

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Cosponsor the Healthy Schools Act of 2009

Bring health care to our schools and ensure access to quality care for all children

What if we brought back the school nurse? Why not a school doctor or dentist?

This Congress made a historic commitment to providing health coverage for children when we expanded the SCHIP program earlier this year. But there are still many barriers that keep children from getting the care and preventive health services they need. **By supporting school based health centers, we can ensure that all children have regular access to high quality health care.**

It is well established that regular access to primary care results in better health outcomes and lower total costs. As we reform our health care system, we must find ways to deliver this care more efficiently. One of the ways we can do this is by bringing health care to the patient. Children spend five days a week in school and there is no better place to deliver regular primary and preventive care.


School based health centers are not a new concept. They exist in many schools around the country. However, services provided at school based health centers are not currently eligible for reimbursement under Medicaid. **These same services are eligible for reimbursement if provided at other sites such as physicians' offices and hospitals.** The Healthy Schools Act of 2009 will correct this discrepancy and bring health care to more children by **authorizing Medicaid funds for care provided at school based health centers.** By doing so, we can maximize the chances they will receive regular check-ups and catch health problems sooner.


Apart from their direct impact on improving health, SBHCs have been shown to:

- decrease student absences;
- reduce academic failure rates;
- reduce health inequities;
- and mitigate important health-related risks such as school violence, injury, asthma, obesity, and tobacco use.

School based health centers represent a practical but innovative approach to health care delivery. It is a common sense solution that will make our health care system more efficient and provide parents with more choices when they make health-related decisions for their children.

To learn more about the Healthy Schools Act of 2009 or to sign up as an original cosponsor, please contact Delicia Reynolds (Sarbanes) at Delicia.Reynolds@mail.house.gov; Emily Khoury (Towns) at Emily.Khoury@mail.house.gov; or Katie Campbell (Dingell) at Katie.Campbell@mail.house.gov.


John Sarbanes
Member of Congress

Sincerely,

Edolphus "Ed" Towns
Member of Congress


John Dingell
Member of Congress