

**BEN HILL COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH
CALLED MEETING
Agenda
AUGUST 3, 2021
10:00 A.M.**

CALL-IN NUMBER: 866-809-6529 | ACCESS CODE: 669111#

Please call in at least five minutes prior to the meeting.

1. Call to Order
2. Purpose
 - Presentation of Grant and Request for Letter of Support from the Ben Hill County Board of Health
 - Presenter: Bonnie Kelly
 - Questions and Answers
 - Board Vote
3. Adjournment

Remaining 2021 Board of Health Meeting Dates

All meetings begin at 12:00 P.M.

**Out of an abundance of caution,
all remaining meetings will be held by conference call until further notice.**

- + September 15, 2021**
 - + December 15, 2021**
-

Narrative

Applicant and History

Established before 1906, the Ben Hill County Board of Education (BHCBOE) has been in existence for more than 115 years. A school fire burned the original school system documents in 1906, destroying any records of prior existence of the education system in the county. A second school system, the Independent School System of Fitzgerald, was established some years later but was abolished in 1990 and absorbed by the Ben Hill County School System thereafter. The county school system is the only school system in Ben Hill County.

In 2018, Fitzgerald High School became a College and Career Academy wall- to-wall charter school and renamed the Fitzgerald College and Career Academy through a grant from the Technical College System of Georgia. Construction on a new high school complex was begun in 2020 and is scheduled to be completed in 2022.

Currently, the school system has 3,096 students enrolled for the 2021-2022 school term and serves students from 3-year-old preschool through twelfth grade, housed in six school buildings located throughout the county, with the Pre-K complex being the most centrally located.

Factors Supporting a School Based Health Center

Like many rural counties in South Georgia, Ben Hill County is a shrinking violet. Over the past ten years, industry growth is nonexistent and currently on the decline. The largest employers in the county are the local school system followed by the county hospital. Census data shows a decline of 5.4 percent in the population over the past ten years with population of the elderly and children making up more than 42 percent – a sign of brain drain common in most rural communities today. More than 17 percent of the population below the age of 65 are uninsured. More than 6 percent of the population are Hispanic or Latino. Almost 23 percent of the county population live in poverty.

Dorminy Medical Center, a 75-bed facility, is the only hospital in Ben Hill County. There are no clinics in the community/county. A private Urgent Care Center was recently opened by a private vendor but payment is required upon use of service. A limited number of providers are located in the county with some specialty providers rotating services from one day a week to one day a month. One pediatrician services Ben Hill and Irwin Counties jointly but it is impossible for him to serve all of the students in the county school systems of either or both counties.

Four school nurses are employed by the BHCBOE and serve all 3,096 students within the school system. They are housed at the Primary, Elementary, Middle School, and High School campuses. The leading causes of school absences are asthma, oral health problems, and mental health challenges, according to Voices for Georgia's Children. Absences in the Ben Hill County school system mirror this statement.

Additionally, childhood obesity in the county causes a myriad of medical issues for school-aged children including high blood pressure and high cholesterol, which are risk factors for cardiovascular disease, impaired glucose tolerance, insulin resistance, and type 2 diabetes, and breathing problems, such as asthma and sleep apnea. Other conditions include liver disease, earlier than normal puberty or menstruation, eating disorders such as anorexia or bulimia, skin

infections due to moisture from sweat being trapped in skin folds, fatigue, and bone and joint problems. All of these medical issues have been evidenced in the school system children.

Planning, Collaboration, Coordination, and Communication

The director of the local Family Connection organization, with the assistance of a consultant, will act as the project manager for the planning committee. The consultant will convene meetings, gather data, provide analysis of the collected data, complete required financial and progress reporting at the 6-month and 12-month timeline, and assist in the draft of a business plan and a summary of strategies for ongoing SBHC development past the 12-month planning period.

Advisory board members, including parents of children in the school system, will visit SBHCs located near Ben Hill County which may include Crisp County Elementary School, Coffee Middle School, Turner County Elementary, and Dooly County Elementary School. These visits will help facilitate planning of the BHCBOE SBHC.

Community endorsements of the project will facilitate additional collaborations with medical staff, clinicians, businesses, industries, and non-profit organizations located within Ben Hill County.

A website, located within the BHCBOE, will be developed to facilitate communication with the community, SBHC advisory board members, BHCBOE board members, faculty, and parents. Informative articles will be submitted to the local newspaper on the status of the SBHC and the progress made toward its establishment.

Current and Potential Partners

The Ben Hill County Board of Education enjoys a long-standing partnership with businesses and industries, organizations, and community government entities. These partnerships have been instrumental in the awarding of a College and Career Academy grant in 2018. Current partners for the establishment of the School Based Health Center are listed in the table below. These agencies will serve in the capacity listed below. They will also help in the identification and recruitment of additional partners such as private businesses and industries that would benefit from the SBHC through decreased employee absence due to child illnesses.

SBHC Partner	Description
Ben Hill County Board of Education	Provide a space for the SBHC, provide in-kind contributions where possible, participate in planning meetings, assist in identifying potential partners, provide guidance in the business plan
Ben Hill County Board of Health	Participate in planning meetings, assist in identifying potential partners, provide guidance in business plan
Family Connection	Provide leadership and project management for planning grant
Communities in Schools	Participate in planning meetings, assist in identifying potential partners, provide guidance in business plan
Wiregrass Georgia Technical College	Participate in planning meetings, assist in identifying potential partners, provide guidance in the business

	plan. Provide CNA and LPN student trainees for clinic, once opened.
Dorminy Medical Center	Participate in planning meetings, assist in identifying potential partners, provide guidance in business plan
Chamber of Commerce	Participate in planning meetings, assist in identifying potential partners, provide guidance in business plan
Central United Methodist Church First Baptist Church Arbor Baptist Church	Participate in planning meetings, assist in identifying potential partners, provide guidance in business plan
Ben Hill E911	Participate in planning meetings, assist in identifying potential partners, provide guidance in business plan
Monitor Enrichment Center – Afterschool and Summer Program Grades K-8	Participate in planning meetings, assist in identifying potential partners, provide guidance in business plan
The Jessamine Place – A center designed to empower and support adults with special needs	Participate in planning meetings, assist in identifying potential partners, provide guidance in business plan

Additional partners will be recruited through one-on-one contact by school nurses, advisory board members, and invitations to monthly planning meetings. Information will be provided to potential partners that show the benefits of School-Based Health Centers to school children, the local hospital, and businesses (decreased time away from work for parents), just to name a few.

Outcome Measures

Outcome measures include:

- ✚ Stimulate planning and facilitate collaboration and community discussion to open a School-Based Health Center (SBHC) in the Ben Hill County School System
- ✚ Complete a community-wide needs assessment targeted toward the establishment of a SBHC
- ✚ Membership in the School-Based Health Alliance
- ✚ Attend three vital grantee/workshops during the grant year
- ✚ Solidify list of providers and potential providers
- ✚ Solidify funding grants and partners
- ✚ Solidify allocation for on-site integrated primary care services
- ✚ Create a business plan for SBHC that shows self-sustainability in three years
- ✚ Completed project report and financial report
- ✚ Summary of strategies for ongoing SBHC development past planning grant

Notes:

No personnel will be supported by these funds.
 Budget, narrative and timeline are attached to this proposal.
 Fiscal agent will be the Ben Hill County Board of Education.
 Most recent audit report for BHCBOE is attached to this proposal.
 Names of Board of Directors is attached to this proposal.
 Letters of Support are attached to this proposal.

Benefits of School-Based Health Centers



School-Based Health Centers (SBHCs) place critically needed health-related services directly in schools to reduce access to barriers for children, families, and school personnel.¹

SBHC

Offers primary care services through a staffed primary care provider (e.g., nurse practitioner or physician assistant)²

Comprehensive SBHC

Offers primary care, behavioral health and other expanded services, including health education, dental, and vision services³

SBHCs can quickly become self-sustaining when start-up funds are available. Currently,

17 of 49

states, and the District of Columbia, have allocated state-run funds for administering SBHS grants

SBHCs have grown from two to 52 since 2013.⁴ During the 2020 legislative session, the General Assembly allocated funding to support the development of another SBHC in Irwin County.⁵

THE NEED FOR SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CENTERS



197,000

children in Georgia are currently uninsured²



41%

of children 3-17 struggle to, or are not able to, access needed mental health treatment and counseling⁶



47th

Georgia's rank in access to mental health care, resources, and insurance. Access is generally worse for rural communities¹⁰



28%

of counties don't have a licensed social worker or psychologist⁴



146,000

children in Georgia stay home sick more than 6 days a year²



38th

Georgia's current rank in overall child well-being¹¹

THE BENEFITS OF SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CENTERS



Health¹²

Increased:

- Access to primary, oral, and behavioral health care
- Use of mental health and substance abuse services
- Access to the flu vaccination

Decreased:

- Emergency room use and hospitalization for children with asthma
- Prescription drug use



Education^{13,14}

Increased:

- Attendance and GPA for students utilizing mental health services

Decreased:

- Drop out rates and school discipline referrals
- Faculty and staff absences due to illness



Cost Savings¹⁵

Decreased:

- Emergency room use and hospitalizations
- Pharmacy and transportation costs
- Time away from work for parents
- Pediatric health care for Medicaid, PeachCare, and private insurers

www.georgiavoices.org

SUCCESS IN GEORGIA¹⁶

Whitefoord SBHC

50% reduction in average cost per child to Medicaid for children with SBHC access

62% reduction in annual expense per Medicaid-covered child

Offers primary care, oral health, and behavioral health, and maintained available services throughout the community rezoning process

Turner SBHC

More than 200 patient visits a month, on average

First in the country to initiate Hallways to Health, a program to address childhood obesity, student emotional health, and school staff wellness

Received a state grant to:

- **Increase** study physical activity
- **Reduce barriers** to healthy lunches for teachers

Offers primary care, oral health, and behavioral health

Tiger Creek SBHC

More than 300 patient visits a month, on average

Open to the **entire community**, including adults

Offers primary care and oral health

Screens and refers for mental health

More than 65,000 children, families, and school personnel currently benefit from services at **52** SBHCs in Georgia.¹²



Funding for SBHCs

17 states have an ongoing funding mechanism to support SBHCs.¹⁸

Philanthropic partners provide another funding opportunity for SBHCs.

Current SBHC grants in Georgia:¹²

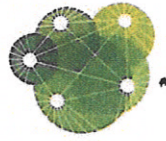
- **NIH Grant** to study the impact and benefits of SBHCs in suburban and rural areas of Georgia
- **PARTNERS for Equity in Child and Adolescent Health:** allocates planning grants to communities in Georgia. 46 have been awarded since 2010.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO STRENGTHEN SBHCs

- Increase state funding to Federal Qualified Health Centers to support the development and expansion of school-based health services throughout the state, especially in high-need, rural areas.
- Strengthen coordination and collaboration among state agencies to increase comprehensive school-based mental health programs and reduce stigma.
- Support existing efforts to create a School-Based Health Technical Assistance Hub under the Rural Health Innovation Center to facilitate communication between healthcare and education entities and coordinate investments to improve outcomes in rural communities.

Sources for Benefits of School-Based Health Centers

- 1 School-Based Health Alliances, 2019. "About School Health Care." Accessed November 19, 2019, <https://www.sbh4all.org/school-health-care/aboutsbhcs/>
- 2 Veda Johnson, email message, September 24, 2020.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Georgia General Assembly, House Budget & Research Office, 2020. FY 2021 Bill Conference Committee (HB 793). Accessed November 27, 2020, <https://www.legis.ga.gov/house/budget-research-office>.
- 6 "Behavioral Health Services in Georgia," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2019. Accessed November 29, 2019, <https://www.cdc.gov/childrensmentalhealth/stateprofiles-providers/georgia/index.html#table>
- 7 Georgetown University Health Policy Institute, Center for Children and Families. "Children Uninsured Rates Rise by Largest Annual Jump in More than a Decade," 2020. Accessed November 10, 2020, https://ccf.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/ACS-Uninsured-Kids-2020_10-06-edit-3.pdf.
- 8 "Indicator 4.4a: How difficult was it to get the mental health treatment or counseling that this child needed?" 2018-2019 Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative, Data Resource Center for Child and Adolescent Health, 2018-2019 National Survey of Children's Health data, accessed October 5, 2020, <https://www.childhealthdata.org/browse/survey/results?q=7717&r=12>. National Outcome Measure 18.
- 9 "Indicator: 5.4 Missed School Days, ages 6-17 years." 2018-2019 Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative, Data Resource Center for Child and Adolescent Health, 2018-2019 National Survey of Children's Health data, accessed October 5, 2020, <https://www.childhealthdata.org/browse/survey/results?q=7840&r=12>.
- 10 Mental Health America. "Mental Health Illness in Georgia," 2020 Accessed November 20, 2020, <https://www.mhageorgia.org/>.
- 11 The Annie E. Casey Foundation. "Kids Count Data Book: State Trends in Child Well-Being," 2020. Accessed November 7, 2020, <https://www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/aecf-2020kidscountdatabook-2020.pdf>.
- 12 National Assembly on school-based health care. "School-Based Health Centers Improving Health Care Access and Student Success," 2011. Accessed November 10, 2019 http://ww2.nasbhc.org/RoadMap/PUBLIC/advocacy_factsheetAccess.pdf.
- 13 Walker, S. C., Kerns, S. E., Lyon, A. R., Bruns, E. J., & Cosgrove, T. J. Impact of school-based health center use on academic outcomes. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 46, no. 3(2010), 251-257.
- 14 Kerns, S. E., Pullmann, M. D., Walker, S. C., Lyon, A. R., Cosgrove, T. J., & Bruns, E. J. Adolescent use of school-based health centers and high school dropout. *Archives of pediatrics & adolescent medicine*, 165, no. 7(2011) 617-623.
- 15 National Assembly on school-based health care. "Cost-Savings of School-Based Health Centers Medicaid Savings and Reduced ER & Hospitalization Utilization," 2011, http://ww2.nasbhc.org/RoadMap/PUBLIC/advocacy_factsheetcostsavings.pdf.
- 16 Veda Johnson, email message, September 24, 2020.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 School-Based Health Alliance. "School-Based Health Care: State Policies and Funding, FY2017," 2017. Accessed October 28, 2020, <http://www.sbh4all.org/school-health-care/aboutsbhcs/school-based-health-care-state-policy-survey/#chart2>.
- 19 Veda Johnson, email message, September 24, 2020.



— BEN HILL COUNTY —
family connection

229-426-7073 family.connection@fitzgeraldga.org PO BOX 5125, Fitzgerald GA 31750 benhill.gafcp.org

July 26, 2021

Ms. Deborah Holt
Program Coordinator
PARTNERS for Equity in Child and Adolescent
Health, Department of Pediatrics
Emory University School of Medicine
49 Jesse Hill Jr. Dr. SE
Atlanta, GA 30303

Dear Ms. Holt:

I am writing to express my support for Ben Hill County Schools' Comprehensive School-Based Health Center Program planning grant application. Ben Hill County Family Connection has been working with partners for over 25 years to improve the lives of children and families in our community. We believe our school system needs this program to improve educational outcomes and health equity for the children in this county. Lack of health care resources, particularly behavioral healthcare, specialist care, and dental care, is a common point of discussion at our monthly collaborative and strategy-team meetings.

In 2018, we conducted a Community Needs Assessment that included surveys of 680 individuals, focus groups, and key stakeholder interviews. Survey results from that assessment indicate that 50% of those surveyed considered lack of health care a big problem in our community. Almost 75% of respondents felt that Ben Hill County strongly needed more mental health counseling resources. Furthermore, nearly 25% said they could not afford needed dental care in the previous 12 months. There has been very little change in the healthcare resource landscape in Ben Hill County since this 2018 community assessment.

This planning grant would empower the school system and its partners to develop a school-based health center that would improve the health and well-being of families in our community while simultaneously improving academic achievement. Our organization is part of a Georgia Family Connection Partnership (GaFCP) cohort to improve graduation rates and post-school success. We will gladly commit our cohort

strategy team to the proposed planning effort. Ben Hill Family Connection has a cross-sector network that includes our local health department, CMOs, faith-based partners, and local government leaders. We can help coordinate community partners and conduct a needs assessment with the support of GaFCP evaluation experts.

Thank you for your funding consideration of Ben Hill County Schools' proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christine Graham", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Christine Graham
Executive Director

July 31, 2021



Ms. Deborah Holt
Program Coordinator
PARTNERS for Equity in Child and Adolescent
Health, Department of Pediatrics
Emory University School of Medicine
49 Jesse Hill Jr. Dr. SE
Atlanta, GA 30303

Dear Ms. Holt:

As the CFO for Dorminy Medical Center in Fitzgerald, it is with pleasure that I submit this Letter of Support for the Comprehensive School-Based Health Center (SBHC) Program planning grant application submitted by the Ben Hill County Board of Education. Our school children and their families need this program and I can certainly attest to the potential cost-savings it will provide our hospital.

Some facts I am sure you are well aware that support the grant application include:

- A study by Johns Hopkins University found that school-based health centers reduced inappropriate emergency room use, increased use of primary care, and resulted in fewer hospitalizations among regular users.
- A study that explored the cost-benefit of a nationwide SBHC program to manage childhood asthma estimated total savings for opportunity costs of work loss and premature death at \$23.13 billion.
- 146,000 children in Georgia stay home sick more than 6 days a year; causing parents and other child care providers to stay home with them, missing work themselves.
- More than 17% of our children in Ben Hill County are uninsured.
- More than 65,000 children, families, and school personnel currently benefit from services at 52 SBHCs in Georgia.

This planning grant would give us the opportunity to develop a school-based health center with the aid of PARTNERS! I am convinced that a health center will improve the academic achievement of our children in Ben Hill County through increased school attendance and decrease the emergency room use and hospitalization for children with asthma.

Thank you for your funding consideration for our proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paige Wynn", is written over the word "Sincerely,".

Paige Wynn, CFO
Dorminy Medical Center