

MEMORANDUM

November 6, 2013

TO: Members of the Mid-Valley Executive Advisory Board

FROM: Carla Cumblad, Executive Director

RE: Increase in Nursing Services for MJC

In the spring of 2010 (prior to my employment), it was recommended to reduce the nursing services for the cooperative from a 1.0 FTE to a .5. At the time, in cases of emergency, the nurse from Munhall Elementary School was made available to assist at Mades-Johnstone. And, at that time, the numbers of students in the New Directions Program were decreasing.

The enrollment for the cooperative in the fall of 2010 was 219 students. The November, 2013 enrollment for the cooperative is 236 students. The enrollment for the New Directions/Safe Schools Program in the fall of 2010 was 40 students (10 of whom were Safe Schools). The enrollment for November, 2013, is anticipated to be 71 students (8 of whom are Safe Schools). Over the past three years, the New Directions Program has transitioned to a therapeutic program, serving more students with significant mental health needs.

The Nursing Services for the Cooperative fall into the following categories:

1. Health Plans for Students in Host Schools. The nurse is responsible for the development and follow-through with health plans for students with significant needs in the host school programs. *Of the 110 students in host schools (not including SAIL students), 30 of them have comprehensive care plans; 4 others have other health needs (31%).* The majority of the CSNs time is spent at the beginning of the year, working with host nurses, training staff and refining the care plans. These plans meet the needs of very complex students and often are in distant locations (Batavia High School, Prairie Knolls Middle Schools. In order to be effective, the students and staff must be observed periodically, and follow-up with the parents and physicians is often necessary. *At this time, the follow-up for these plans is insufficient due to time constraints.*
2. Health Plans for Students in New Directions/Safe Schools. *Of the current 64 students in who attend MJC, 37 of them are on psychotropic medications, 6 have peanut allergies, 7 have asthma (78%).* Approximately 14 students in the program have been psychiatrically hospitalized over the past year. Another 6-8 students have participated in drug and alcohol rehabilitation. The nurse is expected to assist with the development of health plans, monitor medications, assist with hospitalizations, examine the mental health needs, assist with chronic attendance issues and attention issues. This type of work requires extensive work with the staff and the families. *At this time, many of these responsibilities are conducted by the school social workers, secretary, principal or teaching staff. Follow-up and on-site consistency is problematic due to time constraints and the fact that the nurse is often in other locations when scheduled to work.*

3. Reevaluations. The Certified School Nurse is expected to conduct medical reviews for reevaluations for all the cooperative students. These medical reviews can be brief for some students, but for those with complex medical needs and plans, the reevaluation efforts can be quite comprehensive, including observations, interviews with parents, physicians and staff. *This year, 84 reevaluations are scheduled for students in the cooperative.*
4. Reporting. The nurse is expected to complete required paperwork and reports and to collaborate with reporting districts. For example, the MV nurse coordinates the vision/hearing screenings (required annually for special education), immunization reports, and physicals and reports back to the districts with required information. *These tasks are required and are completed as scheduled.*
5. Education and prevention activities. Across the programs, there is a need for health education, sexuality discussions, and health/wellness education. *Except for one session for the 4-5th grade students last year, the nurse has not been able to perform any of these activities for the students in any of the programs.*

We have found that with the increasing numbers and complexity of students, some of these activities cannot be successfully managed with a part-time nurse. We are recommending an increase in on-site nursing support for the MJC facility for 10 hours per week until the end of this school year. We believe that this recommendation is not optimal, but will meet the majority of health and safety needs in the program.

At this time, we are recommending a small amount of RN support, but it should be noted that for most of these duties, by 2014-15, the law is going to require a CSN to perform these special education responsibilities.

Budget Implications

The estimated hourly rate for an RN is \$24.38/hour X 10 hours X 26 weeks = \$6,339.

The hourly rate for our current CSN is \$36/ hour X 10 hours X 26 weeks = \$9,360.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Board approve the hiring of an RN for 10 hours a week to support the students at MJC.