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December 17, 2020

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Kaiser Permanente Provides \$196,000 to Colorado School Districts to Address Health Needs During COVID-19 Pandemic

Funds will support advancement of mental, physical, social health for teachers, staff, and students

DENVER — The COVID-19 pandemic has forever changed the landscape of our state’s schools and school communities. Schools have had to adapt to new methods of teaching, connecting with students, distributing school meals to those in need, and addressing new levels of stress in teachers and staff. Today, Kaiser Permanente is providing \$196,000 to 8 Colorado school districts to support the ongoing work to improve health for teachers, staff, students, and communities during these challenging times.

“Kaiser Permanente is proud to provide this funding and support to districts across our state to help them meet the evolving academic and health needs of students, staff, and teachers,” said Mike Ramseier, president of Kaiser Permanente in Colorado.

This funding is part of Kaiser Permanente’s Thriving Schools work which recognizes the critical importance of health for successful teaching and learning, especially during a pandemic. The funds will help schools launch the [“Planning for the Next Normal at School” playbook](#), which is intended to support schools and districts with actionable steps to prioritize health and wellbeing during a pandemic that has disrupted education for virtually all students across the United States.

The playbook, created in collaboration with the nonprofit health plan and more than 30 nationally recognized and trusted school health organizations, includes six chapters that each include five actionable steps, called “Starter Plays” for schools and district leaders to improve health both in-person and in virtual school environments.

The chapters include:

- Mental Health and Well-being
- COVID-19 Prevention
- Social Drivers of Health (institutional racism, food insecurity, access to health care, homelessness, financial security)
- Physical Activity, Physical Education, and Health Education

- Staff and Teacher Well-being
- Funding and Family engagement

“The Colorado Charter School Institute is excited to distribute grant funding that will impact the mental and physical well-being of over 3,000 students at 6 charter schools across the Denver-metro area,” said Michael McManus, CSI Career Pathways & School Programs coordinator.

Chad Miller, CEO of Pinnacle Charter School, one of the 6 CSI schools receiving funding, shared, “Our students’ social and emotional health has been a primary focus for us and this additional money will allow us to continue our efforts even further in this area.”

Each district was awarded \$24,500 to activate one or more of the starter plays in their schools. Here is a list of the 8 districts and how each plan to use their funding:

Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI)

Funds provided through this grant will allow CSI schools to provide students, teachers, and staff the resources and professional training necessary to ensure emotional and physical wellbeing and academic growth during the COVID-19 pandemic. CSI schools will address these needs using an equity-focused approach and work to provide a sustainable impact to under-resourced and traditionally marginalized members of their school community.

District 27J

District 27J is focused on enhancing its staff health and will use its funding to provide learning opportunities to address burnout and promote stress reduction. The district will also provide self-compassion training for a greater impact on employee well-being, resilience, and stress management.

Jefferson County School District

Jeffco Public Schools plans to use its funding in several ways including offering trainings to physical education teachers to help provide new techniques to increase physical activity for students as well as in-classroom physical activity training and physical activity kits for teachers across the district. Jeffco will also use its funding to provide home-visit-hybrid training to increase meaningful family and student engagement through positive home-school connections. The training will give school staff the ability to bridge the isolation families and students are currently experiencing.

Adams 12 School District

Adams 12 is using its funding to connect school communities to resources to fight food insecurity. The funding will help the district locate meals for students when schools are closed, provide information about food resources in their area, and identify resources due to immigration status. Adams 12 will also partner with a local food pantry who can bring boxes of food on a regular basis to schools. This program will give families access to food while they wait to be approved for other assistance programs.

Colorado Springs School District 11

District 11 aims to reach staff across their district through a wellness campaign that includes using their portion of funding for trainings on social and health inequities exacerbated by COVID-19. These trainings will include safe spaces for staff to express their emotions related to COVID-19 and discuss social injustices experienced in their community.

Fountain Fort Carson School District 8

Fountain Fort Carson 8 will use its funding to implement a train-the-trainer course where teachers will learn about delivering culturally responsive, trauma-informed practices that foster equity and inclusiveness across the district's schools and classrooms.

Harrison School District 2

Harrison 2 will provide social-emotional teacher trainings to support teachers as the first line of connection with the students. The curriculum is a blend of mindfulness practice, emotional regulation skills, and positive psychology.

Weld County School District 6

Weld District 6 will provide trainings that build social-emotional skills for teachers, administrators, and other staff. The funding will also be used to develop cohorts within the district that offer additional professional learning opportunities on this topic.

The newly announced funding for these 8 districts is the latest support Kaiser Permanente has provided schools across the state. In August, the state's largest nonprofit health plan also provided 5 local school districts \$1.5 million for increasing mental health support and COVID-19 prevention for school communities. Kaiser Permanente has also started offering schools a unique virtual platform for learning about, identifying, and living with mental health needs.

This work to support school communities is part of Kaiser Permanente's long-standing commitment to improving the health of all its communities. Throughout its 50-year history in Colorado, Kaiser Permanente has provided more than \$1 billion in support for local nonprofit agencies, school districts, and municipalities to help make Colorado healthier.

To learn more about Kaiser Permanente's work with its communities, please visit: [about.kp.org](https://www.kaiserpermanente.org/about)

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For 75 years, Kaiser Permanente has been committed to shaping the future of health and health care — and helping our members, patients, and communities experience more healthy years. We are recognized as one of America's leading health care providers and not-for-profit health plans. Since July 21, 1945, Kaiser Permanente's mission has been to provide high-quality, affordable health care services and to improve the health of our members and the communities we serve. We currently serve 12.4 million members in eight states and the District of Columbia, including more than 600,000 members in Colorado. Care for members and patients is focused on their total health and guided by their personal Permanente Medical Group physicians, specialists and team of caregivers. Our expert and caring medical teams are empowered and supported by industry-leading technology advances and tools for

health promotion, disease prevention, state-of-the-art care delivery and world-class chronic disease management. Kaiser Permanente is dedicated to care innovations, clinical research, health education, and the support of community health. <http://about.kaiserpermanente.org>