

Internal  
Audit  
Report

*Division of Schools – Department of Social-Emotional Support*

**Office of Health Services: Mitigate  
Health Barriers to Learning Audit**

*December 2023*



Baltimore County Public Schools  
Office of Internal Audit

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**Executive  
Summary**  
December 2023

*Division of Schools – Department of Social-Emotional  
Support*

## **Office of Health Services: Mitigate Health Barriers to Learning Audit**

### **Background**

The Office of Health Services (OHS), within the Department of Social-Emotional Support, provides program and professional development, technical assistance and problem solving, resources, and evaluation for health and wellness programs to Team BCPS in order to support optimal health that results in globally competitive graduates.

### **Objective**

To ensure that OHS develops and delivers programs and services that prevent and/or mitigate health barriers to learning.

### **Results in Brief**

The results of Internal Audit's review disclosed no reportable issues. OHS develops and delivers programs and services that prevent and/or mitigate health barriers to learning.

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## BACKGROUND

### *Organizational Status & Purpose*

OHS provides program and professional development, technical assistance and problem solving, resources, and evaluation of health and wellness programs to staff systemwide to support optimal health that results in globally competitive graduates.

### *OHS Established Procedures*

Board Policy and Superintendent Rule 5420 designates that the school health program will support achievement for all students by providing services and education to address acute and chronic health concerns and promote a healthy school environment. OHS is responsible for establishing procedures and protocols for the health services program in collaboration with the designated medical official from the Baltimore County Department of Health and ensuring compliance with relevant federal and state laws and regulations. OHS maintains the Nursing Manual and Protocols.

### *School Health Programs*

Each Baltimore County Public School (BCPS) is supposed to be staffed by a full-time registered nurse, at minimum, and some schools have supplemental paraprofessional support. The responsibility of the school nurse is to provide a comprehensive school health services program for all students. The school nurse provides services that promote student health and safety. School nurses assist students in improving, maintaining, or adapting to their health status in order to strengthen and enhance their educational experience.

If a school is not staffed by a BCPS Full-time Equivalent (FTE) nurse OHS uses Kelly Education to provide a substitute nurse. When a substitute cannot be recruited by Kelly, OHS will assign a BCPS float nurse to the school. When there are absences or vacancies not covered by a BCPS nurse, float nurse or Kelly substitute, OHS evaluates the needs of students at the school and provides needed coverage by:

1. assigning a contracted nurse from an agency to the school, or
2. assigning a BCPS certified nursing assistant to the school with a RN available by phone throughout the day for consultation, or
3. assigning a trained and certified CPR/First Aid and medication backup with a RN available by phone throughout the day for consultation.

OHS monitors and evaluates the school health programs via site visits. Annual evaluation of school nurses is conducted to achieve three primary purposes:

1. Provide a systematic summary of the principal's and clinical supervisor's continuing appraisal of school nurse effectiveness by (1) informing school nurses of their strengths and weaknesses, (2) indicating suggestions for improvement, and (3) recording the school nurse's contributions to the total school program.

2. Provide an opportunity for school nurses to recognize their progress and to share in their continuing evaluation.
3. Provide a permanent account of professional accomplishments for maintenance in a central location.

Evaluation of the school nurse is a collaborative process between the OHS and the site-based administrator(s).

## COMMENDATIONS

<i>Communication</i>	The Director of OHS was prompt in her responses to audit requests and provided detailed explanations when follow-up was requested.
<i>OHS Procedures and Protocols</i>	OHS has procedures and protocols for the health services program.
<i>OHS Monitoring</i>	OHS evaluated the performance of the school nurse and school health program.
<i>School Health Programs</i>	Each school tested had a school health program administered by a nurse.
<i>Student Health Records</i>	For the sample tested, the student health record exists and is complete.

## RESULTS

There were no reportable issues noted. The Office of Internal Audit determined that the OHS develops and delivers programs and services that prevent and/or mitigate health barriers to learning.

## OBJECTIVE, SCOPE & METHODOLOGY

- Objective** To ensure that the OHS develops and delivers programs and services that prevent and/or mitigate health barriers to learning.
- Scope** The audit period is school year 2022-2023.
- Methodology** To achieve the audit objectives, we performed the following:
- Discuss OHS operations with the Director of OHS.
  - Reviewed applicable Board Policy and Superintendent Rule.
  - Evaluated risk and controls over school health programs.
  - Verified that the OHS established procedures and protocols for the health services program in collaboration with the designated medical official from the Baltimore County Department of Health.
    - Reviewed Nursing Manual and Protocols for compliance with Superintendents Rule 5420.
  - Verified schools have a school health program.
    - Randomly and judgmentally selected sample of schools and sent school health program questionnaire to the school nurse.
  - Verified that student health record exists and is complete.
    - Randomly selected sample of students and sampled schools and reviewed student health record.
  - Verified that OHS monitors and evaluates the school health programs via site visits.
    - Obtained and reviewed site visit evaluation of school nurse from randomly sampled schools and/or confirmed with OHS Director that site visit occurred in school year 2022-2023.