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Kaiser Permanente Funds New Program to Help Prepare High School Students for Health Care Careers

\$650,000 Grant to Support Career and Technical Education Pathways at Four Denver Public Schools

Denver – Kaiser Permanente has made a three-year, \$650,000 grant to Denver Public Schools (DPS) via the DPS Foundation to support Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways in the health and bioscience fields at four DPS high schools. The grant will help DPS build a clearly-defined college and career-readiness pipeline in the biomedical field, preparing students for success in an industry that projects significant growth in Denver over the next 10 years. The initial goal is to reach more than 2,000 students throughout the course of the three-year grant.

Students participating in the program will have access to a variety of career pathway options, including preparation to enter four-year college programs. Students may also choose programs that will enable them to enter the health care workforce immediately after high school. This option provides the opportunity to earn an associate's degree and certification in certain medical professions, including Certified Nurse's Assistant (CNA), Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) and Physical Therapist Aide (PTA).

Biomedical pathways will launch at four DPS schools where there is a demonstrated need. The grant will enable these schools to best provide world-class opportunities to all students across Denver's geographic regions.

- **Florence Crittenton:** Located in southwest Denver, the school serves teen mothers, and this grant will provide students the opportunity to be better prepared for college and career.

- **CEC Middle College:** Situated in the northwest, CEC is a flagship for career and technical education across the district, one of the top high schools in the state, and boasts one of the highest college-going rates in Colorado.
- **Compassion Road:** Located in downtown Denver, this school serves a population of high-needs students with histories often involving the juvenile justice system, the foster care system, and homelessness. This opportunity will help Compassion Road students find a new start on their pathway in high school and beyond.
- **Manual High School:** This historic high school serving a diverse student population near downtown Denver will be poised to offer a world-class biomedical program, and capitalize on its advantageous proximity to many of the city's hospitals.

"We have clearly identified CTE pathways as an integral part of our strategy to develop rigorous STEM programs that will prepare our students for college and career, especially in the very fields in the highest demand for our community right here in Denver," said DPS Superintendent Tom Boasberg. "We are grateful to Kaiser Permanente for this partnership."

"Today is a phenomenal example of how our businesses are stepping up to help create a robust educational continuum for Denver's youth, from cradle to career," said Denver Mayor Michael B. Hancock. A big thank you to Kaiser Permanente for their dedication to the betterment of our children's education. Together, this community is ensuring our students are graduating high school ready to compete in the global economy and succeed in sectors that are booming right here in Colorado."

The biomedical industry in the Denver metro area has grown more than 22% over the past five years, and is home to 18,860 companies and 10 medical research institutions, with a total of 191,440 jobs. As the Denver metro health sector grows over the next 10 years, there will be more than 4,300 job openings on average annually. The biomedical pathway, designed by DPS' Office of College and Career Readiness with input from high school leaders, the Denver Office of Economic Development, local corporations, and university faculty, aims to address this growth.

"This program will provide students from underserved communities in Denver with an opportunity to prepare for a career in health---one of the fastest growing industries in our state. Colorado needs a well-educated and well-trained workforce of the future, and we're thrilled to help make this program possible for Denver youth," said Donna Lynne, DrPH president of Kaiser Permanente Colorado.

Over the next four years, DPS will expand its CTE Pathways program thanks to a recently launched STEM Career Pathways initiative funded by a \$7 million U.S. Department of Labor Youth CareerConnect grant and now, more than \$3.2 million in corporate matching funds raised in partnership with the DPS Foundation. This initiative establishes five STEM career pathways, including advanced manufacturing; biomedical; engineering/engineering and energy; finance; and

technology. These pathways lead to a wide variety of post-secondary options, including: preferential admissions at top four-year universities in Colorado, associate's degree programs at two-year colleges, as well as workforce certification programs. The overarching goal with this broad scope is to engage all students through relevant, project-based, career learning in their area of interest, and to offer students multiple pathways to pursue that passion into post-secondary higher education and career.

This grant is the latest in an eight-year partnership between Kaiser Permanente and DPS. Kaiser Permanente has shown long-term support for DPS' Health Agenda, supporting student and staff wellness. Donna Lynne is the immediate past chair of the DPS Foundation [board of directors](#), in addition to her role as co-chair of Mayor Hancock's Denver Education Compact.

To learn more about the Denver Public Schools CTE initiative, or to become engaged as a partner or funder for this work, [visit www.dpsfoundation.org](http://www.dpsfoundation.org).

About Kaiser Permanente Colorado

Kaiser Permanente Colorado is the state's largest nonprofit health plan, proudly working to improve the lives and health of Colorado residents for more than 45 years. Kaiser Permanente Colorado provides comprehensive health care services to 630,000 members through 29 medical offices and a network of affiliated hospitals and physicians. Kaiser Permanente was recognized by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) [as the top- ranked commercial health plan in Colorado and the sixth ranked Medicare plan in the nation for 2014-15](#). Kaiser Permanente was also recently recognized as a [2012 Hypertension Champion](#) by Million Hearts™. In 2014, Kaiser Permanente proudly directed \$100 million to community benefit programs to improve the health of all Coloradans. For more Kaiser Permanente news, visit kp.org/share or follow us on Twitter [@kpcolorado](#) or facebook.com/kpcolorado.