

Minutes
Superintendent's Health Advisory Council
Tuesday, March 29, 2022

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Marshalyn Franklin, Deputy Superintendent, and Dawn MacAdams. Dr. Davis sends his regrets as he is attending an out of district meeting. Introductions were made and a welcome provided to new member, Madison, as a student from Westwood High. The SC Department of Education requires student involvement in the health and wellness of the district. There were no questions or comments to the meeting notes from November 2021 or February 2022.

Ms. MacAdams provided a health services update. We have seen a drop in COVID numbers and per DHEC guideline from February 22, 2022, contact tracing may be suspended as long as the overall positivity rate for a school is < 10% for employees and students. At present, we have 10 positive cases in students and 3 positive cases in staff. School nurses have contact traced over 18,860 students and over 2,150 staff since July 1, 2021.

The district has partnered with both Prisma and MUSC for COVID vaccines via mobile van for community members, employees, and students. Turnout has been extremely low. School located vaccine clinics for Tdap have historically had a low turnout. The district is in discussion with MUSC's mobile van to provide routine childhood immunizations, specifically the required Tdap for 7th grade, in various locations in August.

School nurses have partnered with eight CDC Foundation employees. There is no cost to the district for the program. Each CDC Foundation employee is partnered with several schools to develop health initiatives, complete routine vision screenings, and focus on immunizations and chronic disease management.

Dr. Shirley Vickery, Executive Director of Learning Support Services, presented an overview of the Whole Child Survey completed in the fall by grades 4, 6, 7, 9, and 10. The survey is completed and scored electronically and takes approximately 20 minutes to complete. The survey looks at student engagement, safety, environment, and social emotional learning. Each child is rated individually and as part of the whole sampled population. Schools also look to BrightBytes for student risk assessment based on student academic achievement, attendance, and behavior. Schools are tasked with following up with "at risk" students and developing a plan to assist the child to succeed.

Next, Dr. Vickery provided a tour of school support from our Learning Support Services teams, Family Intervention Services, and Columbia Area Mental Health site based therapists. Learning Support Services (LSS) are located in each school and are made up of the school counselor(s), school psychologist, school social worker, and school nurse. Family Intervention Services (FIS) provide individual and family therapy at no cost to the student/ family by licensed therapists to assist with school success.

We discussed Homebound services, which is a temporary service to keep students from falling behind when they are out for mental health concerns or prolonged/ chronic illnesses. Students with a Homebound form signed by a medical provider may be eligible for homebound services after eight consecutive absences. Not all students are eligible for medical homebound. Homebound is approved for 45 days at a time.

A treatment plan is required for Homebound services for mental health. The goal is to keep students at school face-to-face. We know students do better in school and the longer they are home, the more difficult it is to return to face-to-face. Each school has a team to discuss Homebound eligibility with the Homebound Coordinators for Elementary/ Middle and High School.

Social Emotional Wellness (SEW) leads have been selected to pilot a program in several schools. The emphasis is on making sure adults understand SEW concepts as they relate to both adult and student skills. When adults understand their own needs for social emotional wellness and feel comfortable in their work, they are better able to assist students. Teachers, bus drivers, LSS teams, and school counselors have all participated in training this year.

Abby Cobb, the Lead Social Worker, spoke about the Attendance Matters campaign. Absenteeism of greater than 10% is considered chronic absenteeism. An example of chronic absenteeism was discussed. On first glance, the child does not appear to have chronic absenteeism but missing 2-3 days of school per month can add up to over 18 days per year.

We had a rich discussion about collaboration between schools, medical providers and mental health providers. A suggestion was made to add a “button” to the district’s home page “I am a provider” with quick links to contact information and resources. Ms. MacAdams will share a listing of school nurses with the group for providers to share with their colleagues. The school nurse can be the gatekeeper and can funnel information to the correct team or person, decreasing the amount of time a provider spends trying to contact the school.

Another suggestion was to include a Medical Release of Information to parents at the beginning of the year, especially those with chronic health conditions. This would enable the district to more easily reach out to providers for collaboration. Schools fall under FERPA- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act instead of HIPAA- Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. See “[What is the Difference Between HIPAA and FERPA?](#)” or [HIPAA vs. FERPA Infographic](#) from the CDC, and if you’re really interested “[Joint Guidance on the Application of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\) And the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 \(HIPAA\) To Student Health Records](#)”

Madison, currently a junior at Westwood High School expressed a concern about bullying and “nothing being done”. She was encouraged to reach out to an administrator, a teacher, a counselor, or other trusted adult at the school if she is bullied, or witnesses the bullying of a classmate. There is a zero tolerance for bullying in Richland School District Two. She was also encouraged if uncomfortable to speak with someone at school, to reach out to a parent and encourage her friends to do the same. The parent can then reach out to the administration.

Ms. MacAdams will send a copy of the presentation, along with a phone list of school nurses, to participants with the meeting notes.

Respectfully,

**Dawn MacAdams, MSN, RN, NCSN
Richland School District Two Coordinator of Health Services**