

Media Contact:
Ross Wilson Jr.
Current Events
ross@current-events.com
808-326-7820

Media Release

Hawai'i Island Community Health Center Opens School Based Health Centers At Honaunau Elementary, Kealakehe Elementary and Intermediate Schools

Hawai'i Island, (January 23, 2023)— Families with school aged children in West Hawai'i have an exciting new resource to look forward as Hawai'i Island Community Health Center (HICHC) has launched School Based Health Centers (SBHCs) providing care on site in local schools. This excellent resource for parents and keiki alike are now open at Honaunau Elementary, and Kealakehe Elementary and Intermediate Schools. Through these School Based Health Centers HICHC will present much needed services including well child exams, acute care visits, behavioral health care and dental services directly in these regional schools on Hawai'i Island and giving young people equal access to quality health care.

“Our School Based Health Centers should not replace routine care. Our goal is to provide care that is in addition to the care received at a child’s primary doctor’s office. This is also a chance for children who don’t otherwise have access to health care to receive it easily in a school setting,” said Hawai'i Island Community Health Center CEO Richard Taaffe. “Parents are so busy these days. It’s our hope that the convenience of a health center at school will reduce students time away from school and parents time away from work.”

Hawai'i Island Community Health Center’s School Based Health Centers at Kealakehe and Honaunau provide primary care services including well child exams, vaccinations, sports physicals, acute care visits (sick visits, injuries etc.) and chronic

care visits (asthma, ADHD, allergy shots etc.). Behavior health care and dental services are also be available.

How the HICHC School Based Health Center Works

Any student with a signed consent form may be seen in the School Based Health Center at the school that they attend. In the next phase of operation, staff of the school including teachers, counselors, bus drivers, janitorial and kitchen staff will also be eligible to receive primary health care services. Signing up for school based health care at Kealakehe and Honaunau is optional and not mandatory.

Each School Based Health Center is staffed with a medical team including a primary care provider. In addition to primary care, campus health centers have access to behavioral health psychologists, and pediatric dental teams. Operating hours vary by each school location and the needs of the students there.

Hawai'i Island Community Health Center is exploring options with the Department of Education in hopes of expanding School Based Health Centers to other Hawai'i Island school locations in 2023 and beyond.

Visit www.HICommunityHealthCenter.org for more information or call 808-333-3600 for East side and 808-326-5629 for West side info.

About Hawai'i Island Community Health Center

Hawai'i Island Community Health Center's mission is to provide quality, comprehensive, and integrated health care services accessible to all, regardless of their ability to pay.

The Hawai'i Island Community Health Center commenced operations in July 2022 with the merger of East Hawai'i's Bay Clinic and West Hawai'i Community Health Center. The newly formed organization is the largest non-profit community health center in the State of Hawai'i. Hawai'i Island Community Health Center employs approximately 400 health care professionals and support staff, serves 40,000 residents island-wide and has an operating budget of \$40+ million.