

# **Health Services, Employee Wellness and School Health Advisory Council**

## **Annual Report for the Denton ISD Board of Trustees**

**July 30, 2013**

### **Philosophy**

The registered nurses of Denton ISD Health Services believe that a healthy child in a safe and healthy environment is the best learner, and that healthy employees are the foundation for excellence in the classroom.

**Our mission is:** to support student success, helping each person we touch reach their maximum health potential by fully implementing the nursing process in the school setting and to contribute diligently to a safe and healthy school environment for all.

The priority of Health Services continues to be support student success inside and outside the classroom. The Registered Nurses of Denton ISD evidenced this priority by the attention given to each individual's healthcare needs and the prompt nursing assessments and interventions that resulted in the student's healthy return to the classroom as quickly and safely as possible.

The Board of Trustees has established goals that serve as a basis for excellence in teaching and learning. The members of the Health Service Team support these goals and the information to follow will demonstrate how the programs and activities support not only the Board goals but the mission of Denton ISD.

### **I. Vision.... In pursuit of excellence, the district will:**

- **cultivate a network of professional learning communities addressing the educational needs of every child in our district**

Following the leadership and direction of the Board of Trustees and Academic Programs, Health Services developed a PLC in the fall of 2010. While we do not address the direct educational needs of each student, we utilize the PLC to develop plans and strategies for teaching health information, disease and illness prevention and lifelong health lessons for our students. We believe the academic success of our district is directly linked to the physical and mental health of our students. In addition, the PLC is used to collect data and information from our nursing team to plan staff development and in service education.

- **develop and maintain a culture where learning is our first priority**

Health Services continues as a department to focus on helping each student maximize his academic success. Learning and academic success is supported by the Registered Nurse on each campus who assesses students and makes good clinical decisions. The nurses encourage and assist the students to return to the classroom as quickly and safely as possible. They also educate students and parents when a student needs to go or remain at home for health or safety reason. The nurses also perform vision and hearing screenings and make referrals to health care providers. The prompt referrals for additional screening and intervention allow students to receive care and assistance for conditions that might interfere with the learning process. The nurses also provide information and resources for students who need assistance accessing care or resources. Many are members of NASN, the National Association of School Nurses, who through a program called Sight for Students can actually provide vouchers for an eye exam and glasses if students qualify for the program. During the 2012-13 school year over 10,300 of our students received vision and hearing screenings. Of the students screened 611 were referred for further evaluation and care.

- **remain committed to providing equitable and outstanding opportunities for every student on every campus**

Each RN is committed to providing the best opportunity for student success to each and every student. The commitment to individual student success is often evidenced by time spent providing the student, family and staff training and support to allow each student to be independent, but remain safe, at school. It is a goal for each student to have the opportunity to learn to make their own health decisions according to their abilities and age appropriate judgment.

**Teaching and Learning.... In pursuit of excellence, the district will:  
establish quality staff development programs that promote professional learning  
communities**

The department of Health Services has utilized the PLC concept since the fall of 2010. In-service and staff development topics are selected as a result of discussions in the PLC. As a result of the work of our PLC, Denton ISD is hosting a three day conference for school nurses on August 5, 6 and 7 at the PDC. Currently, the conference has over 60 RNs from across the state have registered to attend. This is the first conference hosted by our district and we have requested approval from the Texas Nurse's Association to provide 13.66 continuing nursing education hours. The three day Conference titled "School Nursing: Expanding and Improving your Practice" will feature education and information on the following topics: the independent role of the school nurse, Asthma and allergies, Asthma, Clinical Assessment Skills, Sport's Injuries, Anaphylaxis and the Use of Epinephrine in Schools, Mental Health Issues, Documentation, Legal Issues related to School nursing, IDEA and Section 504, Delegation, Immunizations and Exemptions, Individual Health Plans, Preparing for Disaster, Health Care Resources and a panel discussion featuring three local DISD campus principals regarding the expectations of an administrator has for a campus nurse.

Nurses were grouped geographically into "Packs." The pack Concept is based on the Wolf Mantra. "The strength of the wolf is the pack and the strength of the pack is the wolf. "Packs

provide support and backup to a campus if additional nursing support was needed. The Pack members covered for emergency call if a campus RN was absent and a substitute could not be secured. Pack members assist each other with screenings. A designated "Pack Leader "was available to answer questions, mentor, listen and assist as needed. Packs met to share campus or area concerns and to enjoy the friendship and camaraderie they shared.

New Nurse Academy was held for the fourth consecutive year. The program was developed by Kathy Malmberg and Jonita Widmer to increase the success of nurses new to school health. The Academy is a built in resource for learning and sharing information. The program allows RNs new to school nursing a systematic introduction and schedule to maintain a safe and efficient health room, accomplish all required screenings and to enjoy their new role. Participants reported the program was beneficial and was again well received.

- **strive to deliver all academic programs through teachers possessing advanced degrees and demonstrate competence in the areas of professional responsibility**

Entry level for DISD RNs is a Bachelors' degree. Three nurses have Masters Degrees and two have PhDs. The partnership with TWU has already encouraged several to look into Advanced Degree Programs. Two health service nurses are Nationally Certified School Nurses.

- **stay abreast of and incorporate best practices into teaching , learning, technology and leadership**

In addition to the three day conference, health service members attend staff training specifically designed to inform team members of best practices and evidenced based competencies.

In addition to local staff development and training, of the PLC, DISD nurses also participated in numerous outside learning opportunities sponsored by Cook's and Children's Medical Center, Region X and XI Educational Service Centers, the National Association of School Nurses, Texas School Nurse Association and Texas School Health Association.

Twelve nurses are members of NASN, the National Association of School Nurses, and TSNO, the Texas School Nurse Association. Three DISD nurses currently serve on the Executive Board of the Region XI School Nurse Organization. Nurse Dee Guay is President of the organization.

Denton ISD is represented at the Region X and Children's Medical Center School Nurse Advisory Council by Guyer Nurse Georgia Albury and Paloma Creek nurse Dee Guay.

### **III. Climate... In pursuit of excellence, the district will**

- **Motivate and prepare students to embrace their full responsibilities and obligations as active citizens of their community, nation and world.**

It is the mission and philosophy of the DISD nurses to motivate, encourage and provide instruction and resources for all students to grow to take responsibility for their own health

Denton ISD RNs either provided actual classroom instruction or sponsored classes. Through individual or group instruction we hope to equip students to take responsibility for their own physical and emotional health. The goal of education in Denton ISD is not limited to academic success and standardized test scores but to equip our students to be lifelong learners who have the knowledge and skill to make decisions that positively impact their lives. The instruction provided is structured to the physical and social needs of the students.

Personal Hygiene- Hand Hygiene is a popular request especially in the lower grades. The scrubby bear program is always popular with our kindergarten students. Most elementary nurses reported they provided hand washing instruction for every classroom.

CPR- All of the campus RNs are CPR instructors. All nurses are expected to teach at least two CPR classes on their home campus. Many of the nurses, including the secondary nurses, provided classes for the athletic and teaching staff as well as students. Kathy Malmberg, the nurse at Hawk, has made CPR and First Aid a regular part of the fifth grade curriculum for several years. Two staff members are CPR instructor trainers and provide instruction and recertification to our own nursing staff, the ATC staff and staff at the Virginia Gallian Center. CPR/AED instruction by our own in-house staff provides a significant saving of time and money for the required recertification process.

Dental Hygiene- February is Dental Hygiene Month with most elementary nurses focusing on dental hygiene and care. Many of the campuses were visited by local dentists who shared information and free toothbrushes with our students.

Growth and Development- All elementary parents were invited to attend one of several parent preview nights to view information and films that were to be viewed by our 4' and 5 graders during an introduction to growth and development. The parent previews allowed parents to become familiar with the material and ask questions. This year the program was provided in Spanish to better serve those parents who are more comfortable Spanish. At the secondary level, several campuses were visited by the Educator for the Denton County Health Department who provided information on sexually transmitted diseases. High School students enrolled in Health received instruction on the importance of self-exams for cancer screening, sexually transmitted diseases and AIDs prevention.

Parenting Skills- Kathy Nations, the nurse at Lee, worked in collaboration with the school counselor and staff to provide a Saturday Parent Academy. She also provided an onsite liaison for CHIPS and Medicaid at the Academy to assist parents with the forms and applications. Kathy reported many parents completed the applications and the service was reported to be appreciated and well received.

Pediculosis Prevention (Lice) - The nurses provide a general instruction and prevention program for all elementary students.

The nurses work with the counselors and assist to provide the state mandated prevention programs on child anti-victimization, bully and violence prevention.

Programs were developed by nurses to meet specific needs on the campus. The programs were often the collaborative effort of the campus nurse and school counselor.

After identifying several students with life threatening allergies, some of our nurses invited the paramedics from the Fire Station to bring an EMS unit to school and meet the students. This visit provided a friendly face for those students who might require EMS care in the event of a life threatening allergic reaction.

Olga Andrews, the Borman RN, continued her ongoing nutrition program for students and their families. A family dinner and food preparation class was sponsored by Cook Children's. Students and their families had an opportunity to learn about healthy food choices, food preparation and a chance to taste the results.

In addition to general classroom instruction, nurses work closely with parents of students with chronic health problems to prepare these students to assume the role of health care decision maker as the age and development of the student allows.

School nurses develop IHPs (Individualized Health Care Plans) for students with significant health care needs or as part of an (IEP) Individual Education Plan. The written IHP is a collaborative effort with the health care provider, parents, therapists and special education professionals to make appropriate plans and interventions to meet the student's needs at school. The nurse attends the ARD meeting to assure all those involved in the student's care understand the needs of the student with health issues.

School nurses are involved planning and implementing Emergency Action Plans for students with life threatening conditions such as allergies, asthma, Type I Diabetes, seizure disorders and cardiac conditions. For students with mobility conditions the nurse works with the building administrators to plan for the safe removal of a student from the building in the event of an evacuation.

While the classroom teachers and administrators are the primary instructional leaders at the campus, the nurses provide information and resources through the presentations and instruction, role-modeling healthy choices, through bulletin boards and websites and individual counseling with students and parents.

The Breakfast Initiative at Hodge Elementary led by Nurse Sam Teel and Principal Sam Kelley has been well received locally and has been recognized nationally through a video produced by Kellogg's. Approximately 50% of the Hodge students begin their learning experience with breakfast. Visits to the health room with complaints related to morning hunger have reduced by 65 %. The decrease in time spent in the health room provides more time in the classroom with students better physically and mentally equipped to learn. The improved health and

nutrition program has been recognized by Healthy Kids Program and Active Life. Nurse Teel has presented information at the past two summer conferences of Active Life.

The successful breakfast program for students at Hodge created questions from the SHAC as to why the program was not offered district wide and how it could be expanded. Nurse Teel wrote a grant to pilot a Universal Breakfast program in three elementary schools, Hodge, Evers and Borman. The grant was submitted prior to the law passed by the State Legislature and signed by Governor Perry that all students who attend a school with more than 80% of the students on free and reduced lunch will be offered breakfast at school at no charge. The mandated but unfunded program begins September of 2014. Nurse Teel was notified his grant was approved and immediately the work began to design and implement a pilot program with the goal of 85% of the students eating breakfast at school. A committee of stakeholders including Child Nutrition, Transportation, Custodial Staff, nurses and campus administrators has been working to implement the pilot program. The opportunity to provide breakfast was offered to other campuses and currently 12 schools are working to join the program. Active Life and Healthy Kids have both indicated they want to continue to work and support the outstanding efforts of our district. The request for additional grant funds has been submitted. Administrators of both organizations have praised our efforts to provide a breakfast opportunity to students.

- **strive to deliver all academic programs through teachers possessing advanced degrees and demonstrate competence in the areas of professional responsibility**

Entry level for DISD RNs is a Bachelors' degree. Two nurses have Masters Degrees and one has a PhD. The partnership with TWU has already encouraged several to look into Advanced Degree Programs. The Director currently is the only Nationally Certified School Nurse and is encouraging others to sit for the exam.

- **stay abreast of and incorporate best practices into teaching, learning, technology and leadership**

Twelve nurses are members of NASN, the National Association of School Nurses, and TSNO, the Texas School Nurse Association. Three DISD nurses currently serve on the Executive Board of the Region XI School Nurse Organization. Jonita Widmer is President Elect and will assume the Presidency in May of 2011.

Nurses had the opportunity to attend TIA to increase and sharpen their technical skills.

Denton ISD is represented at the Region X and Children's Medical Center School Nurse Advisory Council by Guyer Nurse Georgia Albury and Ginning's nurse Dee Guay.

**Parent and Community Involvement.... In pursuit of excellence, the district will:**

- **foster a positive and welcoming environment that encourages parent and community partnerships to achieve success for all our students**

School nurses work closely with parents to foster a policy of open communication and concern for each student. Parents are encouraged to contact the school nurse by email or on the secure phone line that only the nurse can access messages. Each nurse maintains a website with contact information and hours she is available. Parents are asked to schedule an appointment when possible to allow uninterrupted time with the nurse to discuss their child's specific needs. Nurses made over 27,976 documented parent and guardian contacts last school year.

Parent meetings and conferences often revealed that specific needs and services were needed by a student. Many times the parent expressed concern that they were uninsured underinsured or lacked the resources to provide for their child. Nurses made approximately 8000 referrals to community resources and agencies for our students. Students were referred to the following agencies for assistance based on the need:

Kiwanis Children's Clinic  
Care Van- a free immunization clinic  
Lion's Club  
HOPE, Inc.  
Interfaith Ministry  
Children's Medical Center  
Cooks Children's  
Cook Children's Behavioral Health  
Denton MHMR  
Denton County Health Department  
Scottish Rite Hospital for Children

- **Utilize citizen's advisory committees to focus on long and short term tasks**

The School Health Advisory Council met four times during the 2012-13 school year.

- **Provide support services and promote health, wellness and safety for students and families**

School Nurses are always busy, but especially at the beginning of school attempting to create a safe and healthy environment. Nurses teach students and staff about hand washing, infection control and decision making regarding exclusion from school criteria. Students, parents and staff were often frightened and confused by conflicting messages from the media, their health care and even the government. School nurses partner with the Denton County Health Department in tracking flu and flu like illness for patterns and trends. This information was reported weekly. The tracking which normally does not begin until early November was initiated with the opening of school in August. The tracking process remained in effect until late April.

West Nile Virus was of significant concern at the beginning of the school year. The campus nurses were not alone in the fight to minimize the number of people affected by the virus. Denton ISD Health Services, Media Communications and Technology met weekly, sometimes more often, to collaborate and post accurate and meaningful information on the Website for parents. The staff Portal also was updated with factual and timely information. Students were given information to take home on minimizing exposure to West Nile, including suggestions to eliminate the areas of potential breeding of the mosquitoes, effective repellent and signs and symptoms of the disease. We as a district wanted to provide the most accurate and timely information to parents without creating any panic or fear. Updates information was provided on the Website. Carolyn Thompson and Sharon Cox were essential to the process of sharing this information.

Each and every day the nurses of DISD provide support for student success. The nurse is responsible for assessing the needs of a student and makes the decision if the student can safely return to class, if a parent needs to be called and in the emergent or critical situation provides care and support until 911 EMS arrives on the scene. The nurse or other designated district employee accompanies the student to the hospital and remains as a support until the parent arrives. In the 2012-13 school year, 41 students required transport to the hospital by EMS. In supporting student success, our nurses determined that out of over 84,000 visits to the health room, 66,826 of the students could safely return to class. These students remained at school and received instruction they would have mostly likely missed had there not been an RN readily available on site to assess the student and determine the student could remain at school. Studies done by TEA demonstrate the non - medically trained staff send students home at a much higher rate than the RN. According to the Texas Occupation Code, Nurse Practice Act only a registered nurse can legally perform a clinical assessment. This professional limitation only allows the staff to contact the parent and refer to the judgment of the parent. In the case the student meets the Department of State Health Services mandatory criteria for exclusion the campus administration is required to exclude the student until the readmission criteria is met. TASB Update 97 states- A principal shall exclude from attendance any child having or suspected of having a communicable condition listed in 25 Administrative Code 97.7(a) until the readmission criteria for the condition are met. *25 TAC 97.7(a)* A principal shall exclude from attendance any child having or suspected of having a communicable disease designated by the commissioner of health as cause for exclusion. The support of the Board of Trustees to place and keep an RN on each campus not only supports student academic success but a commitment to student health and safety.

Students who attend school in DISD have health needs that are much diversified. We have students with no health problems and others with very complicated health needs. Summary of student health concerns (numbers represent the entire district based on the needs identified on the health record by a parent)

ADD/ADHD	2021
Asthma	4183
Autism	107



Cardiac Conditions	53
Cystic Fibrosis	2
Diabetes-Type I	117
Life Threatening Allergies	313
Psychiatric Conditions	479
Bipolar, Depression, OCD, ODD, Severe Anxiety, Psychosis	
Seizure Disorders	225

The nurses were busy assessing and treating and working with students and staff. The school year also included nurses administering over

179, 663 medications and treatments

Including:

Over 18,000 blood glucose checks

17,200 Inhaler doses

4,010 Nebulizer Treatments

17,250 oral medications

13,468 Subcutaneous Injections (all of these were Insulin)

3,500 doses of Insulin administered via an Insulin Pump

3,912 eye medications

- **foster a positive and welcoming environment that encourages parent and community partnerships to achieve success for all our students**

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Parent meetings and conferences often revealed that specific needs and services were needed by a student. Many times the parent expressed concern that they were uninsured underinsured or lacked the resources to provide for their child. Nurses made 8,700 referrals to community resources and agencies for our students. Students were referred to the following agencies for assistance based on the need:

Kiwanis Children's Clinic

Care Van- a free immunization clinic

Lion's Club

HOPE, Inc.

Interfaith Ministry

Children's Medical Center  
Cook's Children's  
Denton MHMR  
Denton County Health Department  
Scottish Rite Hospital for Children

- **work continuously with the community in planning and facility development**

The Director serves as a member of the Denton Emergency Planning Action Committee. This group meets periodically with city and county officials to plan for critical events that might impact our schools and community. Denton ISD was an integral part of this year's Emergency Drill held on May 6 at CH Collins. The scenario involved a severe wind and weather incident during a sporting event at the stadium that caused several light poles to fall. Victims suffered various degrees of injury. Local EMS, Fire, Rescue and Law Enforcement and the company contracted to provide care during events responded. The event planners reported an excellent response by the private contracted provider and local emergency responders.

Denton ISD is represented on the Reportable Disease Communication Team by Jonita Widmer and Sharon Cox. The group meets quarterly and any health or environmental concerns are shared.

In addition to the above committees, the Director represents DISD on the Denton County Immunization Coalition and Healthy Community Coalition.

After a survey in 2008 of over 14,000 parents in the six counties that Cook Children's Health Care System serves, the Board of Directors committed to providing resources and facilitating collaboration in the communities interested in improving the health of its children. Cook hosted workshops to form and build successful partnerships. The Center for Children's Health (CCHAPS) was established. Each of the six communities was asked to select a focus topic from the top six issues in children's health as identified by the survey. The six areas of focus include: asthma, dental health, mental health, childhood obesity, safety and child abuse prevention.

After much deliberation and discussion, the Denton County team selected children's mental health. WATCH of Denton County (Wellness and Total Children's Health) has worked diligently over the past two years focusing on improving access to children's mental health services and promoting excellence among the providers of children's mental health services. The Leadership Team represents some of the strongest advocates for children; including Denton ISD, Denton County Health Department and Denton County MHMR, Cook Behavioral Health, Lewisville ISD, UNT and several private practitioners and community leaders. The plan is to develop a user-friendly web-site that can provide families and providers a resource website. The goal is to create access to information for

families and providers and to increase awareness about mental health for families. Additional information can be provided if requested.

The Director and administrative assistant, Lisa Rivera, were the guests of the TWU College of Nursing at the Founders Day Luncheon. The Interim Dean and two Associate Deans were very pleased eager to renew the partnership with Denton ISD. The renewed partnership will provide clinical opportunities for the undergraduate and graduate nursing students but will open doors of educational and professional opportunities for our nurses.

- **utilize citizen's advisory committees to focus on short and long term tasks**

Citizens representing all areas of the community serve on the SHAC (School Health Advisory Council). The SHAC membership included parents of DISD students, DISD employees, community business partners and local citizens. The SHAC meets 4 times a year and makes recommendations to the Board of Trustees in the areas of comprehensive school health.

The SHAC met four times during the school year in compliance with TEA requirements. The twenty four member Trustee approved group includes community leaders, parents of DISD students who are not employed by the district, Child Nutrition, Safety and Security, Counseling and Social Services, Physical and Health Education, Curriculum, and a representative from an elementary, middle and high school campus.

The SHAC made one recommendation to the Board of Trustees this year. TEA announced it would no longer be providing or supporting the Healthy and Wise curriculum used by grades 1-8 for health and fitness instruction. The SHAC supported the recommendation of Elementary and Secondary curriculum to utilize the CATCH program, one of two programs supported by TEA. Curriculum has been ordered and teacher training is planned for the implantation of the new materials.

Approximately 5100 students have life threatening conditions that could severely jeopardize their health each and every day. The campus RN is most often the critical decision maker that leads to a good outcome for the student. Parents entrust their students to these caring professionals each day.

**Human Resources...In pursuit of excellence, the district will:**

- **develop and expect a consistently high level of, and respect for, professional performance by all staff**

The members of Health Services are all Registered Nurses who pride themselves as professionals. The individual nurse has high standards which she adheres to both morally

and ethically. In addition to the personal commitment to professional performance each values the respect of her colleagues.

- **maintain a diverse workforce with respect to qualifications, expertise and commitment to excellence**

The Health Services team is diversified in age, race and gender. The nurses utilize the clinical areas of expertise when question arise outside of their area of expertise. Areas of expertise include Pediatrics, Diabetes, Orthopedics and Sport's Medicine, Obstetrics, Oncology, Home Health, Hospice Care, Infusion Therapy, Renal Dialysis, Neonatal ICU and Transport Team, Surgery, Medical, Worker's Compensation and Case Management, Utilization Review. This diverse combination of individuals provides expertise and consultation that is only a phone call or email away. All of the nurses have a minimum of 5 years clinical experience before joining the team and many have served as substitutes for district.

- **promote health and wellness in the workforce**

The nurses along with staff from Health Matters administered over 1400 Seasonal Flu vaccines at 7 different locations. These will all provided at no cost for the employee. This year the district saved additional funds, as employees with TRS Active Care Insurance, had their vaccine paid for through their health insurance. The savings to the district was over \$13,000.

The 2012 Wellness Day was well attended. The ATC was overflowing on Saturday morning as employees, retirees and their family members made their way through a maze of displays, screening areas, demonstrations and giveaways. In an effort to assist the smaller districts in our area, notices were sent to the districts inviting their employees to attend. The 75 vendors provided door prizes, free samples, health information and interesting displays. The committee was headed by Hodge Nurse Sam Teel and Borman Nurse Olga Andrews. Again local high school students served as volunteers. Student volunteers greeted attendees, helped with directions and provided any requested assistance. The nurses and members of the Wellness appreciated the help and the students appeared to enjoy the opportunity.

**Growth, Change and Fiscal Responsibility....In pursuit of excellence, the district will:**

- **demonstrate effective and efficient management of district resources**

Health Services began last Spring to evaluate methods to improve the use of our resources. Each nurse was asked to inventory her supplies before placing an order for this school year. Through evaluating the actual utilization of items the department was able to eliminate items, avoiding duplication. The nurses continue to explore ways to conserve resources but provide the best care to our students and staff.

Denton ISD Health Services

Keep Pace with Health

Prevention

Assessment

Care

Education