

Successful health clinic under way at Lake Ridge schools

Adult patients will be served at high school beginning April 19

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CALUMET TOWNSHIP | Gary health officials say a full-service clinic opened at Lake Ridge Schools in August has been successful, serving nearly 200 students and improving attendance. Dr. Janet Seabrook, executive director of the Community Health Net, formerly known as the Gary Community Health Center, and Mike McKillip, who handles operations and information technology, told School Board members Tuesday the clinic was so successful with students that it will expand next month to assist adults in the Lake Ridge community.

Health clinic offices are at Calumet High School and Grissom Elementary School. However, only the clinic at the high school will be opened to adults beginning April 19.

The pair said the clinic has had contact with 152 students on medical issues and another 25 students regarding behavioral issues. Seabrook said they hope to increase the number of students the clinic sees for behavioral issues by offering group sessions to youngsters.

No student is turned away, though fees will be charged to the insurance company if the student is covered by insurance. The clinic also will begin offering dental services to students.

The clinic was established following a donation of \$10,000 through Medicaid's Managed Health Service and \$30,000 for equipment through the Area Health Education Service connected to Purdue University.

Seabrook said they consider the clinic a success, and it has been "beneficial" to the school. In one case, McKillip said the clinic was able to avert the spread of MRSA among the wrestling team when a student contracted it.

"The clinic is doing its job in terms of keeping kids in school and keeping them from being sick," he said.

Once the clinic opens to adults, officials said signs and security would be in place to direct them where to go for assistance at the high school. Organizers are planning for the clinic to be open to adults after school from 3 to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday.

In other action, the district is moving forward with plans to develop a New Tech High School within the high school this fall.

The New Tech model focuses on small classes that allow more teacher interaction. The program will be established with the high school's freshman class as a way of turning around the failing high school. Calumet is one of six schools in Lake County that has been on probation four consecutive years under Indiana's Public Law 221. Schools which remain on probation for six straight years face state takeover.

Lake Ridge Superintendent Sharon Johnson-Shirley said State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Bennett will visit the school district April 16. She said he will meet with school officials before meeting with the public at 6 p.m. at Calumet High School.

Schools chief to visit

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Bennett will visit Lake Ridge Schools residents at 6 p.m. April 16 at Calumet High School. He will meet with school officials earlier in the day.

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