

SOME OF THE Previously-Funded **HCF Grants** THAT OFFER **school-based HEALTH SERVICES**

Cristo Rey

**Compass Health Inc (formerly
Pathways Community
Behavioral Health)**

Lee's Summit Cares, Inc.

The Plaza Academy

Lexington R-V School District

Belton School District

USD 258 – Humboldt

DeLaSalle Education Center

**Gordon Parks Elementary
School**

KIPP Endeavor Academy

Policy Statement on Funding Mechanisms for School-Based Health Services

Background

School health services play a critical role in ensuring that children and youth have access to high-quality, affordable health care. By providing physical health, mental health, oral health, and youth development services on school campuses, school-based health centers (SBHCs) and other school health providers positively impact students' health and learning. They address a wide variety of health needs, from asthma management to flu vaccination to teen pregnancy prevention. At the same time, SBHC staff and other school health personnel can act as key partners in efforts to address chronic absenteeism and promote a positive school climate. The American Academy of Pediatrics has endorsed SBHC as a model for service delivery that offers a valuable "safety net" for young people.

The financial model for school-based health centers (SBHCs) varies from community to community. Included in the basic building blocks for sustainable programs are patient revenue (third-party and self-pay), public and private-sector grants, and in-kind partner support to cover non-billable expenses. On average, SBHCs rely on four different grant sources for their long-term sustainability. Eighteen states dedicate funds and staff to administer school-based health center grant programs. Neither Kansas nor Missouri is among these states.

Most SBHCs (85%) bill for health care visits, either via third-party insurers or patient fees. 82% of school-based health centers around the country cite Medicaid as a source of revenue for ongoing operations. Various analyses of SBHC financing have found patient revenue to be directly influenced by policy and practice environments. This includes states' Medicaid and CHIP reimbursement policies, the type of fiscal agent running the SBHC, the distribution of SBHC users by payer, and the administrative capacity of sites to bill and collect from third-party insurers.

Rationale for HCF Support

In celebrating our 10th anniversary, HCF has taken a look back at our grantmaking over the years. We are proud to have supported nearly \$5 million in grants for school-based health services, particularly mental health services. We recognize that children who are well are more likely to succeed in school and life. For children without convenient access to health services, particularly those in rural areas, school-based services offer access that wouldn't otherwise be available. Schools are an ideal setting for health service provision, as the context allows participation by parents, students, and teachers together. Through our grantmaking, we have seen incredible success in terms of health and education outcomes.

While we are very proud of our grantmaking to date, we can't sustain these services in perpetuity. We estimate that, if our funding were used to draw down Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP), we would have leveraged nearly \$12 million for these services over the past ten years. In many instances, we are providing private funding to allow community-based mental health centers to provide therapy services to Medicaid beneficiaries. Unfortunately, these services are not reimbursed since they are provided in the school setting. HCF will work with Medicaid directors, policymakers, and services providers in Missouri and Kansas to explore strategies to sustain and increase access to school-based health services.

KEY TALKING POINTS

- 1 School-based health services offer an important strategy to increase access to health services for young people in the HCF service area, ultimately improving both health and educational outcomes. Unfortunately, neither Kansas nor Missouri have dedicated funding for school-based health services and both states have policy environments that are not conducive to school-based health services.
- 2 Over the previous ten years, the Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City has awarded more than \$5 million in grants to support school-based health services, demonstrating strong outcomes for children served.
- 3 HCF will work with Medicaid directors, policymakers, and services providers in Missouri and Kansas to explore strategies to sustain and increase access to school-based health services.