

# Strengthening Partnerships To Improve Student Health Outcomes

On October 2nd, Kelsey Gummer from the Montana Healthcare Foundation (MTHF) visited Bigfork Schools to hear about our work within the grant framework to better serve our students' health needs. Participating in the meeting with representatives from Bigfork Schools was also Hannah Montague, PA at our Logan Health School-Based Health Center.

School-based health care as a concept is not new, but it is fairly new to Montana, and it has grown rapidly with many schools now hosting a school-based health center. The objective of the health grant from MTHF is to facilitate for schools and health centers to work together on common goals. Since the start of our project we have had more resources and tools to look deeper into connections between nurses visits and academic achievements and to do more detailed assessments when looking at specific students' needs.

Our focus for the 2024-25 school year is on absenteeism tracking and on clarifying roles and what kind of support is available. This will be documented in what is called a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS). This will provide a comprehensive framework for targeted support and early intervention for struggling students, and it will help school staff and health providers to better match services to their students' needs.



Bigfork School nurse Jennifer Knopik (middle) in conversation with Kelsey Gummer, MTHF (left) and Hannah Montague, Logan Health (right)