

School-Based Health Center

When students show up to school healthy and ready to learn, they perform better. School-based health centers help students avoid absences due to health problems by bringing the doctor's office to the school. They provide a comprehensive range of services that meet the needs of students, including physicals, acute care, dental care, and mental health care. Clinical services are provided through a qualified health provider, such as a hospital, and the provider works cooperatively within the school to become an important part of the school.

Project Objective

Our team's primary objective was to explore the history of school-based health centers in New York State, the laws associated with the start-up of a center (Article 28), and most importantly, if there was a need for the creation of a center in the Ithaca City School District. We wanted to explore successful models of school-based health centers in the region, including a city and rural model. Our group also wanted to act as facilitators between health providers, the hospital, the school district, and state health workers, and to encourage conversation and the exploration of starting a school-based health center in Ithaca.

Community Partners

Ithaca City School District – especially Judy Hoffman, Head School Nurse, and Dr. Marguerite Uphoff, School Physician

Ithaca Free Clinic

Susan Terwilliger, clinical lecturer of the Decker School of Nursing, Binghamton University

Lisa Loomis, Program Manager of Family Health Network of Central New York, Inc.

Donna Cashman, New York State Department of Health

Betty Falcao, Director of Health Planning Council

Cayuga Medical Center – John Rudd, Senior VP, CFO

Project Outcomes

Conversations took place between area health providers, advocates, and others to show the importance of creating a school-based health center for our area. The group was invited by Cayuga Medical Center to organize a meeting between John Rudd, VP & CFO of CMC, Ithaca City School District employees, representatives from successful school-based health centers, and state health employees to discuss the creation of a school-based health center in the school district.