

In consideration of this request the Worcester Public School Nursing Coordinator has prepared and will present a brief PowerPoint presentation (Attachment B) on the ‘Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment’ (SBIRT) Pilot Program at Sullivan Middle and Burncoat Middle schools to the School Committee on September 15, 2016. On March 14, 2016 Governor Baker signed emergency legislation into law addressing the deadly opiate epidemic plaguing the state and the nation. This bill-HN4056, titled *An Act relative to substance use, treatment, education, and prevention*, comprises multiple provisions including a mandate to verbally screen students for substance use disorders (Section 97). This new law dictates that each school district shall utilize an approved verbal screening tool (Annex B) to occur at two different grade levels as recommended by the Department of Elementary and Secondary (DESE) in consultation with the Department of Public Health (DPH). Parents/guardians and students must be notified in advance and be allowed to opt out by written notification prior to or during the screening. Any student statement or disclosure shall remain confidential unless written consent of the student or parent/guardian is provided, in cases of immediate medical emergency, or otherwise required by law. De-identified screening results need to be reported to the DPH no later than 90 days upon completion of the screening. The screenings required by this law must to be implemented by the 2017-18 school year.

The WPS Nursing, Safety, Child Study, and Health and Physical Education Departments are well-positioned to meet these demands. Upon request from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH), the Nursing Coordinator applied for and was awarded a School Health Services SBIRT Planning Grant in January, 2016. In a meeting held with Acting Superintendent Marcos Rodrigues and the Nursing Coordinator on February 11, 2016 approval was received to initiate SBIRT planning and implementation as a pilot program within two middle schools, contingent on School Committee approval. A meeting with the aforementioned WPS Department administrators was convened and the creation of the WPS ‘Comprehensive Drug Education and Prevention Program’ ensued. Additionally, an implementation project manager was appointed, school principals confirmed implementation, outside community resources for referral were acknowledged, school staff were trained, an implementation work plan was developed, a parent letter was created, and educational information to share with students and families was identified.

The next step required for successful implementation is the development of WPS SBIRT policy and procedure. Once these have been written and approved, dates for screening will be determined, the parent/ guardian letter (Annex C) and educational brochure, *Family Checkup: Positive Parenting Prevents Drug Abuse* (Annex D), will be mailed, and SBIRT will occur in the two schools as previously noted. Data will be recorded and submitted to the MDPH as required within 90 days of completion of student screenings. On-going education will be provided to students, families, and staff utilizing both internal and external resources.

Refer to prior presentation, ‘The Opiate Epidemic: Impact on Students and Families’, as presented by the WPS Nursing Coordinator and the Regional Behavioral Health Programs Coordinator of the Central Massachusetts Regional Public Health Alliance Worcester Division of Public Health to the School Committee on March 17, 2016 for additional back-up resources.