



CATHY MCDONALD BSN, RN

NURSING/HEALTH SERVICES COORDINATOR

Demographics

- City population is approximately 45,582
- FMS student enrollment – 10,727
- FMS Ethnic diversity: W=29% NA=40%
H=30% Other= < 1%
- District-wide free/reduced lunch: 42%
- Accessibility to medical care
 - Primary care centers
 - Urgent care centers
 - Hospital- San Juan Regional Medical Center
 - Hospital- Mercy Medical Center-Durango, CO
 - Northern Navajo Medical Center



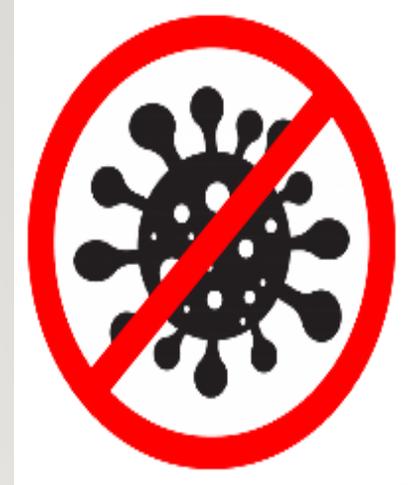
Nursing and Health Services Staff

- **Number of nurses – 17 RNS**
- **Nursing/Health Services Coordinator- 1 RN**
- **Number of Health Assistants – 19**
- **Audiologist - 1**
- **RN and Health Assistant at all school sites**



What's happening at Farmington Schools?

- Remote learning: about 50% of student population
- "Jumpstart Program": Preschool and Special Needs Students
- Hybrid Program K-5 started 9/13/20
- Positive cases (staff): 7 Positive cases (students): 10
- Approximate number of students and staff on quarantine due to illness or exposure since 10/13/20 : 120
- Staff working virtually due to health concerns: 67
- Staff resignations due to COVID: 0 stated



Challenges School Nurses Face

- **How we practiced school nursing in a remote setting:**
 - Contacted parents for medical histories and immunization compliance.
 - Identified students with chronic health needs. Attended IEP and 504 meetings virtually. Health screenings were done by appointment at one location.
 - Followed up with students that were high risk for mental health issues, domestic violence or socio-economic challenges. Created “virtual health” offices.
 - Developed guidelines and procedures for health room visits and COVID-related documentation.
 - Created and presented health education topics via Schoology.

Challenges School Nurses Face (continued)



- **Challenges for school nurses during hybrid learning:**
 - Screening students and staff prior to entering buildings.
 - Ensuring social distancing, mask-wearing, and hand hygiene.
 - Setting up isolation areas for symptomatic students.
 - Contact tracing and maintaining cohorts.
 - Spreading of misinformation/lack of compliance by staff.
 - Government agencies sending conflicting guidelines and mandates. (PED, DOH, CDC)
 - Supporting students with mental health issues.

Concerns from School Nurses in neighboring districts:

- **“Slow and contradictory guidance from the PED and DOH. School Nurses had to rely on NMSNA for COVID protocols and procedures. Our SHA’s were re-assigned for a few months, leaving us with no answers.”**
- **Lack of health personnel: “Last year (my) district approved hiring a School Nurse for every school. However, we lacked the funding to continue employment of our Health Assistants, so they were re-assigned as class aides where needed or the position was lost by attrition. Now, when an RN is out, there is no coverage for that health office.”**
- **“There is one nurse for four schools in the Naschitti and Newcomb areas. Travel time for EMS is 45 minutes. The presence of a nurse can mean life or death.”**

Thoughts For Safety and Health Moving Forward

- **Provide consistent guidance and offer “next step training” for health staff, teachers, administrators, students, and families.**
- **Offer stress management and healthy lifestyle opportunities for staff and students.**
- **Develop COVID-19 curriculum for all grade levels.**
- **Advocacy for legislation requiring a PED Licensed School Nurse in every school district in New Mexico.**
- **Advocacy for increased health services for students via School Based Health Centers, including mental health services.**
- **Including School Nurses and Licensed Mental Health Therapists as part of the legislative funding formula, easing the financial burden for the school districts.**

QUESTIONS?

Contact Information: Cathy McDonald BSN, RN
Nursing/Health Services Coordinator
3401 E. 30th St. Suite A
Farmington, NM 87401
Email: cmcdonald@fms.k12.nm.us
Office: 505-324-9840 Ext. 3106
Cell: 505-427-4176

Superintendent: Eugene Schmidt PhD

FARMINGTON
MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS
Rising to excellence in every pursuit