

Testimony on SB 326

Presented to
Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee

By
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Chairperson Schmidt and members of the committee, I am Dr. Kathy Weno, the Director for the Bureau of Oral Health at the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, the State Dental Director. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony to the committee about a bill that as amended will expand the number of children eligible for school based services provided by extended care permit hygienists.

The Bureau of Oral Health is the state's public health section dedicated to oral health. We are in the second year of our School Sealant program, a project that provides sealants, fluoride and cleanings to children at risk of dental disease in schools across the state. The Bureau of Oral Health partners with 14 clinics and private dental practitioners to provide preventive dental services in schools. Our programs utilize hygienists with Extended Care Permits (ECP) to work regionally in schools without direct supervision of a dentist. A map of our current locations and the counties they serve is below.

School Sealant Program Sites



Current KDHE School Sealant Program Sites:

Rawlins County Dental Clinic, Atwood
United Methodist Mexican American Ministries Clinic, Garden City
Salina family CARE Clinic, Salina
Konza Prairie, Junction City
Community Health Ministry, Wamego
Open Wide, Atchison
Miles of Smiles, Olathe
Flint Hills Community Health Center, Emporia
Community Health Center of SE Kansas, Pittsburg
Douglas County Dental Clinic, Lawrence
Rogers Family Dentistry, Arkansas City
GraceMed Clinic Wichita
Hunter Health Clinic Wichita
EC Tyree Clinic Wichita

The Bureau of Oral Health supports community based solutions that reduce barriers to dental care for all Kansans. School based prevention services provide preventive hygiene services to children in schools by a licensed, experienced dental hygienist. Parents of eligible children are required to sign a permission slip and their children are treated during the school day regardless of their ability to pay. Our school programs have provided services to many children who have never been to a dental office, and parents are pleased as they do not have to take a day off work or worry about transportation. School based sealant programs are a national public health best practice, supported by numerous scientific studies as a proven way to reduce dental disease in children.

The Kansas Dental Practice Act limits the types of children that are eligible to be treated by ECP hygienists in schools. As the law stands now only children on Medicaid/Healthwave and/or Free and Reduced Lunch programs can participate in our school programs. In order to serve as many children in need as possible, the Bureau of Oral Health supports expanding the Kansas Practice Act to allow ECP hygienists to treat more children. The Bureau of Oral Health supports SB326 as amended to allow ECPs to treat children in schools that are on Medicaid/Healthwave, and/or the free and reduced lunch program and/or have not been seen by a dentist during the last 12 months for a dental examination. This will allow some additional children that are not on public assistance programs but have dental needs to access preventive care.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this written information to the committee, and I will be available at the hearing if you have questions.