

The Cincinnati HERALD

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Partners provide dental center for students

7/26/2013, 10:07 a.m.

The Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati and The Deaconess Associations Foundation have provided funding to construct a dental center as part of the new Deaconess Health Check School Based Health Center at Western Hills University High School/Dater High School. The four-chair dental center is currently being constructed as part of a comprehensive school-based health center and is expected to open in January 2014. The center will provide year-round dental services to students and nearby Head Start toddlers. The center is expected to serve 2,000 children and teens annually.

The original construction of the school-based health center was funded by a grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). The dental center added an additional \$165,000 to the original \$500,000 design and construction fees, and the Health Foundation and Deaconess Associations Foundation have provided grants to cover the added cost. "Access to dental services for children covered by Medicaid has been a longstanding challenge," says Dr. Marilyn Crumpton, Cincinnati Health Department of Cincinnati Public Schools' 33,000+ student population, 70 percent are eligible for Medicaid.

"This is a dedicated partnership that is in harmony with the Deaconess organization's focus on advancing healthcare," says Tony Woods, Chairman, Deaconess Associations, Inc. "A wide range of partners has already joined to financially support these two projects." Francie Wolgin, Senior Program Officer, Health Foundation, agrees. "The Cincinnati Health Department is hiring and supervising the dental providers, as well as covering operating costs, and Cincinnati Dental Society Foundation is coordinating volunteer dentists to provide additional services for children in the center," says Wolgin. Cincinnati Public Schools is providing the space rent free, and will pay all utilities and facility upkeep costs.

The Children's Oral Health Network and Cincinnati Health Department are working to raise an additional \$197,000 to fund the purchase of dental equipment for the clinic