

My interview was with Lynn, one of our teacher's aide. She has been with Tremont for 3 years and "absolutely loves" her job. When asked what her role consists of she explained the main thing she (and the other teacher's aides do) is help the teachers with preparing for projects, a lot of copying materials, laminating jobs and monitor all the students during morning, lunch and afternoon recesses and in the cafeteria during lunch. She said recess duty is busy especially if a student gets hurt or sick and when they get into little fights. I then went on to explain my role as the clinic nurse. I informed her that not only do I care for each student, staff and visitor that comes into the clinic, I also do hearing and vision screenings on all 1st, 3rd, 5th grades and all new students, verify immunizations are UTD, educate students and staff on medication administration (epi-pen, seizure meds, etc.)/CPR/AED use/choking/maturation/nutrition/dental care/first aid, monitor students/staff with communicable diseases, make sure that emergency medical forms, medications and supplies are prepared for field trips, make sure the emergency bag is prepared and ready at a moments notice for a fire (drill), evacuation, etc., among many other roles.

I explained to Lynn about the Whole School Whole Child Whole Community Model and what it means. I shared with her it is "student centered, with the overarching goal of keeping students healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged. The WSCC model emphasizes the need to coordinate policy, process, and practice to achieve improved student health and education outcomes. This collaboration in support of students encompasses health services, health education, employee wellness, counseling, psychological and social services, nutrition environment and services, physical education and physical activity, physical environment, social emotional climate, family engagement, and community involvement. WSCC recognizes the critical role of ongoing collaboration between school and community in fostering student success" (NASN, 2017). Lynn and I talked about how our roles could partner together when it comes to the WSCC model. We determined while on lunch duty, the teacher's aides could be more cognizant of how much of their lunch each student is eating before they are released to go out to recess. Not eating a healthy, balanced and adequate amount of lunch can lead to decreased stamina and energy throughout the remainder of the school day. This could also put the student at increased risk for developing colds, flu, etc. If we could work together to help ensure each student has eaten a sufficient amount (at least 3/4) before they are released from the cafeteria to go out to recess then that could reduce the number of students seen in the clinic in the afternoon who do not feel well, are tired/sluggish and/or hungry. I was so excited to have this conversation with Lynn and come up with a plan that could help each student in our school to maintain wellness and encourage eating all of their lunch (and not rushing through it and/or only eating a small amount so they can hurry out to play).

Something that I was surprised about and did not know until Lynn mentioned it to me, was that all of the teacher's aides carry bandaids and wipes with them so they can help limit the number of students who come into the clinic for small and minor cuts. I was very

appreciative of this since our clinic gets so busy especially during lunch. Lynn was surprised that my role included so many different things each day. She said she only really sees me taking care of students in the clinic and did not realize all the other things I do each day. She was especially surprised when I told her about all of the training and teaching I do to staff and students. She knew about the teaching I do for the staff when it comes to emergency medication training and CPR/AED/choking, as she has been to those training sessions, but she did not know of the teaching I provide to the students about maturation, dental care and nutrition. She was happy that I educated our students on all of these subjects especially since her children will be coming to Tremont Elementary in the upcoming years.

RESOURCES:

National Association of School Nurses. *The role of the 21st century school nurse*. Retrieved from: <https://www.nasn.org/advocacy/professional-practice-documents/position-statements/ps-role>