



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 18, 2025

The School District of University City Announces Partnership to Develop School-Based Health Center at University City High School

The School District of University City is partnering with Washington University, Family Care Health Centers, School-Based Health Alliance of Missouri, and Healthy Blue Missouri to establish a School-Based Health Center designed to provide comprehensive health services to students at University City High School.

This initiative aligns closely with the *Schools as Centers of Health* recommendation from the 2015 Ferguson Commission Report. Superintendent Sharonica L. Hardin-Bartley, PhD, PHR, who served on the Commission's Youth at the Center work group, has long championed expanding access to health and wellness services for young people. The creation of a School-Based Health Center reflects the District's continued commitment to advancing this vision for the community.

"For nearly a decade, it has been our vision to bring accessible, high-quality health care directly to our students," Hardin-Bartley said. "We are excited to offer on-site healthcare resources that support both academic and life success. We are deeply grateful to the James S. McDonnell Foundation for helping make this center a reality."

The new School-Based Health Center will offer sustainable, reliable, and easily accessible physical and mental health services. By meeting students' needs on campus, the center will reduce common barriers to care and help ensure students are healthy, supported, and ready to learn.

Why School-Based Health Centers?

- **Access to Health Care For All Children**
School-based health centers provide health care to all children with parental permission, regardless of insurance coverage or ability to pay (often at no or low cost).

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- **Regular Preventive Care**

When health care is far away, expensive, or difficult to access, children are less likely to receive regular preventive care. School-based health centers offer care where the children are -- in schools.

- **Keeping Children in School**

School-based health centers help keep children in school and engaged in learning by addressing health concerns quickly, supporting mental wellness, and returning students to class as soon as possible.

- **Strong Parent and School Support**

When parents give permission for their child to be seen at a school-based health center, they know they will not have to miss work to care for minor problems, and that their child will receive prompt attention from health providers trained at working with youth. School administrators and teachers are extremely supportive of school-based health centers because health centers allow them to focus on their role of educating students who are healthy and ready to learn.

The School-Based Health Center represents a significant step forward in supporting the health and academic success of students at University City High School. This collaborative effort with Washington University, Family Care Health Centers, and School-Based Health Alliance of Missouri reflects a shared commitment to removing barriers to care and strengthening student well-being. As the project advances, the District will continue to provide updates to families and the community regarding timelines, services, and opportunities for engagement.