



PSBHA and PASNAP Statement on FY23-24 Budget

For immediate release -- The Pennsylvania School-Based Health Alliance (PSBHA) and the Pennsylvania Association of School Nurses and Practitioners (PASNAP) were disappointed that the State House and Senate recessed for summer without including critical health services for students in the FY23-24 budget. For all of the talk about investing in public education and our students, we could not help but notice a glaring omission--funding for school-based health services.

School nurses and school-based health centers working together share a critical mission: protecting and advancing the health and well-being of our school-age children. One does not replace the need for the other. Each has a distinct and complementary function.

There are so many benefits when school nurses and school-based health centers work together, including:

- Students' health, overall well-being and academic success improve.
- Students acquire the health knowledge and skills they need to become independent in providing self-care.
- School absence rates decrease and graduation rates increase.
- Student access to equitable health care increases, including health promotion, disease prevention, and illness management.
- Continuity of care occurs when health professionals coordinate with each other about student health needs. This frees educators to focus on teaching and allows parents/caregivers to remain at work.

Based on the statistics gathered through the stated mandated reporting that Pennsylvania's school nurses provide to the Pennsylvania Department of Health, students' needs have only increased since the pandemic. For example:

- In the 2019-2020 school year, Pennsylvania's school nurses administered 855,727 doses of medications, evaluated 6,623,881 students for acute/chronic illness and treated 1,910,772 student injuries.
- In the 2021-2022 school year, these numbers increased to 895,340 doses of medication, 7,687,462 visits for acute/chronic illness and 2,057,743 injuries.

This does not even fully represent the increase in need, because the average daily membership (ADM) of PA schools *decreased* from 1,826,774 to 1,769,525. This reveals that although the numbers of students have decreased, students need more so that they can be safe, healthy and ready to learn.

While the benefits are abundant, the Commonwealth is not appropriately funding these crucial resources. Consider the following:

- Since 1991, the state reimbursement has been \$9.70 ADM for school health services. In the past 32 years, this rate has never increased!
- SBHCs do not receive any state funding.

We call upon Governor Shapiro and the Pennsylvania Legislature to fully fund our school-based health services in this year's budget and years to come. There is no better allocation and return on investment than supporting

school nurses and school-based health centers who coordinate care to provide the best student-centered care possible and ensuring that the Commonwealth's students are healthy, safe and ready to learn.

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[Pennsylvania School-Based Health Alliance](#)

Founded in 2020, the Pennsylvania School-Based Health Alliance (PSBHA) supports Pennsylvania's school-based health centers (SBHCs) to design new, scalable systems of care that address the fundamental medical and academic challenges that come from a lack of access to high quality medical care and wellness education. SBHCs are critical access points that provide comprehensive care—including primary care, behavioral and oral health services, as well as prevention and early intervention services—to children and adolescents in their school, a location that is safe, convenient, and accessible. Currently, 32 SBHCS in Pennsylvania operate in rural, urban and suburban communities and serve primarily low-income and medically underserved children and adolescents.

[The Pennsylvania Association of School Nurses and Practitioners](#)

Founded in 1985, the mission of the Pennsylvania Association of School Nurses and Practitioners (PASNAP) is to provide the structure and leadership necessary to promote unity among all certified school nurses and practitioners, to advance the professional practice of school health through continuing education, improving political awareness, and promotion of school nursing to optimize student health and learning. Our vision is that through the core values of ethics, excellence, diversity and inclusion, innovation, student well-being, integrity, leadership and scholarship, PASNAP is a leader in advocacy for school health, ensuring that students are healthy, safe and ready to learn.

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