

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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**New Student Care Center Unveiled at Booker T. Washington High School,
The First Collective Impact Initiative Of Its Kind In Hampton Roads**
A Collaborative Effort Among Funders and Partners

Norfolk, VA – Students at Booker T. Washington High School are the first beneficiaries of a community-driven partnership bringing comprehensive medical services to a Student Care Center housed at the school. The Student Care Center, funded by Optima Health with medical services provided by Eastern Virginia Medical School, is the most recent accomplishment of the collective impact initiative entitled United for Children. Partners include United Way of South Hampton Roads, Norfolk Public Schools, Norfolk Department of Health and City of Norfolk.

United for Children, a public-private partnership aimed at breaking the cycle of poverty by driving a holistic approach to student success, saw an opportunity to bring medical services to Booker T. Washington High School. Optima Health recognized the need and trusted the partnership, providing a three-year grant for the center. The center is the first of its kind in Hampton Roads and the second in the state of Virginia. It is designed to offer the comprehensive services of a family physician's office in a clinical space inside the school. Students now have access to medical services that are beyond the scope of what school nurses can provide. Examples include sports physicals and general health exams; referrals to specialists or other community services; and continuity of care for on-going medical needs. Additional health services will eventually be provided with other community partners. Booker T. Washington High School students were asked to assist in the development of the center and are giving input on the most critical medical issues they face.

“This innovative and cutting-edge partnership is a powerful example of our community coming together for the benefit of children,” said Dr. Michael E Thornton, Acting Superintendent of Schools. “Such alliances between schools and community partners are essential. Children whose needs are addressed, including access to quality medical care, can then focus on meeting and exceeding academic standards in school, graduating on time and preparing themselves for college or careers.”

The Student Care Center Dedication and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony will take place on Wednesday, October 21st, 2015 from 9:00 – 10:00am in the school cafeteria at Booker T. Washington HS, located at 1111 Park Avenue in Norfolk. Guided tours to follow. Speakers include Lt. Governor Ralph Northam.

To schedule interviews with any of the Student Care Center's funders or partners or for more information please contact:

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