



## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

February 28, 2023

The Honorable Melony Griffith  
Chair, Senate Finance Committee  
3 East Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

### **RE: SB 628 - School-Based Health Centers - Services, Infrastructure, and Funding - Letter of Information**

Dear Chair Griffith and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) respectfully submits a letter of information for Senate Bill (SB) 628 - School-Based Health Centers - Services, Infrastructure, and Funding. SB 628 will require the Maryland Medical Assistance Program to provide coverage for sports physicals performed by school-based health centers (SBHCs), require the Secretary of Health to provide guidelines on the expansion of SBHCs that include certain infrastructure needs, and require MDH, to develop a SBHC funding allocation formula and budget proposal.

MDH supports the requirement for the Maryland Medical Assistance Program to provide coverage for sports physicals performed by SBHCs. These exams can be provided as a covered benefit by Medicaid managed care organizations. However, the Department's ability to issue guidelines on the expansion of SBHCs and develop an SBHC funding allocation formula and budget proposal will not be feasible by January 1, 2024.

Chapter 606 (SB 830) of the 2021 Acts of Maryland transferred the Maryland SBHC Program (the Program) to MDH on July 1, 2022.<sup>1</sup> Two long-term goals of the Program are to expand comprehensive school-based healthcare in historically disenfranchised and underserved communities and for SBHCs to develop a sustainable financial model that can be adopted and implemented consistently.

There are currently 95 SBHCs in 17 jurisdictions. The Program recently conducted a needs assessment which included an analysis of SBHC billing efforts.<sup>2</sup> The current grant funding formula is based on staffing, hours of operations, and services offered. Determining an annual funding formula for the grant funds, as required by SB 628, will require collaborative conversation with SBHCs and other local stakeholders. Further, because the SBHC Program anticipates the number of SBHCs to increase annually, the funding allocations will have to be adjusted each year to support existing sites and facilitate the launch and operations for newly approved sites. Due to the complexity of this issue, at this juncture, annual grant funding allocations should retain a high degree of flexibility, and will not be feasible by January 1, 2024.

Additionally, MDH is currently drafting a toolkit and guidelines to facilitate SBHC enrollment in the Maryland Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program. In State Fiscal Year 2023, 45 of the 95 SBHCs participated in the Maryland VFC Program. Since July 1, 2022, MDH has provided infrastructure grant

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<sup>1</sup> <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgaweb/Legislation/Details/sb0830/?ys=2021rs>

<sup>2</sup> <https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/mch/MD-SBHC-Program/Documents/Maryland%20SBHC%20Needs%20Assessment%20Report%2012-9-22.pdf>

funding to SBHCs, and will continue to do so to support SBHCs who participate in the Maryland VFC Program. MDH also encourages SBHCs to collaborate with local partners such as hospitals and local health departments to facilitate school-wide vaccination clinics to provide state-required immunizations for school entry.

If you have any questions please contact Megan Peters, Acting Director, Office of Governmental Affairs, at [megan.peters@maryland.gov](mailto:megan.peters@maryland.gov) or (410) 260-3190.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Laura Herrera Scott".

Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H.  
Secretary