



ARPA WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS TO BOCC

Last summer, the Boulder County Board of Commissioners partnered with community organizations to embark on a county-wide community engagement process to inform the allocation of federal COVID relief funds. Partners collected ideas from the community on how to build back from the pandemic equitably and prioritize the needs of those disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. Three priority areas arose from the community’s recommendations – Economic Challenges, Housing Affordability, and Mental Health & Social Resilience – which seeded the work for the second phase.

This gave way to a partnership between 35 nonprofit and small business leaders and the County. Three working groups representing the diversity of backgrounds and experience of Boulder County were selected to focus on the priority themes. Through extensive research and discussions, these groups have narrowed down a list of programmatic recommendations that address the needs identified by the community.

On May 3rd, working groups will present their recommendations in a virtual public meeting to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) who will consider this information in their decision on the use of ARPA funds. The public is invited to comment on the recommendations put forward.

AGENDA

- 4:30 Welcome + Introduction
- 4:40 Economic Challenges Working Group
 - Survive and Thrive (Small Business + Nonprofit Support)
 - Direct Cash Assistance to Families with Children to Help with Childcare Expenses
 - Early Childhood Community Village Concept and Collaboration
- 5:00 Housing Affordability Working Group
 - Investment in a Development Pipeline Project
 - Expand Capacity of Regional Housing Partnership, along with capacity for regional outreach related to housing programs/resources
 - Manufactured/Mobile Home Park Affordability Support Programs
- 5:20 Mental Health + Social Resilience
 - Community-Wide Hub Navigation/Resource Navigation
 - Equitable Access – Opening the Front Door
 - Community Mobile Response Teams
- 5:40 Conclusion

ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

INITIATIVE: SURVIVE AND THRIVE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Survive and Thrive Initiative will target historically underserved and underrepresented communities with an infusion of public monies to address the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 health disaster in Boulder County on the small business and nonprofit community. The initiative will facilitate the immediate distribution of monies to support eligible small businesses and nonprofit organizations that can make meaningful, short- and long-term investments that will stabilize their business condition, workforce, and operations (Survive). These monies will come with the requirement that awarded businesses and nonprofits must engage with a variety of entities that provide business support services (Thrive). In parallel, organizations that can provide direct business support services will be eligible for grants that allow for both the expansion of current services and the creation of new, innovative offerings that can best assist the business community. The infusion of capital will be implemented via a competitive grant process for qualified entities.

With this approach, the aggregated ARPA monies address three important needs:

- Provide direct support for businesses and nonprofits that can demonstrate need
- Increase capacity for business support entities
- Motivate business supporting entities to develop new and innovative offerings

Total ARPA Funding Request Amount: \$7,500,000

A model for the distribution of funds is as follows:

- 15 business support entities at \$100,000 per entity: \$1,500,000
- 400 businesses at \$10,000 per business: \$4,000,000
- 40 nonprofits at \$50,000 per organization: \$2,000,000

Examples of small business supports in other localities:

- [U.S. Small Business Administration](#)
- [Boulder County Personal Investment Enterprise \(PIE\)](#) - The PIE program offers a path to homeownership, secondary education, and starting a small business and targets low-to-moderate income and historically underrepresented persons. This is a good example to point to, because of the combination of the matching cash grant (\$4000), financial literacy classes through WfBC, and specialized training through SBDC for starting a business. This shows a successful model where immediate assistance (grants) are combined with long-term support (WfBC classes, SBDC consulting and workshop training).

ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

INITIATIVE : DIRECT CASH ASSISTANCE TO FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN TO HELP WITH CHILD-CARE EXPENSES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our businesses and workforce depend on families being able to access quality, affordable, child care and it is one of the most significant factors impacting our economy today. Inequities in access to affordable quality child care and education was exacerbated by the pandemic as was the corresponding impact on labor force participation and income. The **Direct Assistance to Families** initiative seeks to reduce the financial burden of childcare by providing cash assistance to families identified as low-income and experiencing more social vulnerability. Working with local partners, the initiative would provide families with young children \$300/month per child for up to 2 years and support families with navigation and referrals to child care options and other social benefits and services. Based on similar models, families would not be limited in how they could spend the funds. Rather they could use it to pay for childcare, food, basic needs, or to support the ability to stay home and provide care for their own child. These funds would increase parental ability to enter the workforce, increase financial support for childcare centers and non-centered based care, improve financial stability for families, narrow poverty and early education and care gaps, and address disparate labor force participation rates across gender, racial, and ethnic group lines.

Funding Request Amount: \$6M

- \$5,220,000 - For direct assistance for an anticipated 725 families with children ages 0-3
- \$200K - For 1 Boulder County FTE for 2 years for program planning, administration and evaluation
- \$500K - To partners for help with the distribution and other implementation activities

This program can serve approximately: Using the \$300 per month per child for 2 years, we estimate serving 725 children 0-3 years old.

Leveraging additional dollars: This initiative can help leverage additional dollars by linking families to other county services and benefits through including Boulder County benefits programs, the Family Resource Centers, and City of Longmont and City of Boulder's ARPA investments in early childcare.

Examples of successful programs in other localities:

- The expanded federal [Child Tax Credit \(CTC\)](#), provides monthly cash payments of \$250-\$300 to most U.S. families with children through direct deposit and check. Research has found that for recipients the credit substantially reduced poverty and food hardship, helped pay child care expenses, reduced barriers to employment, and reduced child poverty by 45 percent with particularly large reductions for [Black, Latino/a/x, and Native American children](#).
- [Stockton, California](#): 125 residents living at or below median income were given a \$500 monthly stipend with no strings attached for 24 months. Researchers found that recipients' quality of life improved, participation in full-time employment jumped from 28 to 40 percent, there was more family stability, less strained social networks, less stress, fewer incidences of homelessness, and fewer skipped meals.
- [Oakland, CA](#): Oakland Resilient Families will provide 600 randomly selected Oakland families (with an intentional focus on groups with the greatest wealth disparities per the Oakland Equity Index) with low incomes and at least 1 child under 18 a guaranteed income of \$500 per month for at least 18 months.

This initiative will rely heavily on collaboration with organizations that have developed trusting relationships with the target populations. Boulder County's Family Resource Centers (FRCs), domestic violence and cultural broker organizations have these strong existing connections. By leveraging these relationships we can hope to reach more eligible families. Key pieces of implementation will need to be developed in collaboration with these partners.

ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

INITIATIVE: EARLY CHILDHOOD COMMUNITY VILLAGE CONCEPT AND COLLABORATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Early Childhood Community Village Concept is a multifaceted approach to partner with nonprofits, local government, and business/for-profit sectors to bring together the knowledge and resources necessary to meet early care and education (ECE) needs of children, families and childcare professionals. This initiative seeks to strengthen the ECE system in 2 ways (1) providing seed money to support the development of an Early Childhood Community Village facility in South East Longmont for co-located early care, resources and supports and (2) expand quality child care capacity through training and support for Family, Friend And Neighbor (FFN) caregivers in Boulder County.

Families with young children have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, due to limited affordable and flexible child care options. We see these impacts disproportionately affecting families with children with special healthcare needs, low-income families, families with infants and toddlers, and Hispanic families. This project would help expand child care options in South East Longmont and enhance access to medical, social-emotional, language and other services and support for families and professionals through the co-location of providers.

This opportunity would also seek to support Boulder County's Early Care and Education (ECE) workforce by strengthening FFN caregivers who offer valuable early childhood education that is often more culturally and linguistically matched to the families they serve compared to the center-based care. FFNs have seen a greater negative economic impact due to COVID than other early care providers, however they are not eligible for the state ECE financial support being targeted to center-based care. This opportunity would ensure 4 years of sustained evidence-based training and dedicated space for an FFN Hub to provide on-going training, support and resources, and enhance a peer-to-peer network.

Total ARPA Funding Request Amount: \$1.5M, as seed money to leverage additional funding for the capital and operational expenses of The Village and ensure 4 years of funding for FFN provider training.

- PASO Training Costs: \$337,400 of the \$1.5 million will be earmarked for providing sustained PASO training for Boulder County FFN providers. The cost per cohort is \$42,175 and CSPC has stated that they can serve 2 cohorts per year for 4 years ($\$42,175 \times 2 \text{ cohorts} = \$84,350 \times 4 \text{ years} = \$337,400$).

This program can serve approximately:

- 60-80 individual FFN care providers over 4 years
- At least 300 children per year through child care/education programs
- 300 caregivers and professionals per year through community training and professional development opportunities.

Leveraging additional dollars: The \$1.5 million in ARPA funding will be used to leverage additional investments to the project. The total start-up cost for the project is \$13 million. In addition to potential ARPA funding from the County, other public and private funding streams are being secured. Potential funders include: the Stewart Family Foundation which has committed \$1 million dollars and is currently discussing more financial support; UC Health in partnership with EPIC (Executives Partnering to Invest in Children); City of Longmont; other private foundations are also being approached to support between 50K-250K.

This initiative can help leverage additional dollars by linking families to other county services and benefits through including Boulder County benefits programs, the Family Resource Centers, and City of Longmont and City of Boulder's ARPA investments in early childcare.

Examples of successful programs in other localities:

- This project is based on the successful development of **The Wilderness Early Learning Center** in the City of Boulder. Beginning in 2010, this project has brought together 8 non-profit organizations serving children and families.
- **TLC** currently exists with 9 classrooms and Wild Plum has a Early Head Start program and 3 other Head Start classrooms in Longmont.
- [The Local Initiatives Support Corporation](#) is launching a similar program to build co-location approaches to provide more affordable childcare, support smaller home-based child care providers, and connect families to other community based partners to increase access to important early childhood and family supports. This effort was spurred by the impact of COVID19 and is also being funded with a blending of federal relief dollars, grants and private funding.
- [Clayton Early Learning](#): a hub that utilizes a whole family approach to nurture children. Outcomes include nearly 85% of students scoring above average in their social-emotional development.

Core operating partners include TLC Learning Center, The Wild Plum Center, and Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition all have long-standing individual history within Boulder County and have strong leadership of committed executives and board of directors. Other potential partners to be identified through community engagement and needs assessment.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

INITIATIVE: INVESTMENT IN A DEVELOPMENT PIPELINE PROJECT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Partner with Boulder County Housing Authority, Boulder Housing Partners, Longmont Housing Authority, other non-profit developers, and mountain community municipalities on pipeline projects for gap financing to deepen affordability, accelerate existing projects, and free up non-ARPA funds for future projects. We recommend utilizing the existing Worthy Cause application process as a distribution mechanism. The objective is to use this funding to increase quickly the inventory of permanently affordable housing units for rental and/or sale and to provide economically challenged individuals, families, elders, and our workforce, with safe, stable, high-quality affordable homes. The reason for focusing on projects in the development pipeline is to ensure that funds could be spent within the allowed timeframe.

Total ARPA Funding Request: \$7.5 million to be distributed via Worth Cause application process

This program can serve approximately: 50 - 400, depending on how many projects are funded

Leveraging additional dollars: Resources to be leveraged with this investment include tax credits, local Inclusionary Housing funds, State funds from DOLA, capacity of local non-profit developers already invested in the project, and entitlement costs for projects that are shovel ready.

The group identified three development projects that could be considered but options would not be limited to these three. Further, mountain communities are in need of funds to assist with renovation work.

Project: Willoughby Corner

Location: Lafayette

Developer: Boulder County Housing Authority

Details: 400 permanently affordable homes including rentals serving residents making 30-60% AMI and for-sale deed-restricted for residents making 120% AMI and below.

Project: Rally Sport Affordable Site

Location: Boulder

Developer: Boulder Housing Partners

Details: 100 permanently affordable units in downtown Boulder near transit and services, with at least 10 units dedicated to PSH residents.

Project: Longmont Affordable Assisted Living Solution

Location: Longmont

Developer: City of Longmont and potential partners

Details: The goal is to provide an affordable assisted living solution to serve low income seniors living in existing housing authority units that have higher needs than can be currently provided in independent living.

Project: Mountain Communities Renovation Work

Location: Mountain Communities such as Nederland, Jamestown, and Ward.

Developer: Direct distribution to mountain municipality

Details: Mountain communities have needs around renovation work for properties serving low income residents.

Examples of successful programs in other localities: Kestrel, Coffman, Tungsten Village, Spring Creek Apartments, 30PRL, Canopy @ Red Oak Park.

The population that would benefit is among the most economically challenged and vulnerable portion of our community, who have struggled to be able to afford housing due to economic and other circumstances coupled with the skyrocketing housing costs in our local market. This impact of the pandemic was disproportionate for this population due to the loss of employment or reduction of wages in many of the areas that they work, such as retail and hospitality/food service. This population was also disproportionately affected in terms of health impacts, which in turn affected economic state and employment. These factors combined to increase housing insecurity and lead many among this population into housing insecurity and crisis.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

INITIATIVE: EXPAND CAPACITY OF REGIONAL HOUSING PARTNERSHIP, ALONG WITH CAPACITY FOR REGIONAL OUTREACH RELATED TO HOUSING PROGRAMS/RESOURCES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Implement organizational capacity to expand the home-ownership program throughout the County to purchase, re-sell and administer existing and new ownership units. The second component is to increase capacity to smaller Cities that don't have affordable housing policy, rental compliance and fund compliance staff. Expand eviction prevention services, both rental assistance and legal assistance in collaboration with City of Boulder, CLS, and other sources. Also expand foreclosure prevention services regionally for affordable ownership homes with a revolving loan fund. The purpose of the Regional Housing Partnership is to centralize compliance and homeownership program services through the Boulder County Regional Housing Partnership (BCRHP). This plan will achieve several goals and objectives: Create policy alignment, expand home ownership units, apply consistent best practice, expand newly adopted Inclusionary Housing Ordinances. Provide coordination of rental and legal assistance for renters who are at risk of eviction. Do the same with affordable homeowners facing foreclosure. This type of regional partnership and expansion is a collaboration not seen in Colorado. The principles of regionalized services have been awaiting the right opportunity for implementation, and the ARPA funds would serve as the opportunity to impact services across the entire region.

Total ARPA Funding Request: \$2,230,000

This program can serve approximately: 400 through eviction prevention, 25 per year with ownership and 50 per year through expanding Inclusionary Housing

Leveraging additional dollars: Using this regional approach can leverage and maximize funding (see comment below).

The RAHP could be implemented and launched by late 2022 or early 2023, with the remainder of 2022 being used to work with jurisdictions toward IGA development and approval; implement regional processes and procedures; and hire and train staff. The regional outreach component could be initiated as soon as funding is available. The continuation of these programs after ARPA would be supported by each of the cities cash-in-lieu fees as well as other grants funds accessed by the County.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

INITIATIVE: MANUFACTURED/MOBILE HOME PARK AFFORDABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Create a reserve fund to supply grants or low- to no-interest forgivable loans to support (a) acquisition of manufactured/mobile home parks (MHPs) by resident owned cooperatives (ROCs), nonprofits, or housing authorities; (b) major infrastructure improvement projects for ROCs & nonprofits, or landlords who commit to affordability; and (c) home upgrade assistance for low-income residents of MHPs. Broad goals are to prevent displacement by getting lot rents and manufactured home owner costs to affordable levels, and stabilizing them there, increase resident involvement in MHP governance, and increase overall resilience. Since seniors, immigrants, single parents, gig workers, service sector and care-givers, and others in Boulder's low-income workforce were hardest hit by the COVID economy, and can only afford to live in MHPs, this program will significantly address COVID's destabilizing effects.

Total ARPA Funding Request: \$5 Million

This program can serve approximately: 300-1200 households may be supported depending on how funds are allocated.

Leveraging additional dollars: These funds can help leverage federal, CHFA, nonprofit health and community foundation, and DOLA support. The latter provides potential models for supporting MHP acquisitions, infrastructure, and home upgrade projects. New York, California, Vermont, and New Hampshire MHP funding support programs provide other models.

One ROC infrastructure project is nearly shovel ready and prospects increase for an acquisition and an infrastructure improvement project if funding assistance is available. Since 65 MHPs in the state were sold recently (DOLA), many of the County's 3500 MHP households are likely to need support when their opportunity to purchase rights are triggered. A sunset clause will be needed specifying a date when any unspent funds will be repurposed for shovel ready projects.

MENTAL HEALTH + SOCIAL RESILIENCE

INITIATIVE: COMMUNITY MOBILE RESPONSE TEAMS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This project proposes the establishment of mobile behavioral health response teams that respond to community behavioral health needs, resolving issues locally and without the need for law enforcement involvement. Teams would be dispatched through the state's 988 crisis line and could be activated through the county's Hub Navigation system, should that ARPA proposal move forward. The intent is to provide this service countywide. Responders would be licensed professionals with extensive clinical and crisis intervention experience.

COVID has exacerbated behavioral health issues across the community and has disproportionately impacted BIPOC and other marginalized populations. Additionally, much of the root causes of mental illness and access barriers are due to racial, economic and health disparities. The project will seek to address culture and equity needs by hiring BIPOC staff, those who are Spanish speaking and who come from the communities in which they will work. Referrals, as requested, will be made to both traditional service providers and those reflective of the cultural traditions of those served.

Individuals served will be those experiencing crises related to behavioral health needs, poverty, homelessness, and substance abuse, all of which have been impacted by the pandemic. Additionally, youth will be served as they have experienced greater isolation resulting in increased mental health issues and suicidal ideation. Finally, as the population ages, more older adults aging in place require behavioral health supports.

In the short term, this approach provides a critical new, low intensity-highly responsive intervention that is currently limited in the county. This approach provides rapid, culturally responsive relief to individuals, reducing impacts to downstream systems and law enforcement involvement. Over the long-term this can result in transformational changes in Boulder County's service delivery system, assisting individuals and families with immediate needs and decreasing the likelihood that issues escalate and require intensive interventions in the future.

Total ARPA Funding Request: \$3 Million

The first year of the project would serve as a pilot and is estimated to cost \$750,000. Future years with a full complement of staff are estimated to run closer to \$1 million dollars per year:

- 8 responders and clinical supervisor - \$920,000
- Hourly admin support - \$20,000
- Evaluation contract - \$25,000
- Mileage - \$14,000
- Supplies and operating - \$20,000
- Indirect @ 10% - \$100,000

It is not yet quantifiable how many people would request access to this service since this is a new intervention. Call volume for traditional co-responders could be examined for cases that may not have required law enforcement participation to get a general sense. However, call load will depend on community demand for the service and the capacity (number of responders). If selected, it will be important to scale the response over time.

Leveraging additional dollars: The project could be aided by the infrastructure that has been established through the County's co-responder project, which is supported through state dollars. In addition, more grants are becoming available to support these efforts from the federal government.

Examples of successful programs in other localities:

- [Denver STAR](#)
- [NAMI](#)
- [Contra Costa](#)
- [Centerstone](#)

MENTAL HEALTH + SOCIAL RESILIENCE

INITIATIVE: COMMUNITY-WIDE HUB NAVIGATION/RESOURCE NAVIGATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This project supports the development of a community-wide resource to provide navigation to appropriate mental and behavioral health services for Boulder County community members and community programs serving clients in need of services. Additionally, this project seeks a whole person approach by addressing social determinants of health needs alongside behavioral health needs through comprehensive service referrals and use of alternative treatment models, such as healing arts and community care. The Hub will organize and disseminate BH-related community events and opportunities that may benefit individuals and families seeking services and promote improved social resilience. Outreach and education to community members will ensure Hub navigation services are well-utilized, with targeted outreach provided to Latinx community and other priority populations.

The COVID-19 pandemic represented a collective trauma that has resulted in increased mental and behavioral health needs across the community with disparate impacts for priority populations such as youth, LGBTQ+ individuals, and the Latinx community. The behavioral health system is complex and difficult to access, leading many in the community to not receive the right service to meet their needs at the right time and avert crisis. Community-Wide Hub Navigation would create an accessible “front door” for community members through a team of navigators and collaboration with community connectors and trusted organizations.

Total ARPA Funding Request: \$3 Million

- Navigation staff team (6 FTEs) - \$350,000
- Contracted staff (trainers, evaluation, platform expansion) - \$270,000
- Supplies and operating - \$10,000
- Indirect @ 10% - \$65,000

This program can serve approximately: A fully functional Hub navigation system would benefit the entire community, ultimately, because it would allow any community member to seek support and navigation to mental and behavioral supports for themselves or someone they care about.

Leveraging additional dollars: This effort would build on a pilot project that includes a technology platform and recent grant to support navigation for those interacting with the criminal justice system and new parents.

Examples of successful programs in other localities:

- [Crisis Now Model](https://crisisnow.com/) has a Hub that is specific to those in crisis and includes crisis lines and data base that have information about services and inpatient beds. <https://crisisnow.com/>
- [Douglas County](https://www.douglas.co.us/health-department/mental-behaviorial-health/mental-health-initiative/mental-health-navigator/) has a model that could provide insights but does not have all the components being proposed. <https://www.douglas.co.us/health-department/mental-behaviorial-health/mental-health-initiative/mental-health-navigator/>

Navigation has been expressed by the community for multiple years as a significant need. This provides a unique opportunity to develop work to address the enhanced mental and behavioral health needs in a way that the community has requested.

MENTAL HEALTH + SOCIAL RESILIENCE

INITIATIVE: EQUITABLE ACCESS - OPENING THE FRONT DOOR

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The pandemic has disparately impacted Mountain and Rural Communities, those isolated by COVID, people with disabilities, older adults, those aging in place or homebound, youth and parents, and LGBTQ+ and Latinx populations. Many existing community-based organizations are already supporting these residents and are the trusted experts in reaching the groups they serve. However, lack of culturally responsive access to mental health services along with stigma associated with seeking help, fear or confusion about eligibility requirements and documentation, and known challenges navigating the system often mean many go without care.

This project proposes leveraging the county's existing nonprofit contracting processes, investments in community-based organizations, and school-based programs to develop a request for proposals prioritizing agencies serving disparately impacted populations to create a more comprehensive "Front Door" behavioral health safety net model that expands innovative treatments, services and supports for those experiencing mental health, social isolation, trauma and stressors that impact daily quality of life. It also would provide direct financial aid to individuals to help them overcome financial limitations that create barriers to receiving the mental health services/emotional support they need.

Additionally, technical assistance for program development and implementation would be provided through contracts with consultants and/or existing county staff who are managing behavioral health supports and interventions.

Providing a safety net of mental health services will: 1) Increase the number of priority populations accessing mental health and social resilience services at their chosen front door community based organization; 2) Reduce frustration and challenges in finding/navigating culturally informed care; and 3) Increase the current operational capacity of existing providers while engaging a broader community in elevating mental health needs and access similar to other safety net services such as food, housing, education and physical health care.

Total ARPA Funding Request: \$8.5 Million

Program	Cost	Numbers Served
Community-based Grants	\$3 Million over 3 years	Prevention/Outreach Services: 2000 people per year Therapeutic interventions: 300+ people a year
Community-based resource center	\$2 Million including planning process, infrastructure and operating investment	Variable, open to all community members, depending on location
Mental Health Vouchers	\$3 Million over 3 years	500 per year
School-based services	\$500,000	TBD
Community Trainings	\$500,000	\$7,700 over 5 years

PROGRAM PROPOSALS:

I. Investments in community-based services utilizing existing locations

a. Grant programs for community-based organizations

Strategies in this area would, in part, be modeled on similar successful efforts currently operating in the community, for example:

- > **Out Boulder County** provides access to LGBTQ therapists for the Boulder County community members. They are serving 40 people a month for up to 12 free sessions and have capacity for up to 65 per month.
- > **EI Centro AMISTAD** currently has a similar program providing access to bilingual and bicultural therapists for up to 8 sessions for free. In addition, Centro AMISTAD also has multiple prevention and outreach programs addressing mental wellness in culturally appropriate ways including training for parents, program for pre-teen and teen boys, an annual summit for women and youth, and mental health promotoras.
- > **Naropa Community Counseling Center** is a nonprofit cost clinic offering low-cost access to therapy and alternative therapies including mindfulness and reiki to low-income populations in the county.

b. Examine opportunities to replicate the Boulder Strong Recovery Center model including determining infrastructure for historically underserved mountain communities

- > This opens the front door to a community-based model learning from local models – see for example: [Mental Health Partners](#) and the [Aurora Strong Resilience Center](#)

c. Mental health voucher programs providing financial assistance to address individual participant's need

- > A further strategy to increase equitable access to services and promote individual choice is the provision of financial vouchers directly to individuals to be used in accessing needed and self-directed care. This strategy would be aided by the described investments above that result in increased services capacity and the range of service opportunities.

II. Expanding partnership with school-based programs

- #### a. Leveraging work with existing intervention/prevention programs (school-based counselors) in partnership with the school districts and providers, this strategy recognizes the role that schools play in being the “front door” for many families and students.

III. Increase community capacity to support, address and intervene by providing trainings in Mental Health First Aid, suicide prevention, and other tools designed to combat social isolation.

- #### a. This expands and supports existing community trainings provided by Mental Health Partners: <https://www.mhpcolorado.org/training/>