



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## All Smiles: Ritchie Announces Hannibal Central School District to Join with UB to Offer Dental Care to Students

PATTY RITCHIE August 15, 2016



The Hannibal Central School District community is all smiles thanks to an oral health care initiative that will be implemented in the fall.

In collaboration with the University at Buffalo, and with the efforts of State Senator Patty Ritchie, the district will launch the “S-miles to Go” program beginning in October. The program was unanimously approved by the Hannibal Board of Education at its August 10th meeting and is designed to provide school-age Hannibal children with oral health care, all

from the convenience of a mobile dental unit.

According to HCSD Superintendent Christopher Staats, “S-miles to Go” offers an array of services to students in rural areas where access to oral health care may be limited. Such services include dental screenings, cleanings, sealants, X-rays, fillings and a variety of other procedures.

“This is truly a wonderful program for our students, and I’m thrilled to engage in this partnership with the UB School of Dentistry,” Staats said. “I would like to thank Senator Ritchie for her assistance connecting the University of Buffalo to the Hannibal Central School District. Our students will certainly benefit from this collaborative effort.”

Senator Ritchie co-chairs the Legislative Commission on Rural Resources and in this role works to address challenges that are unique to rural parts of the state. Her involvement in bringing this program to Hannibal was part of her efforts to meet health care challenges that affect rural communities.

After meeting with HCSD representatives, Senator Ritchie reached out to the University at Buffalo’s dental coordinator, Paula Fischer, who leads the logistics of the S-miles to Go program. Fischer and HCSD officials then developed a plan of action to bring the unique program to Hannibal.

“It goes without saying that providing quality health care—including dental care—is critically important to the well-being and growth of children, however, in rural regions of our state accessing care can be a challenge” said Senator Ritchie.

“S-miles To Go accomplishes two things—it will help remove barriers and ensure local children receive the dental care they need, as well as introduce dental students to potential future opportunities in rural health care. I was proud to play a role in bringing this fantastic

program to the Hannibal Central School District and look forward to seeing how it enhances the lives of students.”

The state-of-the-art mobile dental unit is furnished with three dental chairs, high-tech diagnostic equipment, a patient waiting area and a panoramic X-ray facility. When the mobile office rolls in for each visit, it will be staffed by three UB pediatric and general dentists, a dental hygienist and a dental assistant.