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Paula Hans, Public Information Officer

Phone: [303-387-0031](tel:303-387-0031) | paula.hans@dcsdk12.org

Douglas County School District and Kaiser Permanente Colorado Announce Additional Mental Health Support for Students, Staff

CASTLE ROCK, Colo. – Today, Douglas County School District and Kaiser Permanente Colorado announced a new collaboration to provide a host of additional mental health resources to DCSD students and staff. These resources include mental health trainings and \$99,999 in community benefit support from Kaiser Permanente Colorado. The tragedy that took place at STEM School Highlands Ranch in May further magnified the importance of supporting mental health in all schools.

“We are forever grateful for the support and care shown by our partners at Kaiser Permanente following the tragedy in May,” said DCSD Superintendent Thomas S. Tucker, Ph.D. “Their care and dedication to the health and well-being of our students and staff is truly remarkable.”

As the state’s largest nonprofit health plan, Kaiser Permanente Colorado is dedicated to its mission of improving the health of all Coloradans. Providing mental health resources and support to schools is part of an expanding area of focus for Kaiser Permanente Colorado’s work in the community.

“At Kaiser Permanente, our primary focus is making Colorado a healthier place to live and work. We have a great partnership with Douglas County Schools and we look forward to working closely with them to support the needs of the district. These programs will directly benefit students and staff and we are very glad we have an opportunity to help,” said Ron Vance, president of Kaiser Permanente Colorado.

As part of this newly announced collaboration, DCSD will join five other Colorado school districts as part of Kaiser Permanente’s Thriving Schools Mental Health cohort—a group formed in 2017 that focuses on advancing trauma-informed care policies and practices in individual school districts.

DCSD and Kaiser Permanente Colorado are also providing mental health and wellness training to staff through Kaiser Permanente’s *Resilience in School Environments: Understanding and Practice (RISE UP)* program—RISE UP is a learning session for school staff, administrators,

and teachers, designed to foster resilience and support school staff as they work with traumatized students.

“Research shows that adverse childhood experiences impact students’ ability to learn and grow,” said DCSD Personalized Learning Officer Nancy Ingalls. “It is important for school staff to learn about the various events that constitute an adverse childhood experience, and then learn how to use trauma sensitive approaches in classrooms and across learning environments. Use of trauma sensitive approaches can provide the support students need to process their trauma and increase their readiness for learning, and can strengthen a culture of resilience in schools. We are thrilled to have expanded opportunities to increase access for training in trauma-informed care for our schools.”

DCSD staff are also part of an advisory council for Kaiser Permanente Colorado helping to guide the development of a brand-new program for high school students called *Ghosted*. Launching Fall of 2019, *Ghosted* is an interactive play designed to address mental health issues including anxiety and depression—with a follow-up workshop focused on suicide prevention.

In addition to interactive plays, participation in the Thriving Schools cohort, and community benefit funding, DCSD staff, teachers, and administrators will have access to online mental health resources from Alliance for a Healthier Generation. These resources include assessment tools and action plans to help identify areas of focus and launch new mental health initiatives within the school district.

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About DCSD

Douglas County School District (DCSD) is Colorado’s third largest school district and serves 68,000 students. DCSD strives to maximize the potential of every student to pursue his or her chosen endeavor in society, including but not limited to postsecondary education, career, or military service. Learn more at www.dcsdk12.org.

About Kaiser Permanente Colorado

Kaiser Permanente Colorado is the state’s largest nonprofit health plan, working to improve the lives and health of all Coloradans for 50 years. We are comprised of the Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of Colorado and the Colorado Permanente Medical Group—one of the state’s largest medical groups with more than 1,200 physicians. We provide comprehensive care for our more than 640,000 Kaiser Permanente Colorado members through 31 medical offices across the state. We are also committed to our social mission and in 2018, proudly invested more than \$141 million to community health programs to improve the health of all Coloradans. For more Kaiser Permanente news, visit kp.org/share or follow us [@kpcolorado](https://www.facebook.com/kpcolorado) or like us [facebook.com/kpcolorado](https://www.facebook.com/kpcolorado).