



Healthy Food for Denver's Kids 2023 Annual Report to City Council

December 2023

Introduction

Background:

Through the 2018 Denver Ballot Measure 302, the Healthy Food for Denver's Kids (HFDK) Initiative increased taxes to establish a fund for healthy food and food-based education for Denver's youth. The ballot measure was approved by 59% of Denver voters on November 6, 2018, and went into effect in January 2019. The 0.08% increase in the sales and use tax within the City and County of Denver is expected to generate approximately \$11 million dollars annually and will sunset after 10 years. Funds will be collected from January 1, 2019, through December 31, 2028, and distributed by December 31, 2029.

The funds are distributed through competitive grants to agencies of local government, public schools in Denver (including Denver Public Schools or DPS), and non-profit organizations, with an emphasis on serving low-income youth. Funding decisions are determined by a Commission made up of 13 non-profit, government, and community member volunteer appointees. The Commission is staffed and supported by the Denver Department of Public Health & Environment (DDPHE).

Report:

This report serves as the annual requirement to share funding distribution information and key changes to policies or procedures of the HFDK initiative to Denver City Council.

In addition to this report, HFDK staff presented an update on the current state of child food insecurity in Denver, background on the HFDK initiative, a financial summary, and the 2024 contract processes to the City Council Safety, Housing, Education & Homelessness Committee. The presentation occurred on August 2, 2023. During this presentation, Safety Committee members were also presented with 22 resolution requests for new and renewed contracts requiring City Council approval.

2023 HFDK Grantmaking Summary

In 2023, the HFDK Commission awarded a total of \$35.4 million dollars in grant funding to 42 organizations (43 contracts because one grantee holds two contracts). This includes 14 new projects funded as part of HFDK04 (\$21.1 million dollars over 2 years and 5 months), 17 continuing projects from HFDK02 (\$7.7 million dollars), and 12 continuing projects from HFDK03 (\$6.5 million dollars). See the Appendix for a list of all grantees funded in 2023 and their project summaries.

The HFDK Commission received 33 letters of interest in response to the HFDK04 funding request. Reviewers identified 21 projects to seek a full application from, and ultimately, the Commission selected the 14 highest scoring applications to fund. Thirteen (13) nonprofits and one (1) City and County of Denver agency were awarded funds as part of the HFDK04 cohort, with the average grant award size of around \$1.5 million dollars across a two year

and five-month timeframe. The HFDK04 grantee's award term of two years and five months (August 2023-December 2025) is in response to partner feedback seeking alignment with both the academic and growing season calendars. The Commission may allow for the possibility for HFDK04 grantees to apply for a two-year extension.

The HFDK05 funding opportunity, a request for letters of interest, was opened on 11/1/2023, in anticipation for grantee contracts that will begin in August 2024. HFDK released the application earlier than usual to provide applicants with additional time to prepare their letters of interest, especially if they are pursuing partnerships. The typical annual funding schedule has included posting an RFP in winter for contracts to start August 1.

Key Developments in 2023

Grantmaking

Since the passage of [the enabling legislation for HFDK](#), significant progress has been made towards improving healthy food access and food education for Denver's youth. **The total HFDK funding awarded, since 2020, is \$66.5 million dollars to 95 organizations**, including an increased focus on collaborative programming and collective impact around healthy food access for Denver youth and their families.

Staff led equity-focused innovations towards improving Commission, program and RFP processes, including the development of 9 [Values & Approach statements](#). Additional examples include the integration of a letter of interest (HFDK04 and HFDK05), grantee Zoom interviews (HFDK05), intentional community feedback gathered through a series of three grantee workshops to inform RFPs, and an emphasis within HFDK04 on collaborative projects. Staff created a new template for the HFDK05 LOI and refined the scoring criteria for clarity and accessibility for applicants, as well as secured a consultant to provide one-on-one grant writing technical assistance to applicants by reviewing and providing feedback on their Letters of Interest.

In addition to building out HFDK's grants management infrastructure, HFDK staff were major contributors to the Peak Academy effort around identifying a multi-agency, centralized grants management system for the city, with the hopes of 2024 implementation.

Commission

Membership: The Commission welcomed five new members from August to November, including two new City Council representatives (Councilmembers Paul Kashmann and Diana Romero Campbell), one new organizational representative from Food Bank of the Rockies, one community member representative, and a new designee from Denver Human Services. HFDK continues to prioritize diversity and representation in Commission membership: currently 23% of the Commission is made up of Black or African American members and 62% of all members identify as people of color.

Chairs and Committees: The Commission welcomed a new co-chair, Linh Tran, to join current co-chair, Austin Locke. The Commission also identified new sub-committee chairs, Maggie Brown and Meg Tracz, for the membership and funding sub-committees, respectively.

There are a total of five active committees, and most committees met at least quarterly in 2023. The funding and evaluation committees met most frequently, while the technical assistance, capacity building and partnerships committee continued to be active. The membership committee selected new Commission members, in addition to finalizing a member renewal process that will be used in future years. The equity committee decided to restructure to better support integration of equity within the other sub-committees. The governance committee was mostly on pause this year after working extensively on proposed changes to the Denver Revised Municipal Code in late 2022.

Monthly Meetings and Learning: The Commission held eight monthly meetings, exceeding the goal of six meetings annually. The Commission also held one social event for new members and a tour of the Denver Public Schools large-scale greenhouse (funded in part by an HFDK01 grant). The Commission exceeded its goal of two learning opportunities, as members participated in a greenhouse tour, and heard presentations on 1) federal child nutrition programs from Share Our Strength No Kid Hungry, 2) the Denver Sustainable Food Policy Council by DDPHE, and 3) the city's Food Interagency Group from DDPHE.

Evaluation

HFDK has contracted with Change Matrix as its external evaluation partner since 2020. In preparation for Change Matrix's contract ending in January 2024, DDPHE released a second evaluation RFP in 2023. Cicitelli Associates Inc. ("CAI") was identified through the RFP process as HFDK's new external evaluator as part of a four-year \$1.6 million dollar contract to evaluate the impact of the HFDK Initiative. CAI started their contract in September, as HFDK intentionally created overlap with Change Matrix to ensure a smooth evaluation transition in terms of knowledge transfer, collaboration, and preventing gaps in data.

Change Matrix, CAI and HFDK staff co-facilitated an evaluation kick-off call for grantees in October, orienting everyone to the evaluation reporting structure. CAI also facilitated a strategic planning retreat in November 2023 with the Commission and grantee partners to continue to reflect on and better align the HFDK vision, work, and progress towards meeting the goal of this initiative. Staff supported the evaluation transition to CAI, including ensuring CAI understands the importance of HFDK funding opportunities being evaluation data-informed and strategic to maximize impact.

HFDK staff also worked with evaluators to create various [geographic information system \(GIS\) maps](#). These maps help visualize current food access locations, food insecurity risk and needs across neighborhoods in Denver, grantee reach, and population-level demographic data.

In early 2024, Change Matrix will send HFDK staff a full annual impact report about the results of HFDK's program from 2023. Previous annual reports can be found on [DDPHE's website](#).

A preview of the year 3 evaluation report (August 2022-July 2023 data) includes the following impact metrics from HFDK's 49 contracted grantees:

- **117,455 unduplicated youth served**
 - Though most grantees served racially and ethnically diverse populations, **Hispanic/Latinx children was the largest population served** by grantees. This has been consistent across each year of HFDK reporting.
- 39 grantees served a total of **17,696,128 meals and snacks**
- 33 grantees distributed **11,236,446 pounds of food to families**
- 17 grantees distributed **4,016,895 pounds of food to partner organizations** for re-distribution to children and families
- **13 grantees enrolled youth and families** in federal nutrition assistance programs
- 4 grantees enrolled **28 new CACFP sites and 30 new summer meal sites**
- 39 grantees provided **4,699 group classes** (9,090 total instruction hours), **impacting 47,050 youth in food and nutrition education**
- 22 grantees harvested **86,522 pounds of food from local gardens and farms**
- 27 grantees created **220 new youth jobs/internships** in the food system
- 86% of grantees reported increased knowledge of healthy foods and nutrition
- 82% of grantees reported increased fruit and vegetable consumption

Grantee Technical Assistance

HFDK staff led grantee technical assistance (TA) through intentionally coordinating outreach and partnerships around school gardens and federal nutrition assistance programs. These programs include the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), the Summer Meal Service Program (SFSP), and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). For example, multiple grantees are newly participating as summer meal sites as a result of the HFDK funding and TA connection. Moreover, staff co-led a very successful SNAP outreach webinar that included a grantee panel discussion and 40+ attendees.

HFDK staff also gathered and shared out relevant resources and strategic connections for grantees, including info on summer meal sites, youth employment, farm to child, school garden resources, food education curriculum, Healthy School Meals for All and the importance of families filling out the “You Benefit!” form, numerous grant opportunities, trainings and professional development opportunities, mobile pantries, utility and rental assistance, public transit, and job opportunities. Grantee TA work in 2024 will involve continued survey analysis, strategizing, and increased one-on-one support.

Partnerships

Expanding beyond just current grantees, HFDK hosted a publicly accessible partner networking event in October 2023, bringing together over 30 organizations to connect with like-minded individuals and organizations passionate about improving the nutrition of Denver’s children.

For the past year, HFDK staff actively participated in and contributed to the Blueprint to End Hunger Funder Collaborative. This participation included bringing case studies to the group for shared learning, contributing to the development of a “food funder landscape” analysis, and sharing equitable grantmaking best practices from HFDK.

Internal to the city, HFDK sought increased collaboration with two groups, the Sustainable Food Policy Council (SFPC) and the Food Interagency Group (FIG). In early 2023, the SFPC presented to the Commission about their policy priorities, and in the fall of 2023, HFDK program staff attended the annual SFPC retreat where the council identified its policy priorities for 2024. HFDK plans to continue coordinating with current SFPC chairs to increase awareness of each other’s work. HFDK staff were active participants in the city’s Food Interagency Group (FIG) that won a Peak Academy award for “Best Cross-Agency Collaboration in 2023.”

Public Engagement

Throughout this year, HFDK staff worked with the DDPHE communications team to make regular web updates, publish press releases, and post periodically on social media to promote the program. This public sharing also included staff interviews with reporters, resulting in three positive news stories about HFDK (Westword, 9 News and Denverite). Staff also co-presented with HFDK grantee, Denver Inner City Parish, at the 2023 national Hunger Free Communities Virtual Summit. HFDK staff were invited to present about the initiative and Commission at the Colorado Food Summit, being held in December 2023.

Staffing

The HFDK team expanded from three staff members to six staff members in 2023. This expansion included hiring a contract compliance coordinator and two program associates who joined the existing Program Administrator (promoted to Program Supervisor), Fiscal and Contract Administrator, and Administrative Support Assistant.

This growth will significantly increase the team’s capacity to provide improved fiscal oversight, grantee support, and community outreach. For example, HFDK officially launched its site visit protocol, established one-on-one staff support for grantees and commissioners, and delivered an Invoicing 101 training for all grantees (with 75+ attendees).

Policy

In terms of internal policy updates, the HFDK Conflict of Interest and Recusal Policy was updated to indicate that individuals from current grantee organizations or those who intend to apply for funds will not be able to participate in the funding sub-committee. Additionally, HFDK created a Partial Funding Policy for RFPs that states that reviewers may recommend a funding dollar amount and then staff will work with applicants to modify their budgets and scopes of work accordingly.

In the past two years, HFDK staff and Commissioners have continued to gain new perspectives and lessons learned from daily operations and from interacting with grantees. This learning has resulted in the identification of additional gaps and challenges in the Commission's membership and operations, and grantees have demonstrated a strong interest and commitment to buying local food. As a result, HFDK began working with the previous Mayoral administration in 2023 to do a preliminary review of Commission-approved Denver Revised Municipal Code (DRMC) changes, but ultimately, were not able to advance the proposal for consideration due to the timing of the mayoral transition. Note that HFDK had a round of DRMC changes approved by City Council in the summer of 2021 to disburse funds more widely, effectively, and equitably.

In 2024, HFDK staff and Commissioners will continue to operate and refine the Initiative so that it's an equitable and impactful grant program. Leveraging partnerships, policy and evaluation, HFDK will further contribute to its long-term vision that "all Denver kids have reliable access to healthy, nutritious and culturally diverse food and food education that helps them learn, grow, and thrive for life."

Appendix. 2023 Grantees

GRANTEE	AMOUNT AWARDED IN 2023	GRANT SUMMARY
Boys & Girls Clubs of Metro Denver	\$572,474.99	2021-2024 Project: Boys & Girls Clubs of Metro Denver will improve and increase food-related services for our Denver Club members. Like all kids, Club members are full of joy and dreams, and want to do their best. Due to systemic and other inequities, though, many Clubs members face food insecurity and a lack of knowledge around nutrition due to systemic inequities. Of our kids, 87% qualify for free or reduced lunch and half comes from homes earning less than \$22,000/year. BGCMD will help overcome these inequities by offering targeted and robust healthy food supports including daily meals and snacks, take-home healthy food boxes, nutrition education, and support enrolling families in public food benefits like SNAP and WIC. This will be achieved through funds that will allow us to hire a Health Coordinator, support staff salaries, purchase food and equipment, train staff, pay for partner provided programming, and more.
Bright by Text	\$341,000	2022-2024 Project: Support from HFDK enables Bright by Text to increase Denver families' awareness, knowledge, and connection to healthy food resources and educational programs. Through partnerships with organizations providing food distribution, nutrition education, and enrollment in federal nutrition assistance programs, Bright by Text connects over 3,000 caregivers of young children subscribed to the free texting service with information about programs available in their community. This grant funds the scaling of the texting service for Denver community food and nutrition focused organizations and expanding reach to more families.
Center for African American Health	\$691,350	2023-2025 Project: Healthy Food for Denver's Kids funding will support the Center for African American Health (CAA Health) to renovate their 3350 Hudson Street facility to create a teaching kitchen and garden. This new community space will support nutrition classes and healthy eating for program participants and community members. The project helps expand CAA Health's capacity to implement family-friendly, developmentally appropriate, health and nutrition educational programming that incorporates growing and preparing healthy foods and teaching young children and their families the life-long benefits of healthy eating. Housed in a facility that was formerly a charter school, the support from Healthy Food for Denver's Kids is helping CAA Health continue to grow into the family and community resource center we envisioned when we first purchased the building. The addition of a Nutrition and Garden Coordinator to work in tandem with our community navigators will allow us to implement family-friendly nutrition education programming.
Clayton Early Learning	\$1,181,108	2022-2024 Project: Clayton Early Learning is proud to partner with HFDK in three critical areas that promote health and wellness through good nutrition for young children and their families. Their Seed to Stomach initiative will develop, implement, and market an innovative and interactive curriculum that will immerse children and families in the practice of urban gardening as a sustainable source of healthy food, instilling lifelong wellbeing practices for optimal health through good nutrition. The Clayton Cares Market – their innovative approach to addressing food insecurity with dignity and choice, will be expanded to serve more families at Clayton and in the community. Clayton Early Learning will also increase their existing partnership with Denver Health WIC to offer enhanced enrollment resources and maximize nutrition support for women and young children in the community.
Coalition for the Homeless	\$147,394.47	2023-2025 Project: Colorado Coalition for the Homeless will provide healthy food and nutrition classes to residents in two of our supported housing properties. We will also provide an onsite food bank to the residents of the properties and provide them with transportation to obtain food from other resources as needed. We are hiring a Resident Services Coordinator (RSC) to help us provide these services. This person will also provide additional support to keep clients stably housed, ensuring the kids and families are healthy and have adequate access to food resources. The project will

		incorporate office hours into monthly on-site food banks and cooking classes to create a space where the RSC will work with families to provide resources to complete the paperwork for SNAP and WIC, as appropriate. Lastly, this project will provide gardening space, nutrition education, and healthy cooking classes for children and families. Families that attend and participate in 75% or more of the cooking classes will receive cookware at the end of the class to commemorate the efforts of their nutrition education. Receiving HFDK funds means that we can educate our families on how to eat in a healthy way that still tastes good and is affordable. Some families struggle to access healthy food resources and this funding allows us to bring the resources to them.
Colorado Circles for Change	\$332,640	2023-2025 Project: Colorado Circles for Change's (CCFC) Healthy Hood Initiative provides access to nutritious and culturally responsive food for youth in our afterschool and summer programs in Denver. Healthy Food for Denver's Kids funds will be used to provide nutritious meals on site and for delivery of food packages, twice per month, to youth impacted by violence and the criminal justice system in under-resourced communities. Funds will be used to provide cooking classes for youth and their families once a month that focus on using traditional foods in the most nutritional way. We will also hold family gatherings quarterly where we will provide workshops on how to garden, how to access farmers markets, urban gardens, and local foods to increase nutrition at home. CCFC is committed to feeding Denver's most vulnerable youth, including youth of color, immigrants, and refugees. Receiving HFDK funds means our youth are going to show up as their best selves. To be able to be at their full potential, they must eat good food!
Commún	\$570,000	2021-2024 Project: In partnership with HFDK, Commún receives funding for three food programs: community food share, gardens, and trainings and power building. They are in the middle of a three-year process to transition multiple community food banks to combine into a community-led food hub designed and directed by residents who experience food insecurity. Their garden program is led by a community leader and expert and supports 23 gardeners and their families in accessing land, securing seeds and seedlings, and maintaining their gardens. All the food grown goes directly to the gardeners' families and neighbors. HFDK funding increases access to healthy food for Denver's kids by providing food, local urban gardening opportunities, and training in conjunction with a collective process to address the whole person and the root causes of hunger. This funding allows small food shares in Southwest Denver to work with people experiencing food insecurity to co-design a long-term food system for our community that achieves food sovereignty.
Denver Food Rescue	HFDK02: \$468,807 HFDK04: \$1,331,232.57	2021-2024 Project: Denver Food Rescue will provide a new free delivery program using HFDK funds. This program, Healthy Choice Food Box, has been able to deliver fresh monthly produce from East Denver Food Hub to 300 families throughout Denver. Each month families have the option to choose foods that are culturally relevant. The next year of the program is expected to grow to 600 families. 2023-2025 Project: Denver Food Rescue will be collaborating with Spirit of the Sun, Sun Valley Kitchen and Community Center, The Urban Farm, Fresh Food Connect and UpRoot Colorado . All collaborators use culturally responsive nutrition standards informed by the communities we serve. With this partnership, we will rescue and distribute fresh food and produce, distribute free food biweekly, and partner with several community organizations including schools, Denver Health, and City of Denver departments to host No Cost Grocery Programs throughout the city. With HFDK funding, Denver Food Rescue will supplement rescued food by purchasing culturally responsive and requested foods for each No Cost Grocery Program. These foods will be purchased directly from local BIPOC-led farms and food hubs. DFR and Sun Valley Kitchen and Community Center will work together to increase participation in federal assistance programs, and to provide food and nutrition education. Both organizations have employees trained in signing up community members for SNAP and WIC (and will be able to provide staff hours for outreach and signups for

		federal programs) and expand their youth education programs. Spirit of the Sun will increase their food pickup window, add additional delivery routes to families that cannot pickup food, and increase the amount of food our staff and volunteers are able to grow. The Urban Farm will grow desired vegetables and varieties, as well as provide farm-based youth and family education for participants year-round. UpRoot's gleaning initiative will be community-led, with volunteers and staff from partnering organizations working together to provide food distribution, nutrition education, and other services. Lastly, Fresh Food Connect will build on initial success and deepen our local impact, strengthen city-wide networks and increase nutritious local food access and security for our community.
Denver Health and Hospital Authority in partnership with Colorado WIC	\$644,895	2021-2024 Project: Evidence strongly suggests that participation in federal nutrition programs like WIC and SNAP improves health outcomes for pregnant women, children, and families. The program that HFDK funds, specialized co-enrollment, will improve Denver's suboptimal enrollment rates of these nutrition programs and reduce overall food insecurity in households with children by ensuring that eligible families become and stay enrolled in food assistance programs that increase food and economic security. This project will be an extension and expansion of a pilot project with WIC at Denver Health. This proposal will enable patients to be enrolled in and receive WIC services during pediatric and OB/GYN appointments at several Denver Health outpatient clinic locations including Eastside, Montbello, Westside, Webb Pediatrics, and Pena Clinic.
Denver Housing Authority in partnership with Youth Employment Academy	\$412,592	2021-2024 Project: Denver Housing Authority (DHA) in partnership with the Youth Employment Academy (YEA) will address food insecurity in Southwest Denver through education, food distribution, and youth leadership in horticulture. YEA will be providing nutrition and healthy cooking classes, distributing healthy snacks to youth, and running a youth led "Vegetable Artscape" Project. The nutrition and healthy food classes aim to change the eating habits of low-income families in collaboration with the Osage Cafe. The healthy snacks will be distributed through Decatur Fresh, an affordable, fresh, and international marketplace in the Sun Valley neighborhood and the Osage Café & Mercado, an affordable, fresh marketplace in the Mariposa neighborhood. In the "Vegetable Artscape" project, youth will work with Denver Botanic Gardens to learn about the urban farming process and what vegetables are being grown in the Sun Valley neighborhood. The youth will also work with a local artist to create an educational and cultural pathway leading to the urban farm to highlight the cultural diversity of the Sun Valley neighborhood.
Denver Inner City Parish	\$1,271,780.08	2021-24 Project: The Denver Inner City Parish will utilize HFDK funds to support the Greens-N-Grains (GNG) Community Nutrition Food Truck and the Veggie RX Nutrition Education Program. The GNG program will distribute nutritious meals to youth in low food access areas across Denver, partnering with schools, afterschool programs, sporting events, and other community gatherings. The Veggie RX Program utilizes health education, cooking demos, gardening, and food awareness/knowledge to educate youth and families about healthy living. By strengthening participants' capacity to eat and cook healthy meals, plan, and budget for purchasing nutritious foods, understand nutrition labeling, and make empowered, healthy decisions about their diets/eating habits at a young age; both programs aim to increase participants healthy habits and promote active lifestyles. Each year, this program will serve meals and provide mobile education to 2,500 unique youth and provide hands-on nutrition and cooking classes to over 400 unique youth and their families.
Denver Juvenile Services Center / Denver Public Safety	\$146,222.06	2021-2024 Project: Denver Public Safety Youth Programs provides educational and vocational support services to Denver's justice-involved youth between the ages of 14-18. The goal of this specific project is to provide meaningful work experience and education in partnership with The Urban Farm in topics including healthy eating, cooking, farm business planning, horticultural skills, greenhouse management, and livestock care. The participating youth would be enrolled in 4 days of education and hands-on skill building per week for a minimum of 10 weeks from 9-4 pm each day; there would be 4-5 youth cohorts served per year. The youth would be

		directly involved in the development and management of small-scale livestock (poultry, goats, and sheep) and horticultural production in the City of Denver. The produce and animal products would be distributed to the local community on a sliding scale basis, further participants of the program would also receive a share of the food produced on a weekly basis. This program aims to provide critical and meaningful life skills through farm education, access to healthy food, and opportunities for restorative justice for some of Denver's most at-risk youth, while positively impacting the larger community through healthy food distribution.
Denver Public Library	\$280,454	2023-2025 Project: Denver Public Library provides free healthy snacks to Denver youth at 15 branch locations across the community through the HFDK grant. The program employs 10 youth assistants from the local community to help organize and distribute snacks to youth. This program aims to foster connections between youth and their local branch libraries, which provide a wide range of engaging and supportive programs for youth and families. The HFDK grant has been a value add for the families and communities that Denver Public Library serves. The youth at our locations are always eager to pick up their snacks, and it provides us with a great opportunity to connect with them.
Denver Public Schools Food and Nutrition Services	\$772,750.08	2021-2024 Project: To increase the number of daily lunches served to DPS students, Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) needs to improve the quality of meals made at school. To improve the meal quality, FNS must train all (850) kitchen employees and managers in basic culinary skills to serve consistent, high-quality, tasty and nutritious school meals. This proposal will help to fund the professional training program created and executed by a national organization, Brigaid, for all Food and Nutrition Services kitchen workers and managers.
Denver Urban Gardens	\$1,478,388.86	2023-2025 Project: Collectively and independently, Denver Urban Gardens (DUG), Slow Food Denver , and We Don't Waste are working together to educate and inspire students with a special focus on increasing nutritious food access and security. Seed to Plate to Regenerate (SPR) not only will provide nutritious food to thousands of youth in Denver, but also will support families across Denver through innovative and engaging educational opportunities for children to grow, learn about, and cook healthy food. SPR will provide food systems education at 5-10 elementary Denver Public Schools, prioritizing schools with existing DUG gardens. Capitalizing on each organization's expertise and strengths, SPR will increase the depth and breadth of impact on school communities by providing students with hands-on activities related to gardening, cooking and food tasting, nutrition, composting, and food waste reduction. Activities will include classroom experiences, cooking classes, school-wide food waste audit programs, food distribution, and after-school programming (i.e., gardening clubs). HFDK has galvanized our efforts to work both independently and collectively with one another, strengthening the food network in support of Denver's kids. These funds allow each of our organizations to work closer together, creating stronger impact and greater support for experiences that help kids understand the importance of growing, cooking, and eating healthier food while keeping in mind the importance of caring for and sustaining our local community and environment.
Early Excellence Program of Denver	\$203,139	2021-2024 Project: Early Excellence Program (EEP) will continue to implement a new food-based educational program for its 80 under-served students, ages 2.5 - 5 years old and their families. EEP is looking forward to this new grant opportunity with HFDK that will allow for a fresh new start to implementing a family-friendly health and nutrition educational program that incorporates healthy activities, healthy foods and teaching young children and their families the life-long benefits of eating healthy and personal fitness for not only today, but for years to come.

Ekar Farm	\$137,273	2021-2024 Project: Ekar Farm is focused on growing and distributing farm fresh produce, and experiential education, to Denver's youth and families. Receiving HFDK funds means Ekar can ensure that tens of thousands of pounds of fresh, local, nutrient-dense food can be grown and distributed to the most vulnerable youth. These funds put farm-food systems-school partnerships to work building capacity for local schools and other service providers to reach more families than ever with produce, nutrition information, and hands-on food and food system education.
Focus Points Family Resource Center	\$430,297	2022-2024 Project: Huerta Urbana 2Gen Farm Incubator is a community-built social enterprise at Focus Points Family Resource Center providing economic opportunity through urban agriculture. The program opens opportunities for participants to get better-paying jobs and start their own businesses in the industry while earning stipends to support their families. In partnership with their Early Childhood Programs, PAT and HIPPPY, Huerta will be distributing weekly, CACFP-guided 'Bounty Boxes' to each of the 234 children aged 0-5 in those programs by growing produce on their farm at Focus Points and aggregating other food items from co-operatively owned and operated farms around Colorado. In addition to the nutrition, they will be providing education and resources for parents on how to prepare and enjoy the produce provided.
Frontline Farming	\$517,057	2022-2024 Project: HFDK's support will allow Frontline Farming to create expanded educational opportunities to youth in their target areas. The expanded programming activities will include a minimum of 20 educational presentations for youth with a focus on ages 0-5, monthly on-site garden classes, the creation of a community garden with programming at an anchor institution for the Black community in Denver, and additional staffing to enroll and directly connect families to Federal Nutrition Assistance Programs. They will also be able to engage small children with nutritious food by providing healthy snacks and meals at their youth classes.
Hunger Free Colorado	\$135,572	2022-2024 Project: HFDK funds will support Hunger Free Colorado's (HFC) outreach to connect families and children to food assistance such as SNAP, WIC, school meals, summer meals and more. These efforts include HFC's Food Resource Hotline, Mobile Outreach to provide face-to-face support and assistance in partnership with other community organizations and supporting SNAP PEAS (Partners Engaging in Application Services) partners including community-based organizations and government agencies in assisting families to apply for SNAP.
Jewish Family Service	\$399,931.42	2023-2025 Project: Jewish Family Service of Colorado (JFS) provides no-cost/free, nutritious food directly to Denver youth and their families through its Weinberg Food Pantry and Mobile Food & Hygiene Pantry programs. JFS's Mobile Food Pantry (MFP) works to improve food access for Denver youth and their families by bringing nutritious, culturally responsive food directly to families' neighborhoods. The MFP offers year-round access to nutritious and varied food items that clients select themselves, guaranteeing that all delivered food meets children's preferences as well as each family's cultural and medical dietary restrictions. JFS prioritizes communities identified as food deserts (or low food access areas) to reach children and families without access to transportation or affordable groceries. JFS collaborates closely with clients, community members, and trusted neighborhood institutions to ensure the pantry continues to deliver a variety of desired, culturally appropriate food items at convenient times and locations. JFS is proud to partner with HFDK to purchase food and cover essential operating and staffing expenses for its Weinberg Food Pantry and Mobile Food Pantry programs. Collectively, we are dedicated to implementing all programs according to culturally responsive, trauma-informed practices that reduce stigma and promote dignity and choice to benefit children and their families in the City and County of Denver.
Jovial Concepts	\$168,817	2021-2024 Project: Jovial's primary purpose with this funding is to educate Denver's kids on how to avert hunger, reduce waste and eat healthy through 1) garden programs, 2) cooking and nutrition classes, 3) sustainable food education classes, 4) outreach and sign up for federal food assistance programs and 5) school youth garden clubs. In addition, Jovial distributes

		food directly to Denver’s kids through summer meals, and organic garden produce. They will increase food distribution for families with continuing needs through providing a meal subscription Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) food model that features healthy eating from organic produce and recipes from minority chefs who will disseminate educational recipes from around the world. They will also distribute formula and food to families with children ages 0-5 in their Baby Day program.
Kaizen Food Rescue	\$199,078	2021-2024 Project: Their activities all revolve around a central idea: how can we get more healthy food, and more healthy food experiences, to our youth? HFDK funding will support a project that will procure and grow healthy food for the community. Through urban gardening and agriculture, local food procurement, summer kids’ meals, youth teams, and community leaders, Kaizen Food Rescue will augment their hugely successful mobile food share with locally grown food. HFDK funds is providing Kaizen the opportunity to move towards their goal of food sovereignty and simultaneously empower impacted Denver youth in the process.
Lifespan Local – Southwest Food Coalition	\$918,038	2022-2024 Project: The Southwest Food Coalition, led by Lifespan Local, will address food insecurity in families with youth 0-5 through several methods. They will increase the amount of food available at partner food pantries, connect youth 0-5 to existing community food resources, solicit feedback from families to improve food resources, and provide healthy and culturally appropriate food directly to ECEs. Lastly, they will provide food benefits education and enrollment at ECEs.
Metro Caring	\$623,887	2022-2024 Project: Metro Caring meets the immediate needs of families in the community by offering free, fresh, healthy foods in its Fresh Foods Market, open Monday through Friday by appointment. However, it also works in prevention and intervention by offering programming co-created with members of the community who live with low incomes. The Metro Caring Market is the entry-point to programs and services that help address factors connected to food insecurity for low-income families. As an expansion of the Metro Caring Nutrition Program’s Healthy Tastings, and its collaboration with the Urban Agriculture program "Lettuce Be Kids"; recipes, food lists and take-home garden packages focused on brain, bone and soft tissue development, and immune system support will be provided with a focus on families with children 0-5. Additionally, the new iteration of the Metro Caring Community Connector Program that historically provided support for community members to access supplementary resources, will have a focus on families of children aged 0-5, and enrollment in SNAP and other support programs.
Mile High 360	\$387,652.10	2023-2025 Project: Mile High 360 works with a series of community partners, including Youth Employment Academy/Osage Cafe, Denver Inner City Parish, and Denver Urban Gardens , to provide its families with timely access to healthy food, nutritional information, and culinary instruction that can be used to shape a healthy relationship with food. Through its creative use of a full-time Family Liaison, our families are expanding their resource network and learning to independently access essential resources. Mile High 360 students, aged 18-years and under, are starting their relationship with healthy food at an earlier than normal age. Not only are they being exposed to a wide array of healthy foods and talking about how those foods impact their health, but they are also learning how to prepare a range of healthy meals. Finally, working with a Farm/Garden Expert, Mile High 360 will run its own garden plots to grow food that is identified as “valuable” by its own families. As a two-generation wrap-around services community organization working with families in under-resourced neighborhoods, this funding provides a level of stability for so many of our families. This stability, around food, has a positive ripple effect and supports stability in other areas. While this funding is focused on food and nutrition, its impact can be felt throughout the entire family ecosystem.

Monarch Montessori	\$231,000	2021-2024 Project: First Steps at Monarch Montessori's proposal will directly benefit 300 children in Northeast Denver. Their program educates youth, provides nutritious meals to students and boosts revenue to local food suppliers. HFDK grant money will support the student gardening program, daily school lunch, monthly food distribution and classes in gardening and cooking. These services will alleviate school-day hunger, provide healthy food year-round at home for students, and introduce skills essential to long-term healthy living.
Office of Children's Affairs	\$1,059,781	2022-2024 Project: The Office of Children's Affairs (OCA) will expand "Tasty Food: where Denver youth eat free." Year-round, in approximately 50 locations across Denver, children ages 3 through 18 will enjoy nutritious and culturally responsive breakfasts, lunches, snacks and suppers. OCA will also train and mentor other organizations to increase the number of CACFP and SFSP sites and sponsors. Lastly, in partnership with Denver Department of Human Services, OCA will hire an onsite SNAP Enrollment Specialist to provide SNAP enrollment services and food resource information to families at Tasty Food locations.
Re:Vision	\$1,030,763	2023-2025 Project: Re:Vision cultivates a community food system, primarily through teaching families how to grow their own food in their home gardens. With HFDK funding, Re:Vision implements a curriculum with each family garden participant around food justice, health equity and the local food system, while using food as a lens to explore culture and promote discovery and emotional well-being for children in Southwest Denver. Re:Vision has also developed summer youth curriculums based on food justice, nutrition, and culinary techniques. One of the curriculums implemented included a youth hydroponic apprenticeship program for youth in Southwest Denver to acquire the cultural and technical knowledge to grow food in a hydroponic system. Re:Vision also partners with Denver Health's Westside and Pena Clinics to build on the Community Shared Agriculture Program started by Sprout City Farms last year. As part of this partnership, families will be screened for food insecurity, and those who qualify will receive Community Shared Agriculture boxes from Re:Vision's Urban Farm delivered directly to their door via another Denver organization, Bondadosa . HFDK funding is a catalyst for food systems development and youth food programming in Southwest Denver. Through this funding, we can holistically engage families and youth through urban food production and youth nutrition programming in the development of a local food system. Working in the Westwood neighborhood, one of Denver's most food insecure neighborhoods, HFDK funding is allowing us to create systemic changes alongside the community through food, as well as partnering with Emerald Gardens, Xatrucho Concepts, and Denver Children's Advocacy Center to provide food education to students in other neighborhoods, including at the Denver School of Innovation and Sustainable Design (DSISD) and North High School .
Servicios de la Raza	\$300,000	2023-2025 Project: Servicios de La Raza has maintained a food pantry and essential services program for over 40 years. HFDK funding comes at a time when our youth and families go hungry despite this nation's great wealth. HFDK will support Servicios de La Raza in providing healthy, culturally responsive food to 35,000 unique youth in Denver. The funding will help with the purchase of a delivery truck and hiring an hourly driver to assist with picking up food from food banks, as well as delivering food. Our Mobile Bilingual Healthy Food Ambassador will join the delivery driver for deliveries and attend at least two community outreach events each week for the entirety of the project period. Our Basic Emergency Services Coordinator will mirror this education within our static food pantry in Sun Valley. Staff will also help promote SNAP and WIC, connecting community members directly to our enrollment services, which are supported by other funding. Lastly, the Mobile Bilingual Healthy Food Ambassador will teach families to eat in healthy and engaging ways, as well as create a mini cookbook, in Spanish, consisting of healthy and culturally responsive food. Servicios de La Raza leadership and staff are engaged in planning, staff recruitment and initiating the programming for Denver residents.

Sewall Child Development Center, Inc.	\$532,541.54	2021-2024 Project: Sewall’s proposal is focused on improving access to nutritious, culturally responsive foods and nutrition education for young children and their families. Nutrition security is essential in improving the child’s educational outcomes and school readiness. Healthy food access and family food-based education programs are essential for high-quality early childhood education programs that ensure Denver’s youth have a solid foundation for their social emotional and academic success. Sewall is proud to partner with HFDK to help to ensure that no Denver child goes hungry.
Sisters of Color United for Education	\$210,208.91	2021-2024 Project: Sisters of Color United for Education (SOCUE) is expanding to the Denver Northeast Park Hill neighborhood and have a collaboration with Consumption Literacy Project who is currently working in the Montbello area to develop native gardens and increase BIPOC food access. They will be training Promotoras de Salud in Park Hill, and with their partnerships, will increase youth engagement with understanding and becoming a part of the food systems in Denver to increase healthy food choices and access. SOCUE and Promotoras have been developing community voices and urban farming projects for improving health for its members. They know that historical trauma is a key element of the process for healing community and believe that healing can begin in the roots of the soil and when people cultivate their own food, the medicine has a way of working its magic and children become the best example for how to coexist.
Sprout City Farms	\$356,803.08	2023-2025 Project: Sprout City Farms (SCF), in partnership with Ekar Farm , will provide no-cost weekly Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) shares for food insecure families, donation-based farm stands, Farm-to-Cafeteria at Denver schools, and produce donations to Denver school food pantries. SCF will continue our collaboration with Denver Health’s nearby Lowry Clinic to match our program with WIC-enrolled refugee families experiencing food insecurity. We will dedicate no-cost CSA shares to families receiving WIC and SNAP, as well as to Solidarity members. Solidarity shares are for families experiencing food insecurity but may not be eligible for or enrolled in government assistance programs. Since SCF is determined to support Denver Green School children and families more directly than ever, we are expanding our existing partnership with the volunteer-run Denver Green School Food Pantry, which provides weekly food to 600+ families year-round through a Saturday pop-up pantry at the school and distributes daily snacks to students throughout the school day. Our Community Navigator at Sprout City Farms, who has been trained by Hunger Free Colorado to assist with SNAP applications, will continue to share SNAP resources with our community as well. In addition to the Denver Green School, SCF works with three other schools in DPS: Denver School of Innovation and Sustainable Design (DSISD) in Capitol Hill, North High School in Northwest Denver, and Rocky Mountain Prep SMART in Southwest Denver on youth food leadership curriculum. SCF will also use HFDK funds to expand the scope of our existing education programming, which includes new curriculum for K-8 students around plant and animal life cycles, bees and pollination, and making healthy snacks.
Stigma (Stone Soup, Inc., dba Stigma)	\$1,047,112	2021-2024 Project: Stigma procures meat, dairy, produce and other healthy food from Colorado farmers, ranchers, and distributors. They provide the healthy food to food pantries supporting Denver Public Schools. They are connecting Colorado’s farmers and ranchers directly to the students in Denver Public Schools who need help with food security and nutrition the most. The HFDK grant supports their work and allows them to create community and provide food with dignity. “If we hope to break the cycle of hunger, we must first crush the stigma.”
The GrowHaus	\$917,733	2023-2025 Project: The GrowHaus is a community-led organization providing over 1,000 families, including 1,800 children, with fresh and culturally relevant food through its partnership with Denver Public Library . The GrowHaus hires and trains community members to lead this work and offers robust professional development and training so that team members are equipped to take on leadership positions. The GrowHaus prioritizes sourcing locally and from food banks whenever possible to support our local farmers, ranchers, and charitable food system. Funding from HFDK is putting power into the hands of The GrowHaus’ community-led team to

		increase food access across the city. The GrowHaus' food access program will now be available at 14 Denver Public Library Branch locations. Families will have access to food boxes filled with the highest quality produce grown in Colorado. Through this program, members of The GrowHaus' community-led team, who have historically faced systemic barriers to professional growth, will gain valuable experience in marketing, procurement, and budgeting to support their career pathways.
The Salvation Army	\$213,302.65	2023-2025 Project: The Lambuth Family Center of Salvation Army Denver will provide its clients with more healthy, nutritious food on a regular basis. Mia Donley Nutrition , a registered dietitian, consultant, and educator, will allow for our families to receive food that is culturally appropriate and trauma informed. The Lambuth Family Center will continue the garden and Healthy Living Initiative that was started in 2019: a project that has been well supported by all Lambuth clients. Partners, including Urban Symbiosis , will support the expansion of onsite food production through our garden, as well as encourage the development of nutrition-based food skills for children and families staying at the shelter. The Lambuth Family Center will expand existing gardening space and will hire a Healthy Families Facilitator to maintain the garden, facilitate classes, and recruit children and family participation in such programs. We look forward to changing the lives of the children and families who utilize our family emergency shelter through this new programming initiative of education, access and community gardening.
Thriving Families	\$200,000	2022-2024 Project: Thriving Families provides programs to women and families during pregnancy and postpartum. Their HFDK program integrates healthy nutrition education as well as food resources (e.g., community food pantries, WIC, SNAP) into their core program, MotherWise. It provides parents with the information they need for healthy pregnancies and babies.
University of Colorado – Rocky Mountain Prevention Research Center	\$467,792	2022-2024 Project: The overarching goal of the Culture of Wellness in Preschools (COWP) program is to provide hands-on, developmentally appropriate, and innovative nutrition education programming for children and youth attending the four largest Denver Public Schools (DPS) Early Childhood Education (ECE) centers and 100 Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) refugee providers, reaching approximately 2,280 children and caregivers in the City and County of Denver. Specifically, COWP program activities will include nutrition education lessons for children, parent wellness workshop series, nutrition education texting program, and making health-promoting policy, system and environment changes.
Vista Academy	\$160,925	2021-2024 Project: Vista Academy is proposing a comprehensive program that will provide the Far Northeast community with equitable access of healthful snacks and provide food education to their students and community. The overall proposal has four key aspects: a 1,000 square foot community garden, an aquaponics system, healthful snack student initiative, and an educational program through their Culinary Department that provides monthly cooking lessons for students' families. This will be a multi-year keystone project that the school and community can rally behind. The HFDK grant will provide Vista Academy and its community with opportunities to offer healthful food options and teach how to cultivate healthful foods sustainably. Partnerships with other Community Non-Profit organizations will expand their abilities to serve the far northeast Denver community through educational opportunities and access to healthful food.
ViVe Wellness	\$1,130,712.31	2023-2025 Project: Over the last year, ViVe Wellness's participants have doubled in numbers, with a particular increase in the number of underserved families and youth. To address this need, we will be using HFDK funds to partner with other Denver organizations, including The Urban Farm and SustainEd Farms , that will provide us with additional local produce to supplement our culturally appropriate food bags we deliver every week. ViVe will provide healthy and culturally appropriate snacks to all Out of School Time (OST) school and summer program participants. In addition to providing snacks to children participating in the physical activity and food education programming, ViVe will continue a day school for 5-year-olds that are unable to qualify for kindergarten. We are currently accommodating approximately 25 additional children daily during the school day by offering educational programming for migrant children as they continue to settle in

		Denver. We will also take part in SNAP PEAS training with Hunger Free Colorado , in hopes of increasing participation of our community in SNAP. Lastly, with other local partners, including Metro Caring , we will be able to increase the number of nutrition education classes and increase the reach for our garden program. The program offers a community-initiated gathering with healthy food and intergenerational learning at its center. There will be at least 2 cohorts (each 8 weeks long) offered through the year.
WeeCycle	\$495,499	2022-2024 Project: WeeCycle serves infants and toddlers in need with healthy age-appropriate meals of baby food and formula through their Mobile Baby Essentials program. They also will be developing programming to instill the joys of healthy eating in Denver toddlers.
Wildwood Child and Adult Care Food Program, Inc.	\$226,402	2022-2024 Project: Wildwood sponsors licensed childcare homes, day care centers, Head Start, At-Risk After School and the Summer Food Service Program for USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program. They are involved with those who care for children - whether they are childcare providers, parents, teachers or others involved with the growth, development, welfare and nutritional needs of children. Children are our most valuable resource, and they are proud to contribute to the efforts of those who enrich children's lives.