

Greenville Health System: School-Based Health Centers

OnTrack Greenville Evaluation Overview

Why is evaluation important to SIF? Part of SIF's mission is to determine the effectiveness of programs it funds by requiring an evaluation and providing the technical assistance and funding to conduct evaluations. The purpose of evaluation is to build the evaluation capacity of nonprofit organizations and communities so they can successfully assess whether their programs are truly creating impact. In order to do this, SIF provides the expertise, resources, and infrastructure to conduct meaningful evaluations that demonstrate impact, moving programs from promising to proven. This is where the Riley Institute plays a role. As the third party evaluator, we are conducting an unbiased evaluation—we use evaluation as a way to recognize promising approaches and models to replicate and identify areas of vulnerability to further support, develop, or study.

Why is it important to learn about the implementation and impact of School-Based Health Centers?

- **Celebrate success stories.** By rigorously learning about the model's impact in Greenville, we will have rich sources of data to help tell the School-Based Health Center story of student success.
- **Build evidence.** School-Based Health Centers already are an evidence-based model. This evaluation will add to the body of evidence, helping other similar communities learn more about what impacts to expect as they implement the model.
- **Scale to serve more students.** As we learn what is working really well, program leaders locally and nationally will be able to grow the program to serve more students in more communities.
- **Improve the program.** We will help identify opportunities for program stakeholders to adapt and innovate in order to improve services, fostering a culture of learning and continuous program improvement.

What will we learn about School-Based Health Centers? What questions are we trying to answer?

We are trying to learn if students who receive services at School-Based Health Centers are doing better as a result of their participation. Some of the questions we will explore include: Does students' attendance improve after visiting the School-Based Health Center? Are more students returning to class after visiting the School-Based Health Center instead of going home? Are more students establishing an identified medical home? And are school staff members more aware of the purpose of and services provided at the School-Based Health Center?

In addition, we are trying to learn what School-Based Health Center implementation looks like at the OnTrack Greenville schools. We know how the program operates in theory, but we want to learn more about what implementation looks like in real life conditions. Some of the questions we will explore include: Does implementation look the same at all OnTrack Greenville schools? Are all School-Based Health Center staff members receiving the training they need? Are the School-Based Health Centers reaching the students they should? Are students and parents satisfied with the services provided at School-Based Health Centers?

How will we know that the program is working? We will look at student outcomes two times per year, at the beginning of the academic year and at the end of the academic year. That will allow us to see if students are improving over time. In addition, we will compare students who visited a School-Based Health Center to similar students who did not visit a School-Based Health Center. By having a comparison group of similar students, it will help us attribute positive results to participation in the program.

How will we collect data? Greenville County Schools already collects data on student academic outcomes. A research and data sharing agreement with Greenville County Schools will provide information on student academic performance. We will invite parents and students to take surveys to help us learn about other outcomes. In order to learn more about program implementation, we will survey and interview program staff members and review program records to check for consistency.

Who is on the Research Team?

- **Riley Institute at Furman University.** The Riley Institute is leading the study on the **impact** of GHS. In addition, the Riley Institute is managing and organizing all parts of the evaluation.
- **Clemson University.** Clemson's Public Health Sciences Department is leading the study on the **implementation** of School-Based Health Centers. The Riley Institute is working closely with Clemson, coordinating each step of the evaluation process.
- **Social Innovation Fund.** As the primary funder of the initiative, SIF provides guidance on how to plan and conduct evaluations. SIF also provides final approval of all evaluation plans.
- **OnTrack Greenville.** As the SIF grantee and collective impact backbone organization, OnTrack Greenville is responsible for making sure all parts of the evaluation meets SIF guidelines. OnTrack Greenville reviews evaluation plans and creates a culture of learning for the entire initiative.
- **Greenville County Schools.** As the project site, Greenville County Schools reviews and approves all research activities with students and district employees, taking special care to protect student information.
- **Greenville Health System.** As an OnTrack Greenville Implementation Partner, GHS staff members contribute to the evaluation plan and are important evaluation stakeholders, providing information and insight to the learning process.

Who is available to answer more questions about the evaluation? At the Riley Institute at Furman University, please contact Assistant Research Director **Dr. Tracy Waters** (tracy.waters@furman.edu; 864.294.3803). At Greenville Health System, please contact Senior Medical Director **Dr. Kerry Sease** (ksease@ghs.org; 864.220.7270).

