



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
October 28, 2024

Warren Local School District and Hopewell Health Awarded \$1,371,200 to Expand School-Based Health Services

VINCENT, OH (October 28, 2024) — Warren Local School District and Hopewell Health will partner to expand school-based healthcare services, thanks to a \$1,371,200 grant announced today as part of Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine’s ongoing investment in Ohio’s Appalachian communities.

The Appalachian Children’s Health Initiative, launched by Gov. DeWine and Lt. Gov. Jon Husted, is a historic \$64 million investment designed to improve healthcare access in 36 communities across 20 Appalachian counties in Ohio. It marks the largest investment in school-based health services in Ohio’s history.

With this grant, Warren Local School District and Hopewell Health will introduce new services to their school-based health center, enhancing primary care, behavioral health, and preventive care. The expansion is expected to significantly increase access to these essential services for students, families, and community members across the district. Planning and implementation are set to begin immediately, with a targeted completion by the start of the 2025 school year.

“This expansion will be a transformative resource for our students and their families,” said Kyle Newton, Superintendent of Warren Local Schools. “By bringing healthcare directly into our schools, we can support the physical and mental health of our community and help our students succeed in all aspects of their lives.”

“Hopewell Health is honored to partner with Warren Local School District in this vital effort,” added Sherry Shamblin, Chief Strategy Officer for Hopewell Health. “Together, we are creating opportunities for children to access critical health resources they might otherwise go without, setting the foundation for healthier, more resilient communities.”

The grant proposal was prepared by Nationwide Children’s Hospital in Columbus on behalf of the Appalachian Children Coalition. This initiative seeks to improve children’s access to

healthcare where they spend most of their time—school. The enhanced services funded by the grant will help nearly 375,000 youth, families, and community members across Ohio’s Appalachian region. Each project is uniquely tailored to meet specific community needs.

“We appreciate Gov. DeWine’s commitment to the health of children in the Appalachian region and are excited to be able to lead the effort to bring local healthcare services to meet their needs,” said Randy Leite, PhD, executive director of the Appalachian Children Coalition. “For many children and families, the lack of access to local healthcare services leads to negative health and educational outcomes. The school-based clinics and services to be developed as part of this program will provide access that is so desperately needed. We share Gov. DeWine’s commitment to our children and know that our many partners in this effort do, too.”

Schools play a crucial role in supporting children’s health and well-being. According to the Ohio School-Based Health Alliance, more than 150 school-based health centers are in operation or development across Ohio. This project will support 16 new school-based health centers, as well as mobile care, behavioral health, dental, and vision services. To ensure effective implementation and sustained success, Nationwide Children’s Hospital will provide technical assistance support across all project sites.

“Children reach their full potential in the classroom when they are healthy, live in a safe and stable environment, and have access to the resources they need,” said Mary Kay Irwin, EdD, senior director of school health services for Nationwide Children’s. “By partnering with schools, we are helping children access vital care they might otherwise miss. To improve health outcomes for all children, we must meet families where they are and work together to address their needs.”

This unprecedented investment in school-based and community health is part of the state’s \$500 million “OhioBuilds – Small Communities – Big Impact – A Plan for Appalachia” program, which was announced in 2022. The program is administered by the Governor’s Office of Appalachia within the Ohio Department of Development.