



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Positive Reception for Oral Health Education Paradigm

New school superintendent responds optimistically to state legislation and grassroots initiatives.

Baltimore, Maryland (November 4, 2012). In a meeting last month with The Children's Oral Health Institute, Maryland's new school superintendent, Dr. Lillian Lowery, recognized the invaluable importance of the Oral Health Education legislation signed by Governor Martin O'Malley in May. Lowery expressed optimism for grassroots initiatives being advanced by The Children's Oral Health Institute, including *Lessons In A Lunch Box*, *Code Red: The Oral Health Crisis in Your Classroom* and *15 Tips to Help Prevent the Spread of Flu Germs*. This positive reception for these oral health education paradigms may impact efforts to help struggling learners succeed. Incorporating Oral Health Education into the public school curricula could mean the difference in achieving and advancing to the next grade for many children in Title One Schools.

The Children's Oral Health Institute leaders quoted data from the 2000 Surgeon General Report, including the fact that 51 million school hours are missed each year secondary to painful tooth decay. The organization provided some of their own evidenced based research that has been collected since 2008 during the October 11th meeting. Data recorded from their surveys corroborate the acknowledgment by educators to the importance of incorporating oral health education in the curriculum. The information further confirms the important role teachers can play. Dr. Winifred Booker and Dr. Leslie Grant, both, directors at The Children's Oral Health Institute, agree that empowering teachers with resources to help them integrate oral health into routine lesson plans seems key.

Teaching dental disease prevention in the classroom may reduce the diminishing sense of self efficacy children experience when untreated tooth decay consumes their daily lives. Maryland's Superintendent understands that student performance is connected to comprehensive wellness and is committed to enhancing their learning experiences throughout every corner of the state. The Children's Oral Health Institute and organized dentistry are excited about the intersection of ideas discussed during the meeting. Maryland's Oral Health Education law could set a best practice's benchmark for the nation under the visionary leadership of Dr. Lowery.

For more information about this press release, The Children's Oral Health Institute and to obtain oral health curriculum resources visit www.mycohi.org or call 866-508-7400.

Prevention that Empowers Globally!

P.O. Box 1901 Baltimore, MD 21203 • 866-508-7400