

## Sequoia Healthcare District supports students & educators!

Sequoia Healthcare District (SHD) has been committed to improving the health and wellness of residents in southern San Mateo County for nearly 80 years. Initially formed to build and operate Sequoia Hospital, its mission evolved in 1996 when ownership of Sequoia Hospital transitioned to Catholic Healthcare West, now recognized as CommonSpirit Health. There are currently 76 health districts across the state established by voters to fulfill local health-related needs and Sequoia was the 1st Healthcare District to be established in California.

Funded through property tax revenue, Sequoia Healthcare District operates as a special district, similar to a school, fire or water district with its mandate being health. The tax revenues no longer go to support the hospital but are instead invested in community health-related programs that promote wellness. SHD vision is for all district residents to experience optimal physical and mental health at every stage of life.

Recognizing that good health is essential to academic success and that schools provide an ideal setting for public health interventions, SHD launched the Healthy Schools Initiative (HSI) in 2010 in collaboration with four school districts: Redwood City, Sequoia Union, San Carlos, and Belmont/Redwood Shores. Menlo Park, Las Lomas, Portola Valley, and Woodside joined in 2012. Today, the HSI continues to support the health and wellbeing of K-12 students in all eight school districts within their boundaries, along with public charter schools.

The Healthy Schools Initiative is guided by the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child model developed by the Center for Disease Control. This model serves as the framework for addressing health in schools and meets the need for greater emphasis on the psychosocial as well as the essential role community agencies and families play in improving childhood health behaviors and development. HSI partners with the San Mateo County Office of Education as well as the San Mateo County Health and Behavioral Health Departments to assure alignment with local efforts to improve student health outcomes.

Through the Healthy Schools Initiative, SHD contributes to a portion of the following school-based health resources:

- salaries for school district wellness coordinators, nurses, counselors, and the PE+ Program, operated by Peninsula Community Center for the Redwood City School District
- community-based organizations that enhance the delivery of health education, substance misuse and suicide prevention training, social-emotional learning, counseling, employee wellness programs, and parent education classes

Additionally, SHD invests in developing local healthcare talent through a scholarship program for aspiring school nurses. Award recipients receive up to \$6,000 in tuition reimbursement for earning their school nurse credential in exchange for a two-year service commitment at a SHD-area school district.

Through innovation, collaboration, and community engagement, the Healthy Schools Initiative continues to strengthen the connection between health and education, helping students thrive both in and out of the classroom.

For more information, please visit [seqhd.org](http://seqhd.org).