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Monroe County School District

**School Health Advisory Committee**

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Virtual Teams Meeting

September 5, 2024

2:00-3:00 PM

2:00 Welcome and Introductions

2:05 Update from School District/School Health – school health plan, contract, upcoming immunization report, status of beginning of year clinics, stop the bleed, CPR classes, cafeteria changes

2:10 AHEC update

2:15 Health Department Updates-

2:35 Monroe County Head Start Update

2:45 Tobacco updates- Kimberly Stevens

2:55 Other community partner updates/shares/concerns

3:00 Adjourn

Attendance:

Dana Portillo, Talley Anne Reeb, Kerry Biondoletti, Gayle Glover, Christina McPherson,

Michael Cunningham, Christina Geer, Alejandra Gonzalez, Ashley Ravelo, Dense McLeod,

Brittany Evans, Erin Williams, Brandie Acevedo, Ellen Masters, Suzanne Woltanski, Suyana

Unable to attend due to schedule conflicts: Marianne Finizio, Cali Roberts, Jennifer Lefelar

Meeting welcome. This is the first meeting of the new year since school started.

**School health update** from Dana Portillo:

It has been a busy start of our school year. We popped right into all the usual stuff and reviewing all the health histories. We are learning about our kids and what concerns that they have and educating our staff. AHEC has been very active in going into the schools and doing CPR classes for our staff and our coaches. That is now a requirement with Florida Statute. The school health plan is now completed and submitted. Thank you all for any review and input. We have the school contract that's now signed and in place, so it's been a super busy time and I'm grateful for getting that behind us. The immunization report for our kindergarten and 7th graders is coming up to be due the end of October. The email was sent yesterday to our private schools. The public and charter schools have been busily working on getting people up to speed, getting those records in, and referring people to the health department or other providers to get those vaccines done. We have scheduled our school health screenings, so those will start in a couple weeks. We're always really ahead of that with the state. So I'm really proud to get that going. We have now scheduled our first two visits with Heiken. Those are the people who come from Miami and do the eye exams, prescribe glasses, and dispense those glasses at no cost for people who apply and qualify. I was told yesterday that they've made some changes to the financial qualifications for that and, so far, no one has been turned away. We received all our new epi pens and those have been distributed in the schools. I'm happy to hear that we got our stop the bleed kits replenished as we needed to, not because of use, but because of expiration date. Choking posters have been dropped off and posted in all the schools. This is another Florida Statute. There was a change coming through this year about decreased fat and I think decreased sodium. So all of the school cafeterias are making some changes and we're waiting to get our nutritional breakdown from the new vendors to make it easier to manage all of our families who are looking to make those healthy choices, but especially those who are diabetic and need help with their carb counting. So I think that's a lot from school health, but that's kind of where we stand with that. Joanne Cunningham has gone to drop off some of our forms for the school based dental sealant program that we're getting in full swing. We’ve been reaching out to parents and trying to get every kind of application we can get from them to get the services that they need.

**Talley Anne** addition: Giving Dana kudos. Dana has been working very hard on the contracts,

and as most know who must deal with government agencies, what was supposed to be a

way a minute ago just got changed and nobody knows about It. It’s no different with the

Department of Health. I think she’s kept her sanity, even though there were times that she

called me and I thought she was gonna lose it. But I’m grateful for you, Dana, and thank you

for all you do for school health and the dental program. So she’s been through a lot with

school opening and everything else going on this last couple of weeks that she’s had to do.

**AHEC update** by Michael Cunningham**:**

Addition to CPR statement before, Christine and Keith have started in August and we’ll have

offered sessions in all 10 schools as needed. For some of the coaches and athletic directors who

have needs, we’ll address as we move forward to see if we need additional classes. We are also

supporting the students in the health sciences arena. We are taking care of our teachers, our

coaches, and some of our students. Jo has been dropping off forms and getting an bit of an early

start this year for the dental sealant project. We have 8 sites to service. Most likely four will be

done at the schools and 4 done with the mobile dental unit. That will put them in our schedule

during the week that were there and then we’ll extend service days to add an additional Friday at

that school. When we’re there we’ll just focus on the dental sealants kind of like we did with our

Head Start Kids a couple weeks ago at HOB, where we had an extra day to make sure that we could

get them in timely. The regular dental program has the schedule out for the entire year, so all they

need to do is call for an appointment Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays where we are at each

school on the rotating basis. On Mondays and Fridays we do have office hours at the Marathon

Dental Center and that will continue throughout the year. As for the **medical** primary, we

made it through the initial rush. August is always the busiest month with the new school physicals

and sports physicals. I would still like to work with the athletic directors and some of the coaches

to get information to our athletes a little bit earlier because we had 100 visits and 27 phone calls

on the Thursday before tryouts. Serving all those people in a short period of time does create a

backlog and some patients can’t get in just due to the volume. We are there all summer long, so

that should be an easy fix, and medical and dental are working at all school sites. There will be an

additional day at KLS, just due to the sheer volume that we are starting to see in the upper keys.

PKS will have a practitioner two days a week and CSHS will have 3 days. The other schedules will

remain the same. Our brochures are out at schools, on the website, and Facebook pages.

Additional input by **Christina McPherson** for AHEC: I wanted to echo what Talley Anne said that

Dana really did a fabulous job this summer preparing the school health plan as well as updating

policies for school health that are getting ready to go to the board for review. She spent a lot

of time and hard work. We appreciate your commitment to the schools and we’ve had a

wonderful opening throughout the 17 schools and the nursing staff has been fantastic. They’ve

been very busy. Also want to shout out to AHEC. They will be recognized as a gem at Tuesday’s

school board meeting in Marathon. We want to recognize the fantastic work that AHEC provides

to our students. Looking back historically of the changes that have taken place, many students

would miss so many days because they couldn’t get health care and had to wait to go to Marathon.

What AHEC has provided has been a game changer in the schools. So I want to recognize them as

well. Additional input by **Dana Portillo** for AHEC: I remember being a school nurse before AHEC

was in the schools. It was a challenge for kids who needed physicals to stay in school or to

participate in sports. Some couldn’t afford it. Major kudos and thinking outside the box, a lot of

organization and planning, to make it come together. Thank you very much to Michael and his

team.

**School update** by Erin Williams: We have 16 full-time social workers now, so all the schools have at least one who is there five days a week, so they don't have to share schools anymore. KLS, HOB, and CSHS have two full time social workers and KWHS has three full time social workers. So we're doing pretty good on that end. The mental health stuff hit us right as school started, so we've had a lot of heavy hitters in terms of some pretty serious stuff going on. But we've got the staff right now to address it, make sure that that the kids are being supported. So far, so good. I think it has been a great opening to the school year, but this is now the second year that we've had the social workers, so everybody's trained and good to go. Even though we've had some pretty hard cases, they've been met with staff that knows how to handle it. I've been pleased with the work they're doing. We'll keep hitting it because the mental health stuff isn't going away. We will keep plugging away at getting more staff and addressing the issues. But so far, it's been a great start to the year. I do want to echo the support for AHEC not only for our students, not missing school, but I'll say that it works for staff as well. You know the staff being able to come in and get the prescription for, you know, I don't know, strep throat or, I don't know, something and they're not having to miss work. I mean, that's been a game changer, too. So again, kudos, AHEC and all the medical folks because you guys are amazing. So thank you. Additional update by **Dana Portillo**: I am now part of a Wellness committee for the district, and so we have had a couple meetings. We have another one coming up here on the 16th. And so we're looking at ways to really provide some more services to staff, maybe that do not have the school health insurance. I know that there will be some services provided by AHEC as they have always been very instrumental in providing services for them. I will be going to two of the schools and I think someone from the Upper Keys Health Department, will go into a third school for their Wellness days with like vaccines and anything that we can provide. So that kind of piggybacks onto that and continues our efforts to help everyone.

**Health Department Updates** by Denise McLeod. We had a really nice back to school event (7/25) where approximately 25 community partners came out. We all geared up to give away school supplies to the kids and give them a good start. I was very pleased to be a part of that and also during that day, two of our nurses were there and they checked over more than 20 immunization records and even administered some immunizations to get the kids where they need to be. I'm so very happy and thank you to everyone who helped in that area. We just got all our flu vaccines so the nurses and I will start going around the community from Key Largo to Key West. October the 5th in Key West at Bernstein Park there will be a Wellness and safety event. We will be promoting Wellness and safety for better community. It is hosted by the southernmost coast early steps and also Department of Health. We'll have the fire trucks out there and a lot of good community partners. A new project that I'm working on for healthy communities is a nutrition and physical activity project for the Florida Children's Shelter, which is located in Tavernier. And a couple of organizations to Islamorada Library Joy, just older adults and Department of Health. We are coming together to see how we can serve on this for the Florida children shelter to see what needs they have and how our organizations can help in that area. Also, the Department of Health is working on a drowning prevention program working to make sure that no child has to pay to learn how to swim, and so that's that how the program should be. This is wrapping up and being promoted into our community really soon. Our quality of life program is in our chip program Community Health initiative. We are continually focusing on mental health. That's one of our strong focuses that we want to continue to be there for our community and see how we can work out. It can provide the resources necessary for those who are struggling with their mental health. I attended a pop up meeting in May or June and learned of some of the resources that we don't have here in the keys to help a person to recover, especially if there is a substance abuse issue. I found resources in Miami that can give additional help to Monroe County. Just recently, on August 25th, we did a nice program at Higgs Beach to address human trafficking. So our Department of Health is working in a lot of different areas and trying to stay focused on some of our top issues as well while promoting new programs.

**Head Start Update** by Ashley Ravelo: I have started screenings for our 45 day deadline to get vision and hearing screenings completed along with any blood pressures and height and weights that have not been completed by the physician. I wanted to 2nd, 3rd and 4th show my appreciation for AHEC because of course they've been amazing in our schools and for dental working with Jo and getting our kiddos in for their exams and cleanings in a timely manner. It has been truly amazing for the program. Thank you so much. Other than that, we have the 45 day deadlines and then the 90 day deadline for dental is in November. I'm also doing immunization reviews. I know, Dana, you have been in there fixing so many things. You've corrected things so many times that I haven't even had to email you because I see that you've already been in there and corrected them. I know there's been a lot that haven't been correct, so thank you for that.

**Guidance Care Center** update by Brittany Evans: I'm part of the Community Action team and that's an outpatient mental health program for youth ages 11 to 21 and we work closely with the school district in the schools. At the guidance center, but I just wanted to let everybody know that we do have our mobile response team and that is a program that we have staff that respond to individuals in crisis of all ages. We can have people respond in the Community and go out and help. We also have children services and there's a range of services available to those youth and we're always accepting referrals. I can send out that referral form if that could be helpful. There's also more mental health support for the community.

**Tobacco update** by Gayle Glover: I don't have a lot of updates. Kimberly did not leave any with me. I can tell you a couple things the tobacco program is going to be doing very soon. One is we're going to participate in the International Coastal cleanup on September 21st. We're going to partner with Plogging the Keys, and it's from 8:00 to 9:30 up on Smathers Beach. Anyone is welcome to go and help with that. They'll record the data worldwide, so we'll be a part of that effort and you can park there. They will meet in the parking lot beside Margaritaville. They will have gloves and all of that for you if you if you would like to participate in that. Spread the word because the more the better. They weigh the amount of garbage they collect and the cigarette butts by themselves. They have a Facebook page. The last thing I have is the tobacco program is working on zoning throughout the keys of creating zoning areas for tobacco sales. We're asking for a 500 foot buffer between any place that includes children like schools, parks, daycares, those kinds of places, so that no tobacco retailer can be located in that area. That's something that would be controlled by an ordinance that the Commissioners would have to pass. We are working with Key West and have we started moving up the keys for Marathon and Islamorada just this year. One area of concern with zoning activity is mobile vehicles. Throughout the keys, wherever you are, if you see any van or a truck that is like a smoke shop, CBD, or vaping product distributor, please get a picture of that and the address where it is and send that to me. I can add it to our database. That would be greatly appreciated.

Further update from **Talley Anne Reeb**: We didn't really talk that much about the school based dental sealant program, which the health Department is supporting again this year. We contract with AHEC and they do a great job going in the schools. This program is for 2nd and 7th graders, and I know Joanne's been working on getting permission slips out and setting up dates to go to each school. If we see that a child may need sealants, but they haven't had their teeth cleaned, we have the ability to have AHEC to refer those children to them to the mobile van. So this may be like the first time they ever have had their teeth cleaned. It’s hard to tell them we can't do anything for you in a dental sealant program because your teeth need to be cleaned without doing something about it. Michael and Dana have been working together to get that program started for this year. We can service those kids and give them some help, too. And that's funded by the Health Department and Michael and Dana have done a great job just working out all the little details of that. We had a really great school based dental sealant program and then after COVID it kind of decreased a little bit. If you want to know more about this you can get with Dana and get the details. If you can try to do some promotion, that would be helpful because it's no cost to the kids. This is for sealants, fluoride, and the hygienist does a little dental exam on them, and gives some education. It's just something that we really need to try to promote and try to get back to what we had, because it was so decreased last year and I'd like to see it just grow like we had it before. Update by **Dana Portillo:** I think one of the things that we also experienced even besides COVID was when the Florida statutes really kind of nailed down parental consent and considered anything like this as invasive. It required this active consent to even look in the mouth, whether you do any fluoride or not, and so we definitely saw a challenge with the numbers. Then we had COVID and it's just been hard to come back since then. We've really tried to push out paperwork for families and awareness and notifications in three different languages, and we've learned the challenges. Whether it's a notification for that, Heiken, or for vaccines, we see how many phone numbers are inaccurate or lack of email addresses. Those are struggles that we're all facing when we try to reach these families. And I think if we could get some of that squared away, it would help as well. But I certainly don't have those answers. Update by **Michael Cunningham**: You know, part of it too is that when we get these students that that do come through the van, we had just over 3400 services last year with this program. Everybody who's coming through the van is walking out with sealants unless the caregiver says no. We're getting these kids in from as early as Ashley's group, right on through kindergarten, first, second grade, you know, in some cases not in all. I mean, obviously we're looking for those primary and secondary molars coming through. We’re getting these kids now from second grade all the way through the entire year, which is great. And then when we are going in offering the actual program on site which is really good if, for some reason, we can't do something for somebody you know right then and there. They get an appointment made so they can come in and get what they need. We bring them in and they become a patient where they get the full exam, the X rays, you know the cleanings, the sealants, the fluoride and we take care of any restorative care that's needed right at that time, too. This way they walk away with not going back home with the cavity or something that can't be touched. We're grateful for the fact that we have this little outreach program to bring these kids earlier, and now we're actually be able to provide them with that longitudinal care for the for the years to come. Final update from **Talley Anne Reeb**: I agree, Michael. Thank you for that. The sealants and the fluoride are such a preventative measure. It's not just an idea that that somebody made up. I mean it has fact- based evidence that says it's so. We have so many kids that before Michael could, they probably have never seen a dentist, so his program is a godsend. This has been a very, very big issue in all the Keys because many don't have the money to pay for a dentist, or many can’t find a dentist that could take care of them. So yes, Michael, thank you for all that. It's just such a collaboration. I don't think anybody really gets the depth of that. So thank you for that. Joanne does a great job promoting it and getting in the school. I think this is a group that really needs to hear that. So when you hear about the school based dental sealant program for 2nd and 7th graders, it's just such a preventative measure that then they won't get the cavities and they won't have all the pain. When you see a little child crying because their teeth are killing them because they got this huge cavity, it's heartbreaking. Previously our hands were tied. When I was working in the program, we had nowhere to send them. You had to like, really work around trying to figure out something. Thank you Michael, and thank you Dana, for all you do for those two programs.

**Adjourn:** We have a really good village in our county and I'm very proud of it.

OK, if anyone doesn't have something more to offer, I will give you a about 24 minutes back of your day because I'm always a fan of that whenever possible. Our next meeting is December 5th at 2:00 PM. I will send out a reminder beforehand and I will share the minutes so we can have a couple people do the approval for that and then we'll get it uploaded for the school district.

9/9/24 Minutes approved by Talley Anne Reeb and seconded by Brandie Acevedo.