



NMASBHC

New Mexico Assembly on School-Based Health Care

Legislative Update from the Executive Director

by Howard M. Spiegelman

Your NM Assembly has gotten two SBHC bills introduced this Legislative Session. This is the Assembly's first effort at initiating its own SBHC legislation. It was accomplished through some good legislative background work this past quarter from the NM Assembly's 4 YOUTH project staff, active participation and encouragement from our Board's Advocacy and Native-American committees, and timely intervention from our NM Voices partners.

Both bills are being carried by Representative Ray Begaye (D-Dist. 4) with our great appreciation. The first, called the Native American Student Mental Health Care Act (HB 27), would appropriate \$500,000 for more mental health provider hours in school-based health care centers at schools with at least 15 percent Native-American students. It would also provide culturally appropriate training for providers, and it stipulates that 98 percent of the appropriation goes to direct student services or provider training. The bill was assigned to the House Health and Governmental Affairs Committee, was heard on January 23rd, received a unanimous "do pass" recommendation, and has been sent on to the House Appropriation and Finance Committee.

The second bill, called the Native American Suicide Prevention Program Act (HB 29), would appropriate \$100,000 for a pilot Native American youth-led peer-to-peer suicide prevention project. This bill was assigned to the House Consumer and Public Affairs Committee. It also was heard on January 23rd, received a unanimous "do pass" recommendation, and has been sent on to the House Appropriation and Finance Committee. As the NM Assembly did during the last 60-day Legislative Session, we will be sending out "Legislative Updates" via email every week or so.

A Federal SBHC authorization bill for \$50,000,000 is slated to be introduced in Congress before the end of January. Called the School-Based Health Clinic Establishment Act of 2007, this bill would amend the Public Health Service Act to create a school-based health clinic program within the federal government. To date, Senators Susan Collins (R-ME), Christopher Dodd (D-CT), Ted Kennedy (D-MA), and Olympia Snowe (R-ME) have signed on as the bill's original co-sponsors. As we were preparing this newsletter, we were delighted to learn that that Senator Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) also will sign on as an original co-sponsor. We hope that Senator Pete Domenici (R-NM), who recently visited the SBHC at Santa Fe High School, will also support the legislation, although he will not be an original co-sponsor. Representative Tom Udall (D-

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**Join us for
SBHC Day at the NM Roundhouse
Thursday, Feb. 22, 2007
8:30am – 3:30pm
State Capitol Rotunda
Santa Fe**

**OPEN to ALL New Mexico School-Based
Health Centers and friends of SBHCs**

THIS IS AN EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL SBHCs TO MEET WITH
AND EDUCATE NEW MEXICO LEGISLATORS
ABOUT SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CARE

It is **NOT TO LATE** to reserve a table
for your SBHC for this date.
Email d.birkhauser@comcast.net
to request a registration form.

Update from the President

by Maria Duran

Happy 2007 to all of you!

This year began with excitement and anticipation as the Legislative Session got underway on Jan. 16. Our Executive Director, committee chairs, members, and program managers for the NM Assembly and the 4 YOUTH project have been active in many sectors of children's health issues in the state in order to increase awareness of school-based health centers, our financial needs, and our role in the comprehensive access and delivery of health care to the youth of New Mexico.

NM Assembly members are being asked to actively participate in the legislative process by signing up and standing up for SBHCs on Thursday, February 22, at the Roundhouse. This day is designated SBHC Day, and I hope that all sites in New Mexico will be represented, bring display materials, and share their programs together in the rotunda of the State Capitol. On that day, we will distribute packets of information to be shared with your representatives and senators. Board members will accompany participants as they visit legislative offices to share SBHC updates. Please email me at mptduran@msn.com for your registration form and we'll send you information about the day's activities.

Not every SBHC in New Mexico is a member of the NM Assembly. If you know of any nonmember sites please contact them and encourage them to join us on Feb. 22.



Thanks to your dedication and determination, SBHCs now serve all four quadrants of the state. This expansion has heightened awareness of SBHCs and the needs of the unique populations they serve. These needs must be addressed in both state and local arenas. I urge all Assembly members to stand together in support of our children as funding streams develop and legislation is written — even if it does not directly impact your SBHC. Any funding improves the lives of all our children and benefits the entire NM Assembly membership.

Legislative updates will be emailed out to all NM Assembly members and I urge all of you to check your email daily for current information. This is an active time of year for us and if we all participate and share this opportunity to contact legislators and stay in touch with each other, we will unify our efforts and advance school-based health care across the state.

New addition to the NM Assembly Website...

We are continually working to make our website, www.nmassembly.org, even more useful to you. We definitely want our website to be one of your favorites. By the end of this month we will have a new section of the website entitled "clinical resources." Some highlights of this page will be a set of operational policies and procedures you can adapt for your SBHC, CLIA and blood-borne pathogens resources, and an employee training manual to help you meet OSAH benchmarks (so you too can train your staff on 504). Thank you so much to Paula LeSueur from OSAH and Chris O'Donnell from the UNM SBHC Program for providing resources for this site.

NMASBHC Welcomes a New Staff Member



The New Mexico Assembly on School-Based Health Care is pleased to announce that Debbie Birkhauser will be joining us as a Program Manager. To help you learn more about her, we asked Debbie to introduce herself. Here is her response:

Retiring after 30 fulfilling years as an educator, I asked myself the question “What do you want to do the next couple of years and how can you continue to advocate on behalf of children and youth?” Serendipitously, I read the advertisement in the Albuquerque Journal for a Program Manager for the NMASBHC. Sometimes the stars align and the timing works to your advantage! Such was the case for me.

In addition to working in public schools as a teacher, counselor and principal, I also worked as the Community Outreach Coordinator in the Department of Health and Mental Health Services for Albuquerque Public Schools (APS). In this role, I worked with school staffs, community health care providers and Department of Health staff to facilitate the implementation and enhancement of dental, behavioral and general health services within APS schools. I was one of the founding members of the NMASBHC and helped to write its bylaws. It’s amazing to see how far the organization has evolved since its inception.

I am thrilled to work with the staff at the NMASBHC to support the initiatives taking place in the school-base health centers in the state and to advocate on their behalf. For now, I can be reached at d.birkhauser@comcast.net. I look forward to meeting you.

How Many SBHCs Are There?

by Nissa Patterson

The age-old question for SBHCs in New Mexico is... well, actually there are many age-old questions, but the one your NM Assembly is trying to answer once and for all is: *How many SBHCS are there in New Mexico?* Here at the NM Assembly, as well as at the Office of School and Adolescent Health (OSAH), we do our best to keep tabs on all the SBHCs in the state, but as the numbers expand this becomes more and more challenging. The NM Assembly has taken on the task of compiling a comprehensive directory of SBHCs in New Mexico. This directory will include the locations of each SBHC, a short summary of its services, and contact information.

Please help us answer this age-old question. In Spring 2007 you will receive a short information form from us and we ask you to please complete it and return it as soon as possible. The success of this directory depends upon all the SBHCs in New Mexico standing up and being counted for the wonderful work you do!

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NM 3), through his staff, has shown interest in being part of a similar effort in the House.

None of this could have been accomplished without your help. So, please, if you have not done so yet, become a member of the NM Assembly. Application forms can be downloaded from our website.

Bringing 4 YOUTH into the Fold Native Youth Step Up Into the Limelight

by Aaron Carr, Program Manager



One of the goals of 4 YOUTH has been to engage and train youth to be community organizers and activists on issues of importance to them and their communities. We're delighted to announce that Native-American youth will have a voice

at the Roundhouse this Legislative Session, advocating for funding for mental health care and suicide prevention.

Much of this legislative preparation has been taking place at our Laguna site. Community organizer Eski Tenorio is helping his YAG members prepare to give presentations to legislators on two bills that 4 YOUTH is supporting (more on those later), as well as a bill the students identified for support themselves. The student-supported bill is a request for capital outlay for a van to transport YAG and SHAC members to and from meetings, presentations, and other activities such as the legislative sessions. These students have identified transportation as a vital need for mobilizing and advocacy work in Native communities. State Representative Miguel P. Garcia (D-Dist. 14) is willing to sponsor the bill if 4 YOUTH can find two co-sponsors.

The students at Laguna have also been working with New Mexico Voices for Children and New Mexico Civic Engagement. Stephanie Gabriel of NM Voices will be conducting a legislative training session focusing on presentation and messaging around our two bills and the outlay request, so the students will not only be a presence at the Roundhouse, representing their communities, but will also speak with confidence. Two other trainings with NM Voices' YEAH! program (Youth

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Empowerment Advocacy Heroes) and NM Civic Engagement are scheduled in February.

The two bills 4 YOUTH is supporting are being carried by Rep. Ray Begaye (D-Dist. 4) and involve funding for mental health care and suicide prevention for Native-American youth. The suicide prevention funding, an appropriation for the pilot project Native American youth-led peer-to-peer suicide prevention program, has received the full support of the New Mexico Suicide Prevention Coalition, and they have put the bill on their list of session priorities. You can read more about these bills in the Legislative Update from the Executive Director.

Meanwhile, 4 YOUTH is growing and we recently hired two new community organizers. Rhonda Padilla will be working in the community of Acoma Pueblo. Rhonda has worked as a youth advocate and as a community health educator, and has 11 years experience in case management. She has completed her associate's degree in general studies and continues to pursue her bachelor's degree in social work. Josephine Dailey will be working in the community of Shiprock. Josephine is currently employed as an EMT at the San Juan County Detention Center, working with juvenile and adult inmates. As an organizer, she was recognized for coordinating a blood drive for United Blood Service. Her experience as a health data analyst with the Navajo Earth Study and as a Fieldworker with the Johns Hopkins' ongoing Rotavirus Study Project will be useful as she begins her work in Shiprock. Both new organizers are very excited about joining 4 YOUTH and the NM Assembly in mobilizing Native-American tribal members around school-based health care.

With our two new organizers, joining Eski Tenorio in Laguna and Harrison Platero working in To'hajilee, 4 YOUTH is fully energized and ready to back our Native youth members as they create a presence at this year's legislative session. Building youth confidence and mobilizing Native American communities around school-based health care has been 4 YOUTH's focus in our second year. We're

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SBHC Spotlight A Star Shines in Roy



The school-based health center in Roy, NM began its life in a coach's office in October of 2005, but within a year it had moved into digs of its own, courtesy of a renovated house on the school

campus. It was, perhaps, a fitting beginning given the history of its hometown. The village of Roy was founded in the late 19th century by homesteaders – hardy folks who could make do with just about anything. Many of the village's early frontier buildings still stand, including the original day hospital, which has since been converted into apartments.

With a population just over 300, this ranching community in Northeast New Mexico still makes do. Before the SBHC opened, the only non-emergency health services were provided by a rural clinic with limited business hours. Beyond that, a trip to a doctor meant a long drive to either Las Vegas, Raton or Tucumcari. Taking such a trek meant missing a day of work for parents and a day of school for their kids.

Now the children of Roy can get medical attention, wellness care, sports physicals, immunizations, and even some medications, without ever leaving campus. The staff at the Roy SBHC can draw blood for lab work, make referrals to outside providers, and call in prescriptions to local pharmacies. Students can also take advantage of behavioral health services, substance abuse prevention programs, family planning information, and a suicide

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prevention hotline and crisis team. "We just try to do as much as possible," said SBHC Coordinator Deanna Walker.

The center is staffed on Wednesdays by a nurse, who also makes rounds to Mosquero and Wagon Mound during the week, and on Thursdays by a nurse practitioner. Behavioral health services are offered on Thursdays and a chiropractor visits once a month.

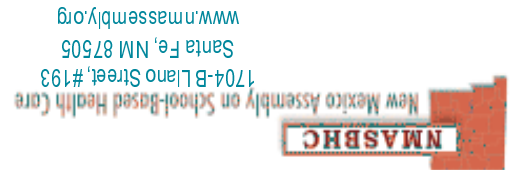
While the student population of Roy's K-12 school tops out at 65, about 13 kids go through the clinic each day, ranging in age from infancy to young adults of 20. Roy High School graduates have even come back to use the clinic. Students from nearby Mosquero and Wagon Mound can also use the SBHC in Roy, making the combined total of students served about 200. With funding from the Office of School and Adolescent Health, the center does not charge students for its services. "We see everybody regardless of their ability to pay," said Walker. The center should soon be certified to receive Medicaid reimbursements as well.

While the SBHC is not yet open to parents and adults other than school faculty, Walker said the staff would like it to be. They'd also like to be able to offer more behavioral health care and dental services. The town of Roy does not have a dentist, so people must travel the 90 miles to Las Vegas.

Cavities and cleanings aside, Roy's students are spending more time in the classroom and less time on the road en route to an out-of-town physician. "They can miss 15 or 20 minutes instead of whole day," said Walker. All romantic notions of frontier life aside, it sure beats having to make do.

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now ready to begin year three by putting the skills our youth have gained to work in hands-on advocacy. The outcome, we hope, will be more than just funding for various health needs specific to the Native-American communities. We hope that through this process our youth members will learn that they have unique and compelling voices and that they have the power to make themselves heard.



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We look forward to seeing you at the

**NMASBHC Annual Meeting
 Head-to-Toe Conference**

April 19, 2007

12:50-1:40 pm

Lunch will be provided.

Members of the New Mexico Assembly on School-Based Health Care and interested members are invited to this meeting. In addition to interacting with colleagues from around the state as you enjoy your lunch, you will have an opportunity to:

- Learn about the Assembly's accomplishments during the past year;
- Meet the officers;
- Vote on Board candidates; and
- Help set the Assembly's policy focus for 2007-08.

REMEMBER, your annual membership dues are due July 1, 2007. The annual meeting is a great time to pay your dues ahead of time!