

Medical advantage comes to Hale High

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Is there a doctor in the house? Not yet, but new alternative gives students chance to explore options.

Evan Taylor said a new program at Hale High School will help him know before he graduates what part of the medical field he will enter. "I'm thinking about becoming an anesthesiologist," said Taylor, a sophomore. "This program will let me see what an anesthesiologist does. I may decide I want to do something different, but it will definitely be in medicine."

A mini medical program is under way at Hale, 6960 E. 21st St., with 70 students enrolled. The program is in conjunction with the school's newest Partner in Education, Oklahoma State University Center for Health Sciences, 1111 W. 17th St. "OSU is interested in supporting Hale students who have a desire to go into the medical field by allowing them to come into our world and see what we do on a daily basis," said Dr. Jenny Alexopoulos, associate dean of graduate medical education at the OSU Center for Health Sciences. She said the program is based on one run by Stanford University in California.

Sophomores, juniors and seniors enter the program by taking Trish Pruitt's anatomy class. "Teachers and doctors have a lot in common in that we both touch and change lives. This program will help students achieve things they didn't think were possible," Pruitt said.

Alexopoulos said through the Stanford program, many students from disadvantaged backgrounds have entered medicine.

Hale Principal Chris Johnson said a key component is hands-on experience for the students.

Leigh Goodson, vice president for enrollment management and external affairs dean of students at OSU Center for Health Sciences, said the program includes more than bookwork. "For example, when Hale students come to the center, they'll get to look at human cadaver parts, such as organs," she said.

OSU has agreed to provide mentors; access to equipment and supplies to assist teachers with labs; shadowing; field trips to OSU facilities; and assistance in developing an athletic and personal training program as a component of Hale's dietetics and nutrition curriculum, Pruitt said.

OSU will conduct monthly sessions, such as Forensic Science Day-CSI in March, when an instructor will conduct a "CSI" type presentation.

Tulsa Public Schools Science Curriculum Specialist Adrienne Elder said all TPS students have the opportunity to transfer to Hale for the program.

"Hale is on the road to giving students the knowledge and skills to be successes in the global marketplace where emphasis is on science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Health fields include all these disciplines," Elder said.