



September 25, 2017

Dear New York State Congressional Delegation:

**Please oppose the Graham-Cassidy bill.** The cuts to Medicaid contained in this legislation jeopardizes health and health care of New York's most vulnerable children.

New York's Medicaid program provides important health coverage for more than two million children – including 84% of children living in poverty and 100% of children in foster care. Schools are a critical part of where children receive services, particularly our students with disabilities and our students from low-income families. The need is so great that New York's schools relied on over \$273 million in Medicaid funding to provide health services in 2015.

The primary responsibility of schools is to provide students with a high-quality education, yet we know that children cannot learn to their fullest potential with unmet health needs. With Medicaid funding, school districts provide critical health and disability services to ensure that all children are ready to learn and able to thrive. These services are delivered effectively and efficiently since school is where children spend their days. Of course, Medicaid also helps to ensure that our students can access necessary care outside of school, including immunizations; physicals; as well as primary, mental, dental and other necessary care.

School districts use Medicaid funds in a variety of ways to help support learning and development, for example:

- Provide services (e.g. developmental, hearing and vision screenings, behavioral health care and specialized therapy) to students and cover the cost of health professionals (e.g. speech-language pathologists, school nurses, school psychologists, social workers).
- Help pay for school-based health centers.
- Cover costs of services for students with disabilities and special education needs.

The Medicaid cuts contained in Graham-Cassidy will harm the health of children in many ways – from families losing health insurance to reducing access to health providers. The loss of critical health services provided in schools would be one more blow to the health, well-being, and future of New York's children.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kate Breslin".

Kate Breslin  
President and CEO  
Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Timothy G. Kremer".

Timothy G. Kremer  
Executive Director  
New York State School Boards Association

# Medicaid in Schools

## Overall Data

Nationally, Medicaid covers nearly **37 million children**.<sup>1</sup>

Medicaid has supported the provision of certain medical services in schools for nearly 30 years.<sup>2</sup>

Schools receive approximately **\$4 billion** a year in Medicaid funding which they use to provide a range of services including: psychiatric, mobility and vision, speech-language pathology, and other needed services.<sup>3</sup>



## New York Data

- Medicaid covered **1,805,600** New Yorkers 0-18 years old in FY 2015.<sup>4</sup>
- The total Medicaid expenditures for school based services was **\$273,563,018** in FY 2015.<sup>5</sup>
- There are **252** approved & operating school-based health centers.<sup>5</sup>
- **181,569** students are enrolled in a school-based health center.<sup>7</sup>
- **450,048** school age children with disabilities received some form of special education programs and/or services.<sup>8</sup>

## How the Money is Used



Provides free care by qualified clinician to students in need<sup>9</sup>



Helps pay for the cost of school-based health centers<sup>10</sup>



Creates resources for families about Medicaid programs<sup>11</sup>



Covers cost of services students w/ disabilities & special education needs<sup>12</sup>

This can be carried out through programs like the Preschool/School Supportive Health Services Program (SSHSP) which provides Medicaid funds to cover the cost of services for disabled students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP).<sup>13</sup> The SSHSP covers qualified students aged 3-21.<sup>14</sup>

## Medicaid Benefits Students in Many Ways<sup>15</sup>



Do better in school



Miss fewer school days due to illness or injury



More likely to finish high school, attend college, and graduate from college



Have fewer emergency room visits and hospitalizations as adults



Earn more as adults