



School Health Services Program Newsletter

Fall 2018

An effective school health program can be one of the most cost-effective investments a nation can make to simultaneously improve education and health. – World Health Organization, 2018

FALL IS IN THE AIR!

Fall is definitely in the air and what a busy start to the school year it has been! We here at central office certainly appreciate all your hard work in making this a successful 2018-2019 school year so far! With the aftermath of Hurricane Michael, we understand what a difficult task this has been for some counties. We are pleased to present the second edition of our program newsletter designed for school superintendents, county health department (CHD) directors and administrators, and school health partners. We hope you enjoyed the first newsletter last spring and found it to be informative. It is our goal to keep you abreast of all the happenings in school health! We encourage your feedback to ensure this newsletter informs and inspires collaborative development of local school health programs.

SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES PROGRAM

Through the cooperative efforts of the Florida Department of Health (DOH) and the Florida Department of Education (DOE), the School Health Services Program provides the services mandated in Florida Statutes, sections 381.0056, 381.0057, and 402.3026. School health services are intended to minimize health barriers to learning for students in grades pre-kindergarten (pre-K) through 12th. To help ensure the provision of safe and appropriate county-level school health services, the program office provides funding, technical assistance, and oversight of health services provided in Florida's public and participating non-public schools. During the 2017–2018 school year, local school health programs provided a total of 25,341,633 services statewide for the 2,819,224 students attending public schools.



2018-2019 PROGRAM FOCUS

As always, our program will be focusing on the great collaborative initiatives that take place between local school districts and their county health departments. This school year a focus will be on how and why we collect the data we do. You will notice significant changes to our Annual School Health Report that were made to align with the National Association of School Nurses' (NASN) data initiative, "Every Student Counts! National School Health Data Set." We are hopeful that the new report format will provide an improved snapshot of the wonderful services you provide to your students each and every day.

School Health liaisons will continue performing periodic monitoring site visits throughout the school year to ensure statutory mandates are fulfilled. We strongly encourage superintendents, health officers, and other school health stakeholders to attend the meetings associated with your visits.

THOUGHTS FROM AN EDUCATION LEADER

Bill Montford, Chief Executive Officer for the Florida Association of District School Superintendents

As educators and those who work in the school medical services realm, we know firsthand the importance of our children's health. There are a multitude of studies that document the correlation between a healthy mind/body and high or improved academic success. As a former middle school assistant principal, high school principal, and district school superintendent, I have seen firsthand the impact that a student's physical and mental wellbeing can have on their academic performance and their overall school experience.

Every child should have the same opportunity for academic success. Unfortunately, the reality is many students come to school with health issues that can often be a barrier to learning if not identified and addressed. Many families turn to schools for help and schools are always ready to provide that help. However, more attention and additional resources are needed to adequately meet the health needs of our young people. Schools play an important role but could do much more if the resources were available.

The physical, social, and psychological health of

students is everyone's responsibility. Schools, health agencies, parents, and local communities must work together toward the common goal of supporting the link between healthy eating, physical activity, and improved academic achievement of children of all ages.

Through a collaborative, community-based approach, we collectively have the ability to improve student health. We need to level the playing field so that every student has the opportunity to achieve their greatest social, emotional, and educational potential

A SUPERINTENDENT'S VIEW – Larry Moore, Superintendent, Jackson County School District

My school district and community are still recovering from the devastation of Hurricane Michael – which will be a long process. Months for some, and possibly years for others. A reality that plays out throughout all the hurricane-impacted school districts and communities in north Florida. So, when I was asked to write an article for this newsletter, I initially hesitated. However, the more I thought about it I realized I did have an experience to share.

The recovery from a traumatic occurrence is always difficult and the reaction to it is different for every person. Since school began again in Jackson County post-Hurricane Michael, the increased stress and anxiety is clearly evident not only in students – but also teachers and staff. Lives were dramatically altered, and many people are still trying to establish their own “new normal.” This is why school-based health services are so important for our students. Not only to address their physical health needs, but also the psychological needs – which have increased since the hurricane.

Addressing the mental health needs of students is equally important as the physical, especially following a traumatic event. School-based mental health specialists, nurses, and clinical staff all play a huge role in ensuring the health and well-being of our students. Working in conjunction with teachers and administrators to identify student needs so they can be timely and appropriately addressed, is critical to providing a safe and secure environment.

When student's physical and emotional needs are being met, they are better able to learn which ultimately improves their academic trajectory. And a student's educational success is our ultimate goal.

VISION SCREENING PROJECT

Last spring the School Health Services Program applied for and received a special project award through The Florida Department of Health's Office of County Health Systems. The award was granted in the amount of \$561,240, to disseminate among counties for the purchase of vision screeners. A total of 72 vision screeners were purchased statewide, at an approximate value of \$7,795 each.



A statewide vision screening training (webinar) incorporating proper use of the spot screener was held on Wednesday, September 26, 2018. The training consisted of a presentation and a reference manual. The lead presenters were Dr. Howard Freedman, a pediatric ophthalmologist located in Naples, FL, and Adam Fundora, RN, MPH, School Health Coordinator, Florida Department of Health in Collier County. Both gentlemen have had much experience in working with spot screeners. This training proved to be useful and informative for staff involved in the vision screening process.



SCHOOL HEALTH AD HOC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

On September 28, 2018, the first meeting of the School Health Ad Hoc Advisory Committee was held at the direction of Dr. Celeste Philip, State Surgeon General and DOH Secretary. The Committee membership consists of leadership from varying agencies, organizations, and student leaders. The Committee will be meeting monthly to address the current physical, behavioral, and mental health needs of students and is charged to submit a final report of recommendations by June 30, 2019. The program office will be keeping school health stakeholders apprised of the Committee's developments as we move forward with the goal of increasing positive health outcomes for Florida's pre-kindergarten-12th grade students.

MANDATED SCREENINGS

Did you know that your county's school health staff may be busy throughout the year planning, organizing, and conducting mandated student health screenings? Pursuant to Florida Administrative Code Rule 64F-6.003, grade-level vision, hearing, growth and development, and scoliosis screenings are provided to students unless the student has documented parent/guardian opt-out, is not able to be screened due to profound disability or is currently in treatment for the condition. The School Health Services Program Schedule C Scope of Work details the following requirements:

Vision Screenings and Hearing Screenings:

- Must be performed for 45 percent of eligible students in kindergarten, first, third, and sixth grade by December 31 of each school year
- Must be performed for 95 percent of eligible students in kindergarten, first, third, and sixth grades by March 31 of each school year

Scoliosis Screenings:

- Must be performed for 45 percent of eligible students in sixth grade by December 31 of each school year
- Must be performed for 95 percent of eligible students in sixth grade by March 31 of each school year

Growth and Development Screenings:

- Must be performed for 45 percent of eligible students in first, third, and sixth grade by December 31 of each school year
- Must be performed for 95 percent of eligible students in first, third, and sixth grade by March 31 of each contract year

After the initial screenings, all students with abnormal screening results must be referred for additional evaluation and or treatment. After the initial referral, school health staff should document at least three or more follow-up attempts if parents/guardian are nonresponsive.

HEALTHY SCHOOLS PROGRAM UPDATE

The DOH Healthy Schools Program continues to work collaboratively with school districts by supporting the Florida Healthy District Recognition.

The [Florida Partnership for Healthy Schools](#) (formerly known as the Florida Coordinated School Health Partnership), recognizes school districts for implementing policies that comprehensively support the health of the students and staff. Of the 67 school districts, 53 have been recognized as Florida Healthy Districts.

The self-assessment submission period for the Florida Healthy School District Award opens in January and closes in April each year. For more information visit: <http://www.healthydistrict.com/>

ASTHMA PROGRAM UPDATE

DOH supports the academic performance and improvement of the health status of students with asthma in Florida. In partnership with the Florida Asthma Coalition (FAC), an Asthma-Friendly Schools Recognition was established in 2013 with the goal of improving student health, safety, attendance, and academic achievement. This voluntary program recognizes schools with exceptional asthma management programs. Encourage your school staff to complete an [Asthma-Friendly Schools Recognition Interest Form](#) to become Asthma Champions and assist their school in becoming Asthma-Friendly!

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

The Florida Association of School Nurses' will hold its 23rd annual conference at the Florida Hotel and Conference Center in Orlando on February 8-9, 2019. Registration information can be found at: <http://www.fasn.net/home>

The Florida School Health Association will hold its annual conference at the Rosen Centre Hotel in Orlando on May 1-3, 2019. Registration information can be found at: <http://fsha.net/>