

Health Services /School Health Advisory Council Annual Board Report

August 24, 2010

Are School Nurses Just Nurses?

I'm just a Nurse. I strive to make the difference between a good day and a bad one for everyone I meet.

I just have educated eyes that prevent medication errors, injuries and catastrophes.

I'm just an informal researcher that helps other health care providers give better, safer and more effective care.

I just work in a school managing and monitoring students with chronic and life threatening conditions.

I just educate students, families and staff about how to maintain their health.

I often just make the difference for a child being able to come to school or stay at home.

I'm just a mentor and preceptor who educates and models care for future generations of nurses.

I just make the difference between a student who is hurting to one who feels comfort and dignity.

I just treat boo-boos and major injuries with compassion and care.

I'm just central to providing first line care to students at school

Don't you want to be 'Just a School Nurse 'Too?

This writing was adapted from a letter written by Suzanne Gordon - 2001.

The priority of Health Services has been to 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:

a. 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. These prompt referrals 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 2009-2010 school year over 11, 500 of our students received vision and hearing screenings. Of the 11, 500 screened 767 were referred for further evaluation and care.

Teaching and Learning.... In pursuit of excellence, the district will

c. Expect full curriculum implementation on each campus by instructional leaders

Denton ISD RNs either provided actual classroom instruction or sponsored classes in the following areas:

Personal Hygiene- Hand Hygiene was a popular request at all grade levels with the H1N1 outbreak. Most nurses reported they provided hand washing for every classroom and every grade at their campus including our middle schools.

CPR- All of the campus RNs are CPR instructors. All nurses taught 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. Cindy Fitzgerald, the ATC RN, provides First Aid and CPR for the Ready, Set, Teach students. Three are CPR instructor trainers and provide instruction and recertification to our own nursing staff saving resources 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.

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. Peggy Fogle, the nurse at Strickland worked with students who were identified as being at risk for Type II Diabetes. The after school program utilized UNT students. The SMS students learned nutrition and exercise tips to help them make healthy life style choices. A unique feature provided disposal cameras the students could use to make a "photo" rather than written food journal.

Betty Reed, the McMath RN, developed a set of "Deal a Meal "cards to assist a Type I Diabetic student who is also autistic with meal planning and food choices.

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

Realizing the importance of First Aid, Olga Andrews, the Borman RN, volunteered time from her own summer vacation to teach First Aid to the students involved in the summer Communities in School Program. She also served as a Field Trip Chaperone for a day at the Water Park. (That is dedication!)

Ginny Smith at Savannah has continued to utilize and add to her large puppet collection. This school year the students were encouraged to write scripts and develop the shows that were shared with classmates.

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.

d. Establish quality staff development programs and promote professional learning communities

Health Services, with a desire to participate at the professional level of our teaching colleagues, are working to develop a PLC for the nurses. The department has established an education committee. One of the first responsibilities of the committee was to develop and survey the nurses to determine their learning needs and professional areas of concern. The Director is planning to receive additional training in the PLC concept.

Nurses were grouped geographically into "Sisterhoods." The Sisterhoods provided support and backup to a campus if additional nursing support was needed. The Sisters covered for emergency call if a campus RN was absent and a substitute could not be secured. Sisters assist each other with screenings. A designated "Big Sister" was available to answer questions, mentor, listen and assist as needed. Sisterhoods 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. The program was again well received.

The Director and two nurses were the guests of the TWU College of Nursing at the Founders Day Luncheon. The Dean and two Associate Deans were very 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.

In addition to the formation 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.

All the middle school nurses and two high school nurses attended the Cook's Sport's Symposium in June. This valuable one day conference provided training to the middle school nurses who see many athletic and sports related injuries without the benefit of an onsite trainer. August In- Service provided three hours of professional CEUs by the UT Southwestern Medical School librarians. The three hour program provided information and instruction in ways to access free and reliable medical information using the Internet.

e 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.

f 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.

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

The Board of Directors for Texas School Health Association continues to have representation from Denton ISD with the membership of Director Jonita Widmer. Mrs. Widmer presented the Texas School Health Excellence Award winning program as a breakout session at the state conference in Austin in January.

**Climate.... In pursuit of excellence, the district will
a Celebrate and respect the diversity in our Denton ISD community**

All members of Health Services completed the Safe School Diversity training in February. In addition to exploring and discussing various cultures, the Team received a presentation based on Ruby Payne's poverty model by Joe and Heather Ader. Each nurse has been asked to read Ruby Payne's book during the fall semester. As a district the needs of all students need to be identified, addressed and met if possible.

b Promote and nourish a safe learning and working environment which is supportive, cooperative, ethical and ensures open communication

School Nurses were very busy at the beginning of school attempting to create a safe and healthy environment during the H1N1 outbreak. Nurses at all campuses taught hand washing classes, 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 partnered 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.

The campus nurses were not alone in the H1N1 fight. 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. Elementary students took letters home on more than one occasion in their weekly folders regarding H1N1. We as a district wanted to provide the most accurate and timely information to parents without creating any panic or fear. Free

H1N1 vaccine clinic information was provided on the Website. Carolyn Thompson and Sharon Cox were essential to the process of sharing this information.

e. Motivate and prepare students to embrace their full responsibilities 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. 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.

As previously mentioned school nurses are working on a continual basis to role model healthy behaviors, guide students to make healthy choices and to avoid life style decisions that might negatively impact the student's health or the health of those around them.

Realizing the contributions of the retired Denton ISD educators in our community, Cindy Fitzgerald attended a meeting and shared information about DISD Wellness Day and the Wellness Center. She volunteered to be the liaison with this group to keep them informed and updated with Health Services information and benefits.

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

a 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 31,500 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 over 9, 500 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
People's 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

b 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.

Peggy Fogle serves on the Denton Reportable Disease Communication Team. The group meets quarterly and any health or environmental concerns are shared. Peggy represents Denton ISD.

c 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.

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

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 accompanies the student to the hospital and remains as a support until the parent

arrives. In the 2009-2010 school year, 41 students required transport to the hospital by EMS, over 9000 students were dismissed to a parent. In supporting student success, our nurses determined that over 23,000 student visits to the nurse could safely return to class. These 23,000 plus 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 professional medical staff send students home at a much higher rate than the RN. 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 some 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 | 2073 |
| Asthma | 4183 |
| Autism | 107 |
| Cardiac Conditions | 321 |
| Cystic Fibrosis | 5 |
| Diabetes-Type I | 112 |
| Life Threatening Allergies | 313 |
| Psychiatric Conditions | 479 |
| Bipolar, Depression, OCD, ODD, Severe Anxiety, Psychosis | |
| Seizure Disorders | 256 |

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.

School nurses care for the significant and minor injuries and illnesses each day. Our nurses saw students for a combined total of 67,174 visits including 13,968 injuries, 51,476 illnesses and 2456 other visits. In addition to the health room visits, our nurses administered over 40,000 medication doses and 9000 treatments.

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

a 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.

b Maintain a diverse workforce with respect to qualifications, expertise and commitment to excellence

The nurses are diversified in age, race and now gender. The Health Services team consists of three African American nurses, one Latino, one male and a variety of ages and clinical area expertise. 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, however, allow no diversity in the area of commitment to excellence. All of the nurses have a minimum of 5 years clinical experience before joining the team and many have served as substitutes for district.

e Promote Health and Wellness in the workforce

The nurses administered over 1400 Seasonal Flu vaccines at 7 different locations and over 400 H1N1 vaccines. These will all provided at no cost for the employee. The 2010 Wellness Day was the best attended Wellness Day in the history of Denton ISD. The ATC was overflowing on Saturday morning as over 750 employees and their family members made their way through a maze of displays, screening areas, demonstrations and giveaways. The Blood Drive and Mammogram mobile units were busy all morning. The 75 vendors provided door prizes, free samples, health information and interesting displays. The committee headed by Ryan HS nurse, Peggy Fogle, invited local high school students to serve as volunteers. Ready, Set, Teach ATC students assisted in the child care area where children did health related activities while the adults visited the booths. Each child left the area with a goody bag of health items, including a toothbrush. The student council members 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. The DHS Fillies and Cheerleaders provided excellence entertainment and "boosted the spirit "of the attendees.

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

e 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.