

Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child model at Platt Tech

The Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child model is a model that looks at the needs of students from many dimensions. It focuses on the school and community to provide students with a greater chance for success. This model includes ten dimensions. The dimensions are health education, physical education and physical activity, health services, nutrition environment and services, counseling, psychological, and social services, physical environment, social and emotional climate, health promotion for staff, family engagement, and community involvement. I conducted my interview at Platt Technical High School in Milford, CT on March 14, 2018. The health educator that I interviewed was Kevin Kapushinski, he is a graduate from Central Connecticut State University. I asked Mr. Kapushinski three to four questions for each dimension of the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child model.

Strengths

- **Health Education** is a strength because all students are required to take health education classes. The requirement is for all 4 years at Platt tech. Health educators do provide meaningful content to students.
- **Health Services** is a strength at Platt Tech. Although about two days a week the school does not have a nurse present, the school has a health center. The health center is open and available to any student at Platt. Any student wanting services from the health center just needs to get a form signed by their parent allowing the student to receive a health service.
- **Counseling, Psychological, and Social Services** is a strength because there are many resources for students to use if they are struggling. The school has a school psychologist and social workers. Some teachers would also be willing to help.
- **Physical Environment** is a strength at Platt Tech. This is a strength because every day the school has 4 security guards in the school all day long. The school also has a state trooper in the school every day as well. With all 4 security guards and the state trooper the students at Platt Tech feel safe in the school. Platt Tech also has specific drills that are followed for lock downs and fire drills.
- **Social and Emotional Environment** is a strength because the school really does try to prevent bullying. Health educators present a unit about bullying. There are respect posters around the school, and teachers all talk about having respect for others.
- **Family Engagement** is a strength because there are many events that Platt Tech runs where families can be involved. For example, Platt Techs annual 5k road race, freshman orientation, meet the academic teacher's night, annual fall festival/car show.
- **Community Involvement** is a strength because teachers and sports teams promote community service opportunities.

Challenges

- **Physical Education and Physical Activity** is a challenge because physical education teachers do not always see their students very often in each cycle, so they are forced to cram important information all at once. Most teachers in the school do not promote physical activity and exercise.
- **Nutrition Environment and Services** is a challenge because the food that is offered to the students is not the best. The culinary shop should think of inexpensive, nutritional lunches to serve to the students. The breakfast options need to be expanded and healthier. I also think there needs to be more teacher involvement with nutrition.
- **Health Promotion for Staff** is a challenge because the staff does not have access to a weight or cardio room. The weight room is small and for the football team. The wellness of the staff varies from day to day. There should be a place in the school for the staff members to exercise because exercise can make people feel better.

Recommendations

My recommendation for physical education is that all the students should be allowed more class time for physical education. Since the students are not always in academic classrooms, half the year is spent learning a trade, they are only scheduled to go to a physical education class two times a week, which is not enough. From the CDC website I looked at the, "High School Youth Risk Survey" from 2015. I found that 48.4% of the students did not attend a physical education class on 1 or more days when in school. This means that almost half of the students surveyed did not go to more than 1 physical education class in one week. Physical education is important for students, and there needs to be changes made to the amount of time students are in physical education class.

My recommendation for nutrition, environment, and services is that the quality of food needs to be healthier. The food served to the students at Platt Tech is not the best. The culinary shop should think of inexpensive healthier options to serve all the students. The breakfast options at Platt Tech are filled with sugar and are not healthy options at all. Looking at a study about healthy and free breakfast meals provided to students in schools the results showed a positive increase in student performance. The results also showed an increase in student attendance. This is most likely due to the student knowing that they will be receiving a meal in the morning. If Platt Tech offered healthier breakfast options for students in the morning then I think the student's performance might improve.

Ni Mhurchu, C., Turley, M., Gorton, D., Jiang, Y., Michie, J., Maddison, R., & Hattie, J. (2010). Effects of a free school breakfast programme on school attendance, achievement, psychosocial function, and nutrition: a stepped wedge cluster randomized trial. *BMC Public Health, 10*, 738.

My recommendation for health promotion for staff is to give the staff members the opportunity to use the weight room before school. I would recommend this because the football team uses the weight room after school. Another thing I would recommend is to put relaxation objects in the staff lounge. Objects can include stress ball, a few dumb bells to exercise, and a spot to play soft music. When the teachers are on their break they can use a relaxation object to calm down if they are having a rough day.