



FALL 2024

The School-Based Health Center is a Vital Support to Students In Need

The School-Based Health Center (SBHC) has provided life-altering support to students and families since its inception more than 20 years ago in District 207. The SBHC is a community support that assists families with basic health needs and most services are provided at no cost to families.

Last year the SBHC expanded to Maine West after opening its first location in District 207 at Maine East in 2002. This additional location provides easier access for district students and families. Students from any District 207 school can receive services at either of the SBHC locations.

The SBHC is a partnership between District 207 and Advocate Children's Hospital. The goal of the SBHC is to improve the physical and emotional

health of students attending Maine East, Maine South, Maine West and Frost Academy.

"The School-Based Health Center in District 207 provides easy access to healthcare for students who might otherwise struggle to receive it," says Family Nurse Practitioner Amy Carlson. "This support system leaves a lasting impact on our families by ensuring every student has the healthcare they need to thrive in school and beyond."

The SBHC is one of many across the country and provides a number of services including medical and mental health screenings and treatment for young people who might otherwise not have access to primary care. School-based health centers have proven to be successful vehicles for addressing the challenges of adolescent healthcare.

The program is supported through state grants, Advocate and other sources outside the school district. Additionally, the Maine Township High School Foundation has been instrumental in supporting the SBHC by providing funding to help keep the center open. Anyone who would like to help support the SBHC can donate to the foundation at www.mthsfoundation.org.

"The School-Based Health Center in District 207 provides easy access to healthcare for students who might otherwise struggle to receive it."



Family Nurse Practitioner Amy Carlson provides a health exam for a student at Maine West High School. The SBHC supports students across District 207.



Supporting Students on their Journey to Lifelong Success

Every student in District 207 has unique needs that require support in order for them to be successful in high school and beyond. Some students struggle with math; others with public speaking; and some with executive functioning skills. For each of these students, it is the responsibility of the education system to meet their needs and support them along their learning journey.

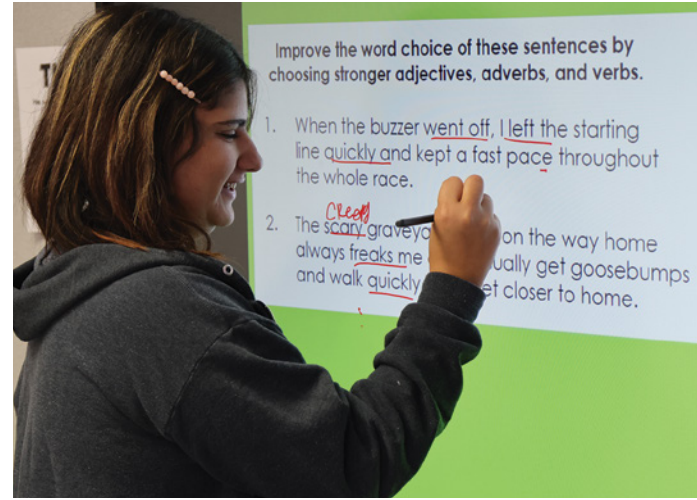
At Frost Academy, the goals are the same but the needs are greater as the staff works to support students who have significant emotional and behavioral challenges. All students at Frost receive special education services to support their educational needs in areas like self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness, interpersonal skills and decision making. Located at the corner of Dee and Devon in Park Ridge, the school typically enrolls about 30 students each year and provides a highly structured environment. All students attending Frost reside within the school district.

“For some students, a large comprehensive high school environment with 2,000 students can feel overwhelming and may not provide the best environment for learning,” says the leader of Frost Academy Dr. Anna Hamilton. “Additionally, for many of the students we serve, school has not been an easy journey. They have been misunderstood by adults and peers, and sometimes viewed as not caring about school or their education. We find that all of our students want to be successful.”

The work at Frost is grounded in fostering a school community where each student feels safe, cared for and believed in. In a recent survey, 89% of students reported feeling cared for and connected to staff at Frost. “This is the foundation needed to help these beautiful young people build skills and find their place in this world,” Hamilton says.

Four pillars guide the work with students at Frost:

- We believe that students do well if they can. If a student is not doing well, it is not an active choice the student is making. Staff work with the student and family, in a collaborative manner, to support the specific skills for which a student is struggling.



Frost Academy student Vanessa Nado works on a word choice assignment. Frost provides support for students who have significant emotional and behavioral challenges.



The staff at Frost Academy are dedicated to the success of their students. As one student says: "The teachers and staff are very caring and kind."

- We believe in the power of relationships and intentionally build connections with students and families through many different strategies and approaches that serve as the foundation for trust and growth.
- We are committed to repairing student harm in a collaborative manner. These negative experiences become opportunities to build skills in areas like perspective taking, conflict resolution, coping and a range of other interpersonal skills.
- We value clear expectations. Our core values of self-awareness, work ethic, accountability and respect are woven throughout the day and reinforced each class period.

Unfortunately, many in the community do not fully understand the services provided at Frost and the remarkable students who attend the school, which can result in misunderstandings and misinformation.



Teacher Katie DePalma works with Frost Academy student Jose Sanchez-Perez on a recent lesson. Smaller class sizes help teachers better support students enrolled at Frost.

“It is not uncommon when I share information about Frost, someone says something along the lines of ‘I do not know how you work with those kids,’” Dr. Hamilton says. “The fact is that I am privileged to work with the students at Frost. They are incredibly intelligent, thoughtful and insightful.”

When students are asked about their experience at the school, universally they talk about the support they receive from their teachers and other staff at Frost. Additionally, students report that their

experience at Frost is drastically different from their expectations, which were shaped by what they heard about Frost and the stigmas associated with being students who have emotional and behavioral challenges.

“Frost is a unique school and different from the mainstream schools in a good way,” says Frost student Jay Lebron. “The teachers and staff are very caring and kind. Sometimes students who come here feel like they have nobody and the Frost staff changes their lives and makes them feel like they have someone. For me personally, I felt like when I came here I immediately had a support system.”

Rather than viewing Frost students as individuals with deficits in emotional and behavioral regulation, the school recognizes them as resilient young people who deserve the opportunity to be understood rather than judged.

“Many students with emotional and behavioral challenges experience issues with their mental health as they have often been exposed to unspeakable traumatic experiences,” says Dr. Hamilton. “We would never judge a student with needs in reading or mathematics, and students with emotional and behavioral challenges deserve the same opportunity to not be defined and judged by their disability.” ■



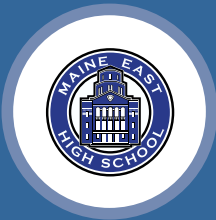
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Substitute Teachers and Other Employees Needed

Interested in serving the community and supporting District 207 schools? District 207 offers competitive rates for short-term and long-term teacher substitutes.

To serve as a substitute, applicants must have a valid Illinois Teaching License or Substitute Teaching License. Those licenses can be obtained through the Illinois State Board of Education at www.isbe.net.

Residents interested in applying to be considered as substitute teachers in District 207 should visit the district website or bit.ly/207sub.

In addition, throughout the year District 207 has full- and part-time openings, including certified teaching roles, maintenance, security and support staff positions. All open positions are available at bit.ly/D207apply. ■



Join the amazing team of professionals in District 207 by applying for any of the open positions that become available throughout the year.



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