

April 21, 2021

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**Significant Wins for School-Based Health Centers in New York State**

**ALBANY, New York, April 21, 2021:** School-Based Health Centers (SBHCs) are in-school clinics that offer students comprehensive and convenient care in partnership with schools and hospitals or community health centers. These services are especially vital for low-income families who can rely on school-based services for their children. At the onset of the COVID-19 crisis, New York State's School-Based Health Centers had to quickly transition to telehealth services and School-Based Dental Clinics were closed indefinitely. With recent legislative wins, the [New York School-Based Health Alliance](#) (NYSBHA) is thrilled to announce the reopening of dental programs and numerous successes in the 2021-2022 NYS budget.

School-based dental clinics have historically provided free dental care for families in underserved communities who would otherwise struggle to access basic preventive dental care. Thousands of Medicaid-enrolled children in New York, who are at a sensitive time in their dental development, had gone a year or longer since their last dental appointment, which could have a lasting impact on their health and academic performance. "Students are already learning in a strained environment, and ongoing dental issues could be making it worse for low-income students to keep up with their peers," Sarah Murphy, executive director of NYSBHA, stated in a press release by NYU Langone. After months of advocating on behalf of SBHC dental care, the New York State Department of Health released reopening guidance for School-Based Dental Guidance in mid-March.

Following this grassroots advocacy win, School-Based Health Centers in New York were granted a 2 year extension for carve-in to Medicaid Managed Care, a long-fought issue with regard to SBHC sustainability, as part of the State budget process. April also brought significant fiscal successes as SBHCs have received full funding in the Executive proposed budget as well as \$3.8M in legislative added funds in the final NYS 2021-2022 State Budget. See an overview of our recent victories below:

- Dental programs reopening after nearly a year of state-mandated closure
- SBHCs shall not be provided to medical assistance recipients through managed care programs until at least **April 1, 2023, a two-year extension**
- Success in the 2021-2022 NYS budget including \$17M in Executive proposed funds and \$3,824,000 in legislative added funds for SBHCs
- \$84,000 grant provided to NYSBHA by the NYS Assembly to support our programming

NYSBHA wants to extend our gratitude to our members, leaders, and peer organizations for their strong advocacy efforts. Special thanks to Assemblyman Gottfried, Senator Rivera and the legislature for valuing SBHCs; to the Greater NY Hospital Association (GNYHA) and 1199SEIU for their enduring support of our center sponsors; and to the Community Health Care Association of NYS (CHCANYS), the New York Dental Association and our dental program members for their support for SBHC dental reopening.

For more information, contact:

Sarah Murphy

(518)-694-3423, [nysbha@gmail.com](mailto:nysbha@gmail.com)