



Irisha Goodman, Director of Public Relations
goodmani@troup.org / troupp.org
100 North Davis Rd, Building C / LaGrange, Georgia 30241
Office: 706.812.7900 / Fax: 706-812-7904

Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LaGrange, Ga., – May 4, 2022 – Keeping kids healthy and in school is the common goal of several partnering organizations in LaGrange and Troup County.

On Tuesday, May 3, 2022, a special ribbon opened the new school-based health clinic at Callaway Elementary.

The momentous occasion all started with a grant from Troup Family Connection Authority a few years ago.

“We spent a year doing research and assessments and doing all that to determine if we have the need and the capacity to do this. We determined that we did so we spent the next few years pulling all the partners together. This is our first school based health center here at Callaway with Wellstar Pediatrics. We are super excited and hopefully this is just one of the many to come,” said executive director Mandy Hill.

The SBHC will be part of Wellstar Pediatrics and staffed by a Wellstar advanced pediatric nurse practitioner. The school nurse at Callaway Elementary can assist if needed. Services offered at the clinic includes:

- General illness/injury treatment
- Covid-19 testing
- Flu testing
- Strep throat testing
- Urinary tract infection testing
- Mono testing

- Glucose check

The clinic has a waiting room, two patient rooms, a lab and an office.

Dr. Brian Shumate, Superintendent of the Troup County School System says he is thankful for the community support, leadership, and vision for the clinic.

“What I’ve found since I’ve been here for three years is people come out. When there’s a good initiative, I’ve never heard one person say no. They are ready to jump in and help. It takes a village to really make this thing happen and make it thrive,” said Shumate.

Dr. Avril Beckford, Chief Pediatric Officer at Wellstar Health System also spoke on why partnerships are so beneficial.

“We’re only one part of the team. We partner with educators, with board members, with the community because everyone has to put their hands together and their arms around to make the difference in the life of a single child,” said Dr. Beckford.

Tripp Penn, President of the Callaway Foundation explains how the clinic aligns with the foundation's strategic plan.

“All Troup County Children will have a quality opportunity for physical, social, emotional and academic development so they graduate from high school and prepare for a job and or further their education.” (portion of the Strategic Plan)

“It’s hard for a child to achieve their academic goals if they are worried about an ear infection or a strep throat or the number of health conditions kids deal with. And this clinic directly addresses those components of the physical and emotional development of children,” said Penn.

Partner agencies:

Wellstar Pediatrics in partnership with the Troup County School System, as well as other community organizations including Troup Family Connection Authority, United Way of West Georgia, and the Callaway Foundation.

About Troup County School System

Troup County School System is an accredited educational system with over 12,100 students in grades K-12. TCSS does offer a free Pre-K program at each elementary school. The system is comprised of eleven elementary schools, three middle schools, three high schools, one college and career academy, and one alternative learning center. Students within the school system are taught a rigorous and relevant curriculum that helps them make college and career choices beyond graduation and succeed in life. The system 2021 graduation rate is 85.9 percent. To learn more about the Troup County School System, visit troup.org and the Troup County School System Facebook page.

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