

# Gov. Whitmer meets with MDHHS staff in recognition of oral health assessment legislation



Gov. Gretchen Whitmer met with MDHHS staff members last week in recognition of new legislation that helps increase access to dental care for young Michigan children.

The legislation, signed into law in December, requires dental oral assessments for children who are registering for the first time in kindergarten or the first grade in a Michigan school. The program will serve 112,000 kindergarteners through

MDHHS and Delta Dental.

Prior to enactment, the program was optional, with parents needing to “opt in” for children to receive services. By requiring parents/caregivers to have their children receive a dental assessment, it provides families with information on the child’s oral health status and resources to refer to if additional care is needed. It also moves the state closer to establishing a dental home for children in Michigan. The program aims to identify needs early and can provide a foundation for improved oral and overall health, setting children up for success.

“These bills will prioritize the health and safety of our children by testing dental health at a young age,” Gov. Whitmer said in December. “Since I took office, we have expanded access and lowered the cost of health care. Let’s keep working together to make sure every child is safe, healthy and can build a bright future in Michigan.”

*Pictured above with Gov. Whitmer holding the signed legislation are Chardae Burton, director of Legislative Affairs (at left), and Chris Farrell, director of the Oral Health Program (at right).*