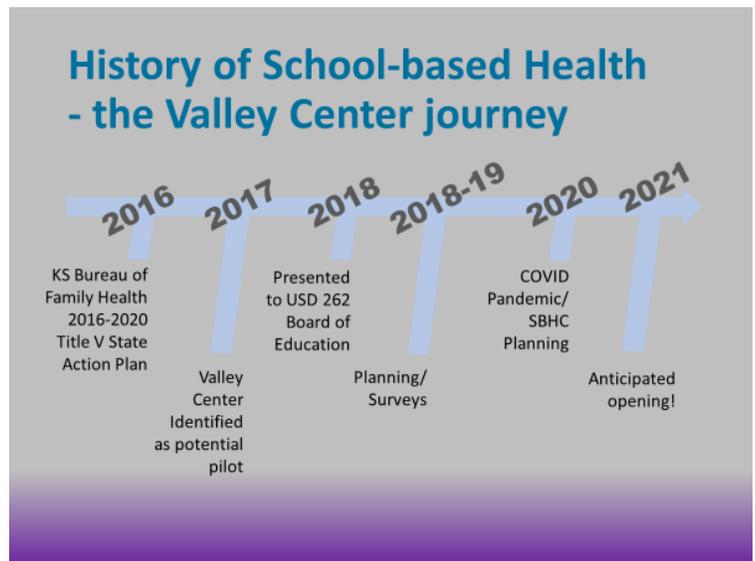


# School-based Health Care

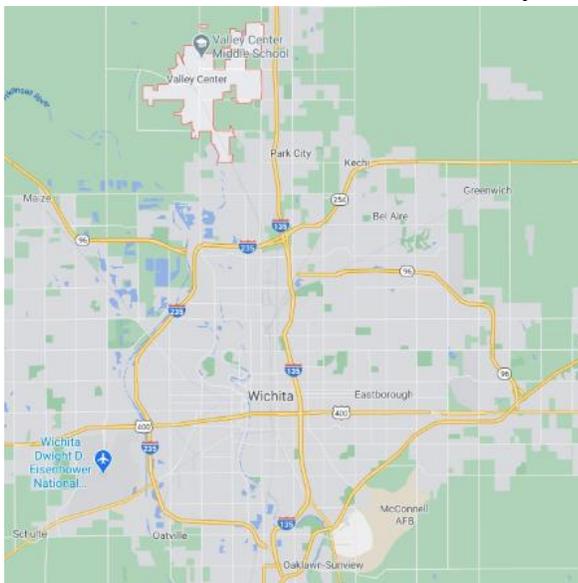
*Bringing care to kids.*

## Project Report – January 2021

**Background:** School-based health care (SBHC) has grown exponentially over the past decade, with SBHC centers increasing by 128% between 1998 and 2017<sup>1</sup>. KU Wichita Pediatrics began exploring SBHC alongside the Kansas Maternal Child Health Council in 2016 as a response to National Title V Maternal and Child Health priorities. SBHC was identified as a way to address adolescent wellness, mental health, substance use and bullying. USD 262, Valley Center Public Schools was identified as a partner and pilot site in 2017. Reasons for this selection included: the support and experience of district leadership with SBHC, proximity of Valley Center to urban resources, similarities of Valley Center to more rural communities, barriers to health care for Valley Center children, and support from the local Family Medicine clinic. Parent, student and staff surveys were completed by the district confirming support for SBHC. Medical sponsorship was explored with nearby health care entities including a federally qualified health center and a hospital-owned clinic practice. Financial limitations impeded progress of the SBHC clinic. In 2020, the COVID pandemic exposed the need for a coordinated health care effort between school systems and physicians and the conversation was again started regarding SBHC. Funding was secured and a school based, pediatric urgent care clinic is now set to open February 2, 2021.



**Justification:** Access to medical care is a major barrier to children receiving health care in Valley Center. The community has only one medical clinic and no pediatricians. Many parents drive their children into Wichita to receive medical care leading to even longer school and work absences. Missing just 2 days of school per month is linked to adverse outcomes, including school failure, poor reading, school suspensions, higher likelihood of dropping out, substance use, and poor health in adulthood<sup>2</sup>. However, SBHC care brings care to the student rather than the student traveling to receive care. Care is provided in a familiar setting where students spend the majority of their time, absences from school and work are reduced, and important resources are available to students. In addition, SBHC staff can discuss health topics that can lead to improved overall health for students; importantly, students perform better academically when they are healthy<sup>3</sup>.



*Bringing care to kids.*

**Funding:** Together, KU Wichita Pediatrics and USD 262, Valley Center Public Schools has secured \$32,250 to date in start up funds for the SBHC clinic at Valley Center High School. Funding sources include USD 262, Kansas Children's Foundation, and Menopause, a local Valley Center foundation. In kind support has been provided by KU Wichita Pediatrics. Funds will be used to secure staffing, supplies, and cover health care for those with financial need for the first year of clinic operation.



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**Services:** Initially, the SBHC clinic will function as an urgent care clinic seeing students in the district for acute health issues such as: sports injuries, cough and cold symptoms, ear aches, acne, COVID-related illness and similar concerns. The clinic will operate on Tuesday and Thursday mornings while school is in session. The clinic will be housed at the Valley Center High School.

**Regional Partners:** KU Wichita Pediatrics recognizes and thanks the Kansas Maternal Child Health Council and the School-Based Health task force who began the conversation regarding SBHC, authored the *Kansas School-Based Health Center Guide* and continues to support SBHC.



**KANSAS MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH**

**Goals for the future:** SBHC has many advantages to students, parents and health care providers. Ideally, SBHC would include comprehensive, medical home health care services with coordination between the school and physician or clinician. In the future, KU Wichita Pediatrics hopes to expand the Valley Center clinic to include these comprehensive services to children and add acute care for adult staff members of the district. KU Wichita Pediatrics supports the concept of "bringing care to kids" and aims to expand SBHC beyond Valley Center to other districts within the state taking an innovative approach to integrating physical health with social, emotional and academic health to support Kansas Kids. KU Wichita Pediatrics appreciates the partnerships with school systems locally and across Kansas and values a team approach to serving children. Alongside school systems, KU Wichita Pediatrics is working "together for Kansas Children."

## References:

1. Love, Hayley, Schlitt, John, Soleimanpour, Samira, Panchal, Nirmita, Behr, Caroline. Twenty years of school-based health care growth and expansion. *HEALTH AFFAIRS* 38, NO. 5 (2019): 755–764. doi: 10.1377/hlthaff.2018.05472. <https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/full/10.1377/hlthaff.2018.05472> (accessed 10-3-20).
2. American Academy of Pediatrics. School Attendance, Truancy & Chronic Absenteeism: What Parents Need to Know. 2019. <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/gradeschool/school/Pages/School-Attendance-Truancy-Chronic-Absenteeism.aspx> (accessed 1-22-21)
3. Harris, K, Johannes, E, Jones, T, Nherbass, E, Smith, H, Wesco, J, Steuart, S. Kansas School-Based Health Center Guide. Kansas Department of Health and Environment. 2019. Unpublished guide.