broader digital literacy skills. This kind of investment in newsroom partners would have positive job impacts, not only helping Kansans develop critical digital literacy skills, but also helping local news organizations train qualified community members to work for their outlets. Moreover, if news outlets were granted "trusted community partner" status, they could build on the trusted relationship they have with their community, partnering with other community institutions such as public libraries or schools to implement digital literacy programs like the one described above and more.</p> <p>In addition, the Kansas Office of Broadband Development (KOBDD) reports barriers to</p>	<p>The Boston Consulting Group studied digital navigator programs over a few years and found from a survey of over 1,500 people that digital navigators can increase the effectiveness of digital equity programs (Kalmus, 2022). With support from a digital navigator, over 65% of survey respondents were able to obtain internet access, computer or tablet at home, and over 85% reported using the internet more (Kalmus, 2022). This illustrates the crucial role that digital navigators play and we need to continue to support these roles across Kansas.</p> <p>We noted that on page 80 (4.2.2) the plan focuses on rural density, distance and availability and really emphasized the issues with attaching community members to rural meetings. The digital navigator model from ACC & LISC has been empirically proven for effective trust & relationship building within rural communities. In addition, the plan can look to build the capacity of these nonprofits listed to hire and train staff dedicated to digital inclusion. Currently ACC's partnership with KC Digital Drive has showed how we can help to improve capacity for a local non profit organization. Digital Connectors are an example of how local organizations are working within the community but need more capacity building resources in order to hire and train staff. One role that our ACC members have taken at KC Digital Drive is to educate communities regarding the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) eligibility & application process. Local nonprofits can serve as a trusted, community resource which can easily be accessed by members of the community. Many individuals already accessing nonprofit services may also be eligible for federal/state broadband programs.</p> <p>References: Kalmus, M., Hill, H., Lee, J., Goodchild, C., & Webb, D. (2022, October 17). A human approach to closing the digital divide. BCG Global. https://www.bcg.com/publications/2022/how-to-close-digital-divide-with-human-approach1</p>	11/2/2023	Added Rebuild Local News to asset list	<p>Thank you for participating in our survey for the Kansas Digital Equity Plan. We appreciate your comment about the role news organizations play in advancing digital literacy, adoption and access programs. The Plan will be revised to include local newspapers in the digital equity assets list and the role newspapers can decrease obstacles in outreach in Section 4.2.</p>
Iris O'Donnell	Bellisario	Leads for America		iris.odonnellbellisario@lead4america.org	<p>1. Section 4: Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement</p> <p>2. Section 5: Implementation</p>	<p>1. The Boston Consulting Group studied digital navigator programs over a few years and found from a survey of over 1,500 people that digital navigators can increase the effectiveness of digital equity programs (Kalmus, 2022). With support from a digital navigator, over 65% of survey respondents were able to obtain internet access, computer or tablet at home, and over 85% reported using the internet more (Kalmus, 2022). This illustrates the crucial role that digital navigators play and we need to continue to support these roles across Kansas.</p> <p>We noted that on page 80 (4.2.2) the plan focuses on rural density, distance and availability and really emphasized the issues with attaching community members to rural meetings. The digital navigator model from ACC & LISC has been empirically proven for effective trust & relationship building within rural communities. In addition, the plan can look to build the capacity of these nonprofits listed to hire and train staff dedicated to digital inclusion. Currently ACC's partnership with KC Digital Drive has showed how we can help to improve capacity for a local non profit organization. Digital Connectors are an example of how local organizations are working within the community but need more capacity building resources in order to hire and train staff. One role that our ACC members have taken at KC Digital Drive is to educate communities regarding the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) eligibility & application process. Local nonprofits can serve as a trusted, community resource which can easily be accessed by members of the community. Many individuals already accessing nonprofit services may also be eligible for federal/state broadband programs.</p> <p>References: Kalmus, M., Hill, H., Lee, J., Goodchild, C., & Webb, D. (2022, October 17). A human approach to closing the digital divide. BCG Global. https://www.bcg.com/publications/2022/how-to-close-digital-divide-with-human-approach1</p>	11/2/2023	No additional change	<p>Thank you for participating in our survey for the Kansas Digital Equity Plan. We appreciate your comment about increasing support digital navigators. The Plan acknowledges their importance, which will be part of evaluating proposals to support digital navigator programs. No revisions are needed based on these comments.</p>	

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First Name	Last Name	Organization	Title	Email Address	Relevant Section of the Plan	Feedback Provided	Other Comments	Date Submitted	DE Plan Change Log	Written Responses and Actions Taken by State in Response
Jennifer	Elis	United Methodist Ministry Fund	Not Available	jennifer@healthfund.org			<p>According to the Kansas Health Institute, nearly 30% of all Kansans lack adequate internet access. This includes those that do not have high-speed internet in their area and those that do not have access to a proper device. Additionally, University of Kansas researchers found that up to 1 million Kansans live in regions that lack access to high-speed broadband services at adequate speeds. Addressing gaps in high speed internet access and devices is critical to improving health and ensuring more civically engaged communities.</p> <p>We are in strong support of Governor Kelly's Kansas Digital Equity (DE) Plan for high-speed internet connectivity which will effectively address the gap in broadband accessibility. This plan outlines digital skills training, affordable service plans, and the availability of broadband-ready devices as top priorities. We agree that these areas are the key components of digital equity. We support additional plans from Governor Kelly and the Kansas Office of Broadband Development like the Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) Five-Year Action Plan (FYAP).</p> <p>The United Methodist Health Ministry Fund is a 37-year-old, \$60-million health philanthropy located in Hutchinson. Our mission is to improve the health of all Kansans. We focus on three strategic areas—access to care, Thriving Children, and Engaged Congregations and Communities, a program aimed at addressing community health by engaging churches throughout Kansas.</p> <p>The Health Fund continues to support statewide measures to address digital inclusion because finding solutions to this issue means improving social determinants of health. As a health foundation, we work to ensure families can access telehealth services through reliable means when and where they need it. At the Health Fund, we will continue to be an active supporter in fighting for digital equity in Kansas.</p> <p>As a statewide health philanthropy, we are excited to share our support for Governor Kelly's plan and this list as a few key elements that are especially important to our mission. The primary suggestion we ask you to consider is to add a framework that provides a bit better unity between the BEAD and the DEA work, which are each so important to the success of the other, but don't always use the same language.</p>	11/2/2023	Add United Methodist Health Ministry Fund to appendices. Added to asset list covering all covered populations	Thank you for participating in our survey for the Kansas Digital Equity Plan. We appreciate your comment about the United Methodist Health Ministry Fund. The Plan will be revised to include it the Appendices list for the Kansas Digital Equity Plan. The Plan acknowledges the importance of telehealth, Community Health Worker and Navigators.
Aaron	Deacon	KC Digital Drive	Managing Director	adeacon@kcdigitaldrive.org	1. Section 3: Current State of Digital Equity Barriers and Assets	1. One item you might add among our initiatives (p 33) is the Kansas City Digital Inclusion Fund. It supports organizations and programs that focus on digital inclusion (internet access, digital skills, affordability and adoption) to increase participation in digital society for the Kansas City region's most underserved and/or disconnected residents. Under "Digital Equity Planning", we also are working with Miami County.	<p>For example, on p 24 of the plan (Section 2, on Availability) the plan clearly acknowledges the difficulty in reconciling the language and the shared objectives by extending the "success measure [of availability] to the actual adoption of broadband." Adoption is indeed a critical metric, but the language perpetuates confusion we see reflected everyday in our communities, where people say, for example, "the internet is not available" when they really mean it is not affordable or their service quality is untenable.</p> <p>We recognize that terms like availability, affordability, and digital literacy are entrenched within the community of practice, and we do not propose eliminating or replacing them. In our work with dozens of on-the-ground community partner organizations, as well as local governments working on their own digital equity strategies (including Johnson, Miami, and Wyandotte Counties), we have developed the framework below. This common language helps various stakeholders to situate their work in a more precise way to one another and also to think about planning and goal setting within whatever community they are serving. It helps us to align solutions, initiatives, program interventions and objectives to a particular aspect of the problem. The approach layers necessary-but-not-sufficient conditions for thriving communities. Logically, the section below was written to follow the sections headed "Implementation" and "Measuring Success" on p. 8. Given the structure of the report, and relation of the Executive Summary to some material repeated later, there may be some additional changes that would accompany.</p> <p><i>Framework for Implementation and Measuring Success</i></p> <p>The barriers to achieving digital equity are multifaceted. There are many reasons an individual might lack internet access or digital skills, for example. Different barriers demand different types of solutions. KORD takes a holistic view of broadband, connectivity, and digital</p>	11/2/2023	Add Miami County to page 34 Add Kansas Digital Inclusion Fund to page 34	Thank you for participating in our survey for the Kansas Digital Equity Plan. We appreciate your comment about the Kansas Digital Inclusion Fund. The Plan will be revised to include Miami County in the Digital Equity Planning's program description. Regarding a framework that provides a bit better unity between the BEAD and the DEA work, please refer to NTIA guidance for certain constraints including the use of terms like availability, affordability, and digital literacy in the Plan.
Carlee	Parker	Ideatek Telcom	Strategic Initiative Project Manager	cparker@ideatek.com			<p>The plan seems difficult to follow without a clear picture. It references a lot of statistics, but the underlying data that derives the statics is difficult to find. An executive summary or outline might be helpful to use in addition to all the detail.</p>	11/2/2023	No additional change	Thank you for participating in our survey for the Kansas Digital Equity Plan. We appreciate your comment that the Plan...references a lot of statistics, but the underlying data that derives the statics is difficult to find. An executive summary or outline might be helpful to use in addition to all the detail. Please refer to Section 3.2.2 under the Objective Section of the Plan for the sources of data used. No revisions are needed based on these comments.
Leslie	Scott	KC Digital Drice	Digital Inclusion Program Manager	lscott@kcdigitaldrive.org	1. Section 3: Current State of Digital Equity Barriers and Assets 2. Section 4: Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement 3. Section 5: Implentation	1. See file emailed 2. See file emailed 3. see sile emailed		11/2/2023	•35 Minor: Quick additions and grammatical corrections •17 Substantive: items leading to plan modification	Thank you for participating in our survey for the Kansas Digital Equity Plan. We appreciated your comments made in the email dated 11/2/2023. Please refer to Section 2.2, Section 2.3, Section 3.1 and Section 5 where majority of your comments and corrections where reviewed and added.

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First Name	Last Name	Organization	Title	Email Address	Relevant Section of the Plan	Feedback Provided	Other Comments	Date Submitted	DE Plan Change Log	Written Responses and Actions Taken by State in Response
Terri	English-Yancy	Essential Families Midwest	CEO	terri@efamilies.org	<p>1. Section 3: Current State of Digital Equity Barriers and Assets</p> <p>2. Section 4: Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement</p> <p>3. Section 5: Implementation</p>	<p>1. Excellent writing and graphics, but it's clear nonprofits, who have not collected covered population empirical data directly have defined digital equity programs for Kansas covered population. Since December 2022, Essential Families has been involved in two (2) Digital Equity programs. We learned a lot, but the most important thing we learned was: Computer, Computer training, and \$30 savings will NOT close the Digital.</p> <p>2. Providing Community Partners with relational database software, AI/ML tools, and Digital Marketing will enable effective Digital Equity Programs, that scale. Additionally, this approach/model ensures DEA funds are not wasted on the programs that have no track record of being successful.</p> <p>3. Based on what Essential Families has learned from our two (2) successful Digital Equity pilots, a lot of the Digital Equity program services mentioned in this section have been used for years, with very little results, relative to closing the Digital Divide. To implement data driven, "measurable" and "accountable" Digital Equity Programming, Essential Families highly recommends the Kansas Broadband Office initiate and fund Digital Equity Pilot(s) in geographic areas that have been identified as unserved and underserved (rural and urban core), from an infrastructure prospective. Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) should be established, based on results of Digital Equity Program pilots. Moreover, entities that receive Kansas Broadband funding should be held accountable and be required to satisfy KPI's. If not, contract "claw backs" should be executed for funded non/underperforming Digital Equity partners. Lastly, Essential Families highly recommends the use of software (specifically relational database services), AI/ML, and Digital Marketing in your implementation section. This model/structure is "measurable and scalable" for Digital Equity programs, proven successful during Digital Equity Program Pilots.</p>	<p>If there are any digital equity assets that you feel have not been listed in the digital equity plan, please list them here</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per our 354 clients served, 59 Digital Navigators, and 720 clients on our Essential Digital Equity Program waitlist; EMPIRICAL DATA, collected "directly" from covered population, and analyzed to determine digital skill level, laptop, social, education, primary health, mental health, and digital workforce needs, is the most valuable digital equity asset of them all. In other words, Essential Families went "deeper" and "directly" to understand covered population true needs. Two successful Digital Equity Pilots, from December 2022 through August 2023, helped tremendously. Essential Families highly recommends that the Kansas Broadband Office initiate and fund Digital Equity Pilot(s) in geographic areas that have been identified as unserved and underserved (rural and urban core) from an infrastructure prospective. 	11/2/2023	No additional change	<p>Thank you for participating in our survey for the Kansas Digital Equity Plan. We appreciate your comment that "the Kansas Broadband Office initiate and fund Digital Equity Pilot(s) in geographic areas that have been identified as unserved and underserved (rural and urban core), from an infrastructure prospective. Please refer to NTIA guidance for certain constraints, and Digital Equity funding will be allocated in accordance with the NOFO and NTIA guidelines. No revisions are needed based on these comments.</p>

