



September 14, 2018

William E. Kirwin, Chair
Maryland Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education
Maryland Department of Legislative Services
90 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chairman Kirwan:

I was recently updated on the outstanding work that the Maryland Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education has done related to collecting best practices in providing health and behavioral health services in school settings.

Choptank Community Health operates medical services at school-based health centers in Caroline and Talbot Counties and provides dental services at all public schools in Caroline, Dorchester and Talbot Counties. There are many proven benefits of the school-based model especially in our rural area as they provide greater access to needed health care services. Barriers that families face such as transportation, inability to take time off from work and getting an appointment with a health care provider as soon as one is needed are addressed. School based health centers play a pivotal role in the healthcare system.

In terms of funding opportunities, the Commission should consider including school-based health centers as an opportunity available for all schools without any further eligibility criteria other than standards from the Maryland Department of Education. This would ensure that students in schools across Maryland have the opportunity to benefit from the needed services provided by school-based health centers.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments to the Kirwan Commission. If you have any questions regarding our school-based health center model, please contact me at srich@choptankhealth.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sara Rich". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sara Rich, MPA
President and Chief Executive Officer