

**THE FIVE HUNDRED SIXTY-FOURTH REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
BOARD OF HEALTH OF BALTIMORE COUNTY  
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2023**

The Five Hundred Sixty-Fourth meeting of the Baltimore County Board of Health was held February 24 at 9:30 a.m. via WebEx.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Steve Adelsberger, Katie McElroy, Dr. Samuel Havrilak, Judy Kistner, Winona Matthews and Camille Smith.

**OTHERS PRESENT,** Della Leister; Deputy Health Officer, Dr. Nolan O’Dowd; Acting Bureau Director, Bureau of Clinical and School Based Services, Samantha Allen, Accreditation Coordinator and Kathy Wynn, Executive Secretary.

Dr. Havrilak opened the meeting. Should it be necessary to close the meeting, the Chair will conduct a recorded vote on a motion to close. A closing statement will also be prepared that cites the part of the Open Meetings Act that contains the applicable exception, lists the topics to be discussed in the closed session and give the public body’s reason for excluding the public.

**I. READING AND APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

To approve the minutes of January 27, 2023.

**Motion:** Ms. McElroy  
**Second:** Ms. Matthews  
**Decision:** Unanimous Approval

**II. SCHOOL-BASED WELLNESS CENTERS**

Dr. O’Dowd provided an overview on the department’s school-based wellness centers (see attached Power Point presentation).

School-based Wellness Center (SBWC) services vary widely depending on the health center. The centers improve access to health care for underserved students, integrate with the school environment and support existing services in the schools.

SBWCs have expanded in the last decades. In 2021, there were 2,500 SBWCs across the United States.

Evidence from 46 studies show that SBWCs improve educational and health outcomes, are cost effective and promote health equity.

Baltimore County Department of Health (BCDH) and Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) have had a longtime collaboration with SBWCs since the 1990s. Staffing is provided by both agencies. There is close communication between SBWC program leadership.

Baltimore County has 13 SBWCs. The slide presented shows the SBWCs overlaid on a map with the Center for Disease Control’s vulnerability index which uses 16 different indicators or variables that help identify at risk communities. Most of the SBWCs are placed in areas with relative higher

needs. Seven are located in high schools, three in middle schools and three in elementary schools in the County.

The DOH's SBWC team consists of five nurse practitioners and one physician. Not every SBWC is open on a daily basis, the team schedule rotates at the various centers.

BCPS has two nurse practitioners, eight health assistants and thirteen nurses. The nurses aren't dedicated solely to the SBWC. They serve in the school health suites and are a referral source.

Funding for the County's SBWCs of \$1,225,000 is provided by a Maryland Department of Health SBWC grant, BCPS operating budget and BCDH general funds.

SBWCs provide annual wellness exams, sports physicals, acute and chronic care, preventive care and screenings, lab work and immunizations. A number of communities we serve have new Americans. Infectious disease screenings are provided. There are concerns with this population regarding TB. We are seeing mental health and trauma needs in this population. Oral health is often ignored as well as vision screening.

FY23 to date, SBWCs have had a total of 1,696 visits, provided 160 wellness exams and administered 2,793 immunizations.

Dr. Havrilak inquired what a sport physical entails. There has been in the news lately reports concerning cardiac issues. Dr. O'Dowd stated these exams are treated as a wellness exam with a full history taken, typical assessments and a thorough physical exam. If there is a history of or suspected cardiac complaints, we take a step back and refer for a further workup before clearing. If necessary, we refer out for EKGs and ultra sound. Also refer to a cardiologist.

Ms. McElroy inquired how parental consent in terms of wellness services and parent involvement for younger children is handled. Dr. O'Dowd explained a consent form signed by a parent or guardian is required. For younger children being seen for a wellness visit, parents are asked to be present for the exam or participate via phone. If a parent is not present, we communicate back to the parents regarding the visit. Written summaries are provided followed up with a phone call. For younger children, it is better if the parent is present.

Ms. McElroy also inquired how families are encouraged not to rely on the SBWCs as their main source of health care. Dr. O'Dowd replied SBWCs are not intended to be the medical home. We recognize for many families, we might be the only provider families are able to see. For children who require a full level of care with a pediatrician, we work closely with community providers for referrals for further medical care.

A question was asked if services were provided over the summer and if telehealth was provided. Occasionally for fall sports but services are not provided during the summer months. Telehealth has been discussed but there are no plans for this service at the centers. Other counties use telehealth for mental health or to expand the number of schools they are able to serve. This can be an option for the future.

### **III. ACCREDITATION**

Ms. Allen reported the final report detailing the site visit was received. All domains were fully or partially demonstrated. We are expecting to hear a determination by next week if accreditation was conferred.

### **IV. DEPARTMENT COMMUNICATION BY THE SECRETARY**

#### Program Updates

- COVID, Mpox and Ebola are stable. The state is discontinuing their vaccine and testing center which was located downtown.

#### Personnel

- Baltimore County has a new OIT director, Michael Fried. Ms. Leister met with Mr. Fried and discussed priorities for the department, two of which are a new electronic health record and overdose to action projects.

#### Trainings/Events

- Dr. Branch and HHS deputies have been attending/participating, in the County Executive's budget town hall meetings. One is held in every council district. Meetings are well attended, usually three hours and held in a school or community center. There are vendor tables which lead into an auditorium where the County Executive provides an overview of the budget. He reports out on information specific to that district and opens up for residents to speak. Up to 60 to 75 people can sign up to speak for two minutes in support of a project or regarding a concern. Common themes are roads, sidewalks and education. Other topics discussed that we have been attentive to have been regarding food insecurity and bilingual immigrants who work and their inability to receive health care. We have met with the County Executive's Immigration Outreach Coordinator regarding what are the barriers for them to receive care at Federally Qualified Health Centers.
- HHS Deputies (Heath, Social Services, Finance and Administration) are providing monthly HHS new employee orientations. Orientation is three hours and staff learn about their respective department.

### **V. OLD BUSINESS**

None.

### **VI. NEW BUSINESS:**

None.


## VII. REMARKS OF THE CHAIRMAN

Dr. Havrilak thanked Ms. Leister for her report. The next virtual meeting of the Board is scheduled for March 24. April's meeting will be in person will discuss at the March meeting.

## VIII. ADJOURNMENT

**Motion:** To adjourn the meeting at

**Motion:** Ms. Kistner  
**Second:** Ms. Matthews  
**Decision:** Unanimous Approval

  
Della J. Leister, RN