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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
PRESS RELEASE**

Alamogordo Public Schools Partners with Gerald Champion Regional Medical Center Urgent Care to Launch Innovative Telehealth Program

Tuesday, June 13, 2023 - Alamogordo, NM – Alamogordo Public School District

Alamogordo Public Schools (APS) is thrilled to announce its exciting partnership with Gerald Champion Regional Medical Center (GCRMC) Champion Urgent Care to introduce a groundbreaking Telehealth program in all schools within the district. Months of planning with teams from Champion Urgent Care & APS Health Services have gone on to prepare for the launch of the telehealth initiative for Fall 2023. This innovative initiative, made possible, largely in part, from the federal "New Mexico Public Workforce Grant," aims to provide accessible and convenient healthcare services to students, fostering their well-being and academic success.

APS Executive Director of Health Services, Lisa Patch shared, "Great things can happen when we work together. We can improve the lives of the families and their children in our community. Our telehealth initiative is a win for everyone. With a parent-approved scheduled telehealth visit in the school nurse's office, with a registered nurse, the parent/guardian won't have to miss as much work, and if the student is able and the diagnosis is not communicable, the child will not miss school. The student wins. The parent wins. The workplace wins."

Providers and school nurses had the opportunity to have one-on-one training with AMD Global Telemedicine and the telehealth units prior to a "Meet & Greet" held on Wednesday, June 7th at The Hub. Every APS school will have access to telehealth. An appointment will NEVER be made without parental consent. The parent/guardian must be present during the time of the visit, either by phone or in the school nurse's office. Parent/Guardian will be charged just like a regular visit to the Champion Urgent Care.

The Telehealth program will leverage cutting-edge technology and the expertise of Champion Urgent Care to deliver high-quality medical care directly to students within the school setting. School Board President Judy Rabon said, "The telehealth partnership between the parents of APS students, Champion Urgent Care and the Health Team of Alamogordo Public Schools provides a win for all! Keeping kids healthy, in school and learning is always a top priority." By utilizing secure and confidential video consultations, medical professionals will be able to assess, diagnose, and treat a wide range of non-emergency health concerns, enabling students to receive timely care without leaving the school premises. NM ranks 50th in the nation in child well-being for 2022. Thanks to our community collaboration, we are leading the way in the state by providing healthcare to our students at school through innovative technology. Access to this modern technology was also made possible in part by a \$50,000 grant from Western Sky Community Care to purchase 4 telehealth units. APS is extremely grateful for their support of this incredible program.

"GCRMC is privileged to be able to be a part of the APS Telehealth initiative. Our Urgent Care team led by Danielle Bynum are truly excited about this service opportunity, and working with Lisa Patch, APS Director of Health Services, has been amazing," said Jim Heckert, Gerald Champion Regional Medical Center CEO.

With this transformative partnership, APS is taking a proactive approach to ensure the overall health and welfare of its students. By implementing the telehealth program, APS is addressing barriers that often hinder students' access to healthcare, including transportation challenges, scheduling conflicts, and limited availability of medical professionals in rural areas. This collaboration will revolutionize the way students receive medical care and promote a healthier school environment.

"We are delighted to have forged a strong partnership with Gerald Champion Regional Medical Center's Champion Urgent Care, as it has enabled us to take a giant leap forward in providing comprehensive healthcare services to our students," said Acting Superintendent Pam Renteria. "The implementation of our new school site telehealth program is a testament to the power of collaboration and innovation, ensuring that our students receive prompt and high-quality medical care right on the school premises."

APS, GCRMC, and Western Sky Community Care have jointly invested in the necessary infrastructure and equipment to launch the Telehealth program district-wide. The implementation of the telehealth program represents a significant milestone for APS and Champion Urgent Care, showcasing their commitment to ensuring the health and well-being of Alamogordo's student population. The program will not only provide convenience and accessibility but also contribute to reduced absenteeism and improved overall academic performance.

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