

**Memorandum of Understanding between
EmPoWER Somerset and Union Township School District
July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024**

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding is to formalize a partnership between EmPoWER Somerset and Union High School to collaborate on implementing the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) School Health NJ Project in Union Township. The purpose of the WSCC School Health NJ Project grant is to support the state goal of transforming the NJ public school landscape by directing resources to build and sustain healthy schools for all students in target communities. The services and funding are contingent upon the funding award, funding availability, and services identified by the NJDOH.

Union High School agrees to:

- Perform a self-assessment of school health-related policies, programs, curriculum and services using the CDC’s School Health Index (SHI).
- Create a School Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) based on the results of the SHI.
- Identify a WSCC School Health and Wellness Team directed by a school nurse.
- Implement actions that cover 5 of the 10 components of the WSCC model.
- Integrate an evidence-based Social Emotional Learning (SEL) program into chosen actions.
- Recommend and refer a minimum of two youth to join the Youth Advisory Board.
- Promote and/ or host Teen Speak to parents/caregivers of Union Township students.

EmPoWER Somerset agrees to:

- Provide \$8,000 of funding in year 1 to support the initiatives of the WSCC School Health NJ Project with an aligned SEL program; provide initial grant award check of \$4000 mailed to the school/district, upon receipt of the signed MOA for Year 1, on or about October 1, 2023; provide the remainder of the funds after the 3rd health and wellness check-in meeting on or about March 31, 2023. It is recommended that \$3500 be applied to designated WSCC Health & Wellness Team Leader’s stipend; \$4500 allocated for grant program funding.
- Provide programmatic guidance and technical assistance throughout the grant initiative to create and sustain a healthy school environment in accordance with the WSCC model.
- Facilitate Teen Speak for parents/caregivers and provide stipends for participants.
- Provide SEL and trauma attuned care training opportunities for school staff.
- Lead the central region Youth Advisory Board (YAB) utilizing the Positive Youth Development (PYD) framework.
- Provide community service learning (CSL) opportunities for students.

SIGNATURES:

Empower Somerset Name & Title

Union HS Name & Title

Signature & Date

Signature & Date



FUNDING AVAILABLE!!! Cohort 1: BUILD AND SUSTAIN HEALTHY SCHOOLS



Schools strive to help students reach their highest academic potential. The Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) School Health NJ Project, administered by the NJ Department of Health (NJDOH), has more than 10 years of experience promoting healthy schools. The WSCC model, shown to the left, is the project's framework and utilizes a collaborative approach to learning and health. This model helps schools address the health needs of students with its focus on the whole child and strengthened by a school wide approach and support from the local community and its resources.

Over the years, the WSCC School Health NJ Project has collaborated with various state, local and statewide professional organizations to improve school health to enhance student learning for life success. Our vision is to begin to transform the NJ public school landscape by directing resources to build and sustain healthy schools for all students. The NJDOH will provide up to \$18,000 over the course of 3 years, to strengthen the school district's capacity to support and sustain healthy schools. Annual funding is contingent upon the availability funds.

This grant initiative is based on the following principles:

- Healthy children learn better.
- Health and academic achievement are inextricably intertwined.
- Schools are an ideal venue for chronic disease prevention.
- Administrative and Board of Education support is critical for creating a culture of health in schools.
- A commitment to systems change is required to sustain healthy schools.
- Social Emotional Learning (SEL) provides children with the necessary skills to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve goals, make responsible decisions, establish and maintain positive relationships.

The NJDOH is recruiting all schools, prioritizing those in Trenton, New Brunswick, Elizabeth, Perth Amboy, and Union Township. Public high schools, with students aged 13 to 19 are eligible to lead this pilot in their school district. In addition to funding, the NJDOH's school health regional agencies will provide programmatic guidance and support throughout the time the school participates in the project.

Schools are expected to establish a WSCC Health and Wellness (H&W) Coordinator position, led by a school nurse, and convene a WSCC H&W Team that will be responsible for assessing, developing, implementing and reporting on school health and wellness policies, programs and activities. Schools are required to implement evidence based actions to meet a minimum of 5 WSCC components. Similarly, schools are required to implement SEL programs with students, provided by Empower Somerset.

We invite you to share this funding opportunity with your colleagues and others that are committed to improving the health of New Jersey students to enhance their learning. For more information, please email Empower Somerset's Director of Health and Wellness, Jennifer Gomez: jennifer@empowersomerset.com



WSCC Grant Important Dates to Remember 2023-2024 (Year 1 Schools)

October 2023 – Meeting with EmPoWER Somerset

October 10, 2023 – Submit data for chronic absenteeism (SY 2020-2021) as well as any data the school is monitoring for improvement (ie: #/type of conduct referrals; #/reasons for in- and out-of-school suspensions; changes in school culture and climate; dropout rates; changes in test scores; changes in student health status)

October 18, 2023 – Submit Pre-improvement log

October 28, 2023 – Submit the WSCC Team Member list, led by school nurse, with a diverse group presentation (administrator(s), staff, students, parent(s), and community members)

November 19, 2023 – Submit Team Leader’s Log, documenting time dedicated to WSCC grant and related health activities

January 2024 – Meeting with EmPoWER Somerset to discuss SHI progress, challenges, budget expenditures, and other grant-related topics or issues

January 7, 2024 – One or two school health and wellness meetings should have happened by this date

January 2024 – Plan one SEL Day event (virtual or in-person) at each participating WSCC School Health NJ Project school to celebrate and create support for the SEL program implementation, as measured by the school submissions of celebration activities.

February 25, 2024 – Post a question, lesson learned, document, achievement, or update to the regional coordinator for posting on the School Health NJ (SHNJ) website.

February 28, 2024 – School Health Index (SHI) Due

March 2024 – Team meetings to develop the School Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) and identify methods for communicating about and disseminating the SHIP to the administration, school staff, students, and families to solicit input and engage their support

March 18, 2024 – Submit the Team Leader’s log

April 2024 – Meeting with EmPoWER Somerset to discuss SHIP progress, challenges, budget expenditures, and other grant-related topics or issues

April 2024 – Hold one SEL Day event (virtual or in-person) at each participating WSCC School Health NJ Project school to celebrate and create support for the SEL program implementation, as measured by the school submissions of celebration activities.

April 1, 2024 – Three or four school health and wellness meetings should have happened by this date

May 2024 – Attend regional/statewide project meeting (date, time, and location TBD)

