

Healthy Food for Denver's Kids (HFDK)

August 26, 2026

Protect, improve and promote the health and environment of Denver

Advancing Health Equity & Outcomes



Presentation Overview

- Current Food Insecurity in Denver
- Background on Healthy Food for Denver's Kids (HFDK) Program and Commission
- Funding Overview and Impact
- Request of 7 Bills/Resolutions for Approval
- Financials
- Sunset and Reauthorization

Food Insecurity in Denver

Results from the 2025 DDPHE food insecurity survey reveal:

- More than 1 in 3 (35% or ~260,000) Denverites are food insecure
- 1 in 5 children had meals cut or skipped
- 68% say food is too expensive (#1 barrier)

Food insecurity is likely to continue to rise due to inflation, federal changes to SNAP and Medicaid, and overall decreases in available funding for food access work.

35%

of Denver residents
are food insecure.



When Families Can't Eat, Everything is Impacted

To afford food, Denver residents are making economic trade-offs:



27%

Cut utilities



27%

Cut medicine
& healthcare



24%

Cut
transportation



20%

Cut rent or
mortgage

“Hunger is rarely caused by a lack of food alone. It is often the result of systems that make it difficult for people to access stability, dignity, and opportunity.” – Kaizen Food Rescue

HEALTHY FOOD FOR DENVER'S KIDS PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- Resident-led ballot measure (302) approved by Denver voters in November of 2018
- Provides 10-years of funding from sales tax to invest in food and related food education for Denver's low-income and under-served youth

History of Healthy Food for Denver's Kids

PROGRAM ESTABLISHED

HFDK begins collecting sales tax revenue, the Commission and staff are selected, and funding goals are set.

2018

APPROVED BY VOTERS

59% of Denver voters approved ballot measure 302 to establish a fund for healthy food and food-based education for Denver youth

2019

FIRST ROUND OF FUNDING IS RELEASED TO COMMUNITIES ACROSS DENVER

Through general grants and COVID-19 emergency hunger relief grants, funds are sent into communities across Denver for the first time.

2020

ANNUAL FUNDING IS RELEASED TO SUPPORT OUR VISION

Each year, HFDK funds community-driven and innovative programs because no child should have to learn on an empty stomach or miss out on the nutrition they need to thrive

2021 - 2028



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**HEALTHY
FOOD FOR
DENVER'S** Kids

HFDK Commission

13-members

- 3 city leaders
- 2 members of City Council
- 4 residents of the city
- 4 representatives of city-wide organizations involved in food

DDPHE is the operational support for HFDK and implements Commission decisions



Who is Eligible for Funding?

Non-profits, public schools (including DPS) and Denver city agencies through competitive grantmaking processes

Funded projects include:

- Healthy meals and snacks
- Classes on nutrition, cooking, wellness, gardening, and food justice
- Food distribution, including mobile food markets and school food pantries
- SNAP and WIC outreach and enrollment



Current Grantees

(HFDK04, HFDK05, & HFDK06)

Funding Timeline for Annual Cohorts

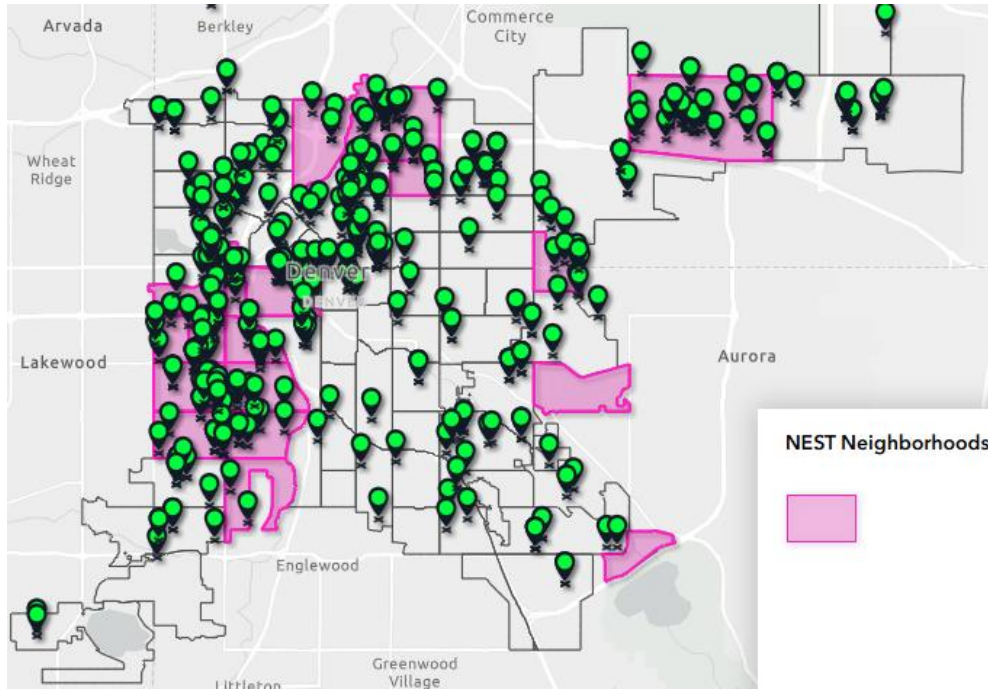
Year	Cohort	Grant details
2020	HFDK01	• 25 contracts
2021	HFDK02	• 20 new contracts and extensions for “01”
2022	HFDK03	• 12 new contracts and extensions for “01” and “02”
2023	HFDK04	• 14 new contracts and extensions for “02”
2024	HFDK05	• 16 new contracts and extensions for “03”
2025	HFDK06	• 17 new contracts and extensions for “04”
2026	HFDK07	• 11 new contracts (in progress)

HFDK Micro-Grants

- Funding tool to promote equity and responsiveness
- More than \$2,000,000 awarded in micro-grants since 2020

Year	Number of Contracts	Average Grant Size	Total Amount Awarded	Micro-Grant Focus
2020	53	\$16,409	\$869,653	COVID-19 emergency hunger relief grants
2021	10	\$9,555	\$95,550	Healthy food access for youth and families
2024	12	\$48,717	\$584,606	Newcomer youth and their families
2026	12	\$44,378	\$532,534	Emergency food access for youth and families

HFDK Evaluation & Technical Assistance



- Third party evaluators
- Grantee-level data analysis to measure outcomes and identify best practices
- A citywide impact evaluation and landscape analysis, including Geographic Information System (GIS) StoryMaps
- Grantee technical assistance (TA) for evaluation and programmatic support



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OVER 90%
OF FUNDS GO
STRAIGHT TO KIDS



BY THE NUMBERS

\$100M+ INVESTED
to provide healthy food and
food-based education for
Denver's youth

118 ORGANIZATIONS FUNDED

101,977 DENVER FAMILIES
served annually



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HFDK Grantee Impact (August 2020 – July 2025)



\$100+ million
Grant dollars invested



118
Unique organizations
funded



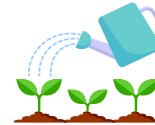
48,232,217
Meals and snacks served



55,468,312
Pounds of food distributed
to youth and families



688,784
Pounds of food harvested
from local gardens and farms



855
New youth jobs created



49,128
Total instruction hours
for food/nutrition education



101,977 *
Families/households
served in 33 languages

**WE'RE BUILDING
A HEALTHIER,
MORE EQUITABLE
FUTURE FOR ALL
OF DENVER'S KIDS.**

Community Impact

We're tackling food insecurity head-on by doing more than just providing meals. HFDK delivers culturally relevant, nutritious food and hands-on education that empowers young people to build lifelong healthy habits.

During the 2024-2025 grant cycle:

- **79%** of HFDK grantee clients reported knowing more about healthy eating
- **92%** of HFDK grantee clients consumed more vegetables because of HFDK
- **99%** of HFDK grantee clients said HFDK reduced their worries about where their next meal would come from

HFDK Current Priorities

- **Funding:**
 - 2026-2027 funding (07 contracting, 2026 micro-grant, 08 RFP planning)
 - Estimated next RFP (“08”) release: fall/winter 2026
- **Technical Assistance:** Nutrition quality and cultural foods, language access
- **Communications:** Impact storytelling, HFDK PR campaign
- **Evaluation:** Economic impact project with CAI

Application Process for HFDK07

Request for Letter of Interest (LOI)

November 2025-
January 2026

Solicitation for
LOI opened

Information
Session, and answers
provided to questions

Free TA from a grant
writer offered

Review of LOI/Invitation to RFP

January-February 2026

38 Letters of Interest
received

Letters and budgets
redacted

14 reviewers

22 organizations Invited to
RFP

RFP Process

February-May 2026

22 Organizations
submitted RFP

Applications and budgets
redacted

12 reviewers

12 applications
recommended for funding

Recommendation & Vote by Commission

May 29, 2026: HFDK
Commission voted to approve
the 12 contracts
recommended by the review
committee with full funding

June 1, 2026: Contracting
process started

*One awarded organization
ceased operations in June
2026, so this cohort will
include 11 contracts

HFDK07 Contracts

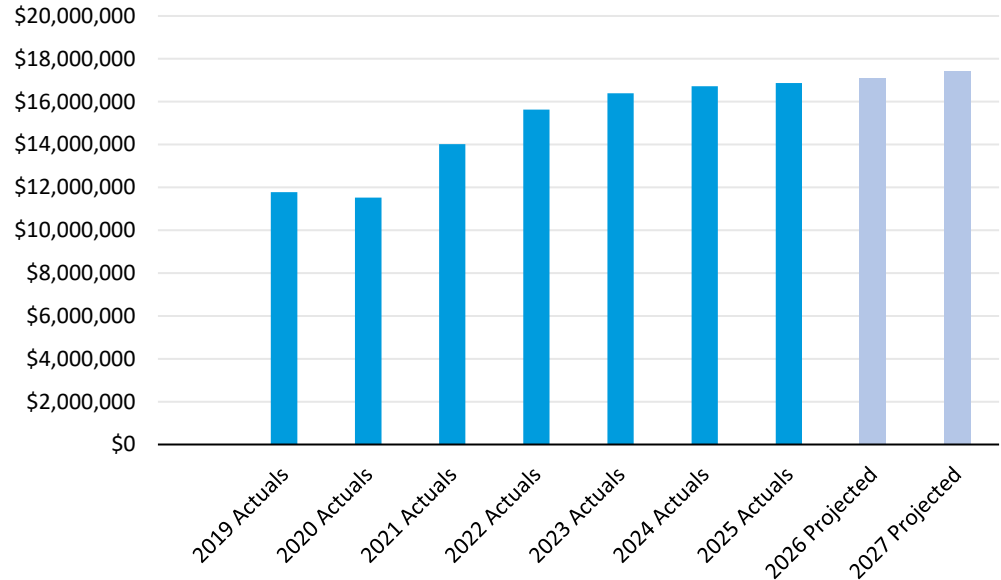
Name of Organization	Resolution #	Total Amount	Council District
1. GES Coalition		\$730,203.28	
2. Focus Points Family Resource Center		\$456,363.16	
3. SustainEd Farms		\$745,706.36	
4. Denver Public Schools Community Hubs		\$441,701.20	
5. Slow Food Denver		\$746,520.63	
6. Metro Caring		\$747,718.98	
7. Rocky Mountain Prevention Research Center, Colorado School of Public Health, University of Colorado Denver		\$749,791.78	
8. Struggle of Love Foundation		\$750,000.00	
9. West High School		\$252,296.10	
10. Sun Valley Kitchen + Community Center		\$548,378.61	
11. Hope Communities		\$375,354.04	

HFDK Revenues

Total Revenue Collected 2019-2025: **\$102,919,131**

Total Revenue Projected 2019-2027: **\$137,460,029**

*2026 and 2027 numbers are projections, per BMO, and subject to change



Grants Awarded

Total Amount Awarded to date:
\$115,479,899

The \$21M difference between revenue and grants is comprised of:

- ~\$8M Administration (2019-2027)
- \$4.4M Available Contingency Funds (2019-2027)
- ~\$8.6M for future HFDK08 funding round & Microgrants

Cohort	Years	Award Total	# of Awards	Focus
HFDK01	2020 - 2023	\$16,075,026	25	General
HFDK02	2021 – 2024	\$19,451,777	20	General
HFDK03	2022 - 2025	\$11,148,346	12	ECE + Federal Programs
HFDK04	2023 - 2027	\$32,781,227	14	Collaborative Projects
HFDK05	2024 - 2027	\$13,799,734	16	General
HFDK06	2025 - 2028	\$12,860,444	17	General
HFDK07	2026-2029	\$7,290,045	11	General
Micro-grants & Emergency COVID-19 Grants	2020-2021	\$965,203	63	Emergency Relief, General
Micro-grants, Newcomer Youth	2024-2025	\$584,606	12	Newcomer
Microgrants, Emergency Food	2026	\$523,489	12	General
TOTAL		\$115,479,899	202	

HFDK Sunset and Reauthorization

HFDK sunset is approaching (2028)

- A ballot measure must be referred to the voters for reauthorization
- If not reauthorized, all funds must be spent down by Dec. 31, 2029
- Discussions about the future of HFDK and a ballot measure referral are being held by various stakeholders, including through the Food Summit

Thank you and Q+A

Contact:

Lauren Howe, Program Supervisor

Lauren.Howe@denvergov.org

(720) 865-5446

Amber Stenson, Grants Administrator

Amber.stenson@denvergov.org

720-865-9601

Visit www.denvergov.org/HFDK or follow @DDPHE for updates on Healthy Food for Denver's Kids and its continued impact.

