



Medicaid in Schools

Overview: Funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) will expire on September 30th. CHIP has benefitted from strong bipartisan support since its creation in 1997. By providing medical assistance to children who are not eligible for Medicaid, CHIP provides essential funding to support states to cover uninsured children. Any delay or a failure to immediately extend funding for CHIP will jeopardize coverage for children who are eligible for school-based health-related services leading to immediate and lasting harmful effects for America's most vulnerable citizens. A lapse in coverage for children places more barriers on their ability to come to school ready to learn. During a time of great uncertainty in the healthcare system, children need the consistent, reliable health coverage CHIP provides today.

More than half of the nearly nine million children served by CHIP are eligible to receive services in school through their state Medicaid programs. Fifteen states exclusively use CHIP funds to extend their Medicaid programs, meaning all children who qualify for CHIP receive identical services and benefits as their traditional Medicaid-counterparts. In most states a substantial portion of children served by CHIP receive Medicaid services and benefits protections. If Congress does not act quickly to extend funding for these children's healthcare then school districts will lose funding for the critical health services these children receive that ensure they are healthy enough to learn. School districts depend on CHIP to finance many of these services and have already committed to the staff and contractors they require to provide mandated services for their upcoming 2017-2018 school year.

Without a CHIP extension, every child educated in school districts across the country will feel the pain. No school district's financial obligations and mandate to address a child's health needs goes away simply because CHIP funds disappear. Children with unmet health needs miss more days of school and can fall behind. The failure to continue funding CHIP would merely shift the financial burden of providing services to the schools and the state and local taxpayers who fund them.

AESA TALKING POINTS – MEDICAID IN SCHOOLS

AESA Talking Points:

- Children cannot learn to their fullest potential with unmet health needs. School-based Medicaid programs serve as a lifeline to kids who can't access critical healthcare and health services outside of their school.
- School-based Medicaid programs are an efficient and impactful delivery system for healthcare because schools are where children are. Increasing access to healthcare services through Medicaid improves healthcare AND educational outcomes.
- The loss of CHIP funds would also hinder many children's ability to access basic health screenings for vision, hearing, and mental health challenges and access to early identification and treatment. Left unaddressed, these challenges or delays undermine children's ability to learn and make any problems more difficult and expensive to treat later.
- The loss of CHIP funding would also jeopardize schools' ability to conduct routine screenings on-site and help to enroll eligible students in Medicaid or other public coverage programs or connect them with needed community-based services.
- Congress must act expediently to extend CHIP, so states and districts have the budget certainty necessary to continue to run CHIP programs and seek necessary reimbursements.
- Schools are often the hub of the community, and failing to extend funding for CHIP could lead to meaningful reductions to comprehensive health and mental and behavioral health care for children.
- Every child in the district will be harmed by the shift of district dollars to cover health services. . It's not just the poor and/or disabled students who benefit from Medicaid and CHIP.