



## HEALTH + EDUCATION = LEARNING

On January 15 Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Sylvia Burwell and Acting Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education John King issued a [joint guidance letter](#) and a [toolkit](#) of promising practices to spur action in school districts and health care systems across the country. The Secretaries urged state and local health and education entities to collaborate around five action items:

1. Helping eligible students and family members enroll in health insurance;
2. Providing and expanding Medicaid reimbursable health services in schools, including immunizations, health screenings and others;
3. Providing or expanding services that support at-risk students, including through Medicaid-funded case management;
4. Promoting healthy school practices through nutrition, physical activity, and health education; and
5. Building local partnerships and participating in hospital community needs assessments.

The decade-long collaboration between the Children's Defense Fund — and AASA (The School Superintendents Association) on a school-based child health outreach and enrollment model is now in the spotlight as a best practice to increase enrollment in health coverage for students and their families. Learn more about CDF's work to expand child health coverage in Marian Wright Edelman's Child Watch® Column, [Keeping Children in School, Healthy and Learning](#).

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### **A Winning Partnership for Children's Health**

CDF and AASA have partnered with school districts first in Texas, then California, Georgia, Louisiana, and Mississippi serving elementary through high schools and hundreds of thousands of Black, Latino, Asian and White students. As a result, many uninsured children have gotten health coverage. "In Texas we have seen the tremendous difference for child outcomes when there is a strong connection and support for children and families for access to health coverage through school districts. Superintendents, teachers and parents see the vital difference health care makes to keeping children in school and learning," said Patrick Bresette, Executive Director of Children's Defense Fund-Texas who participated in the joint Education and Health and Human Services announcement. Read the [statement from CDF](#) on these new guidelines.

### **Improving Academic Success for California's Children**

A California law passed last fall requires schools to inform parents about health coverage and contributes added support for our school-based outreach and enrollment activities. The Mountain View School District in El Monte, like all CDF and AASA partner school districts, has added a question about children's health coverage to the enrollment forms and taken additional steps. If families indicate their child is uninsured, the district follows up. Now more than 1,200 uninsured students in the district have been referred to insurance enrollment assistance. Students who have health insurance and dental insurance miss fewer days of school and are more likely to finish high school, graduate from college and earn more money than those who are uninsured, according to research cited in the Education and Health and Human Services guidance letter, including this [2014 paper](#) from the National Bureau of Economic Research that tracked how children enrolled in Medicaid fared over time.