



Alaska Council of School Administrators

Leadership, Unity and Advocacy for Public Education

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Dear Honorable Members of the Alaska State Legislature,

The Alaska Council of School Administrators is writing in support of HB 343 and its companion bill SB 240, both titled *School District Medical Assistance* sponsored by Governor Dunleavy.

HB 343/SB 240 would provide much needed coverage for school-based Medicaid Services for school districts by removing the requirement that school-based services are only Medicaid reimbursable if the service is covered under a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Some of those Medicaid Services include speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, audiology, selective behavioral health services, and selective nursing services. Thus, this bill would expand accessibility to necessary medical services by removing barriers for Medicaid eligible students to receive school-based services.

This bill would be beneficial to the children of Alaska for a plethora of reasons. For instance, many children may appreciate the option to receive medical services in a setting that they are already familiar with. Additionally, this bill would increase accessibility to healthcare for economically disadvantaged families, families with language-based barriers, and/or immigrant families who are unfamiliar with navigating the healthcare system in the United States, and may therefore experience difficulties or delays in obtaining documentation for a child's disability. Furthermore, the Hopeful Futures Campaign's report titled [*America's School Mental Health Report Card*](#) issued state specific report cards that examine state policies that support school mental health; the report found that Alaska has achieved some progress in the area of sustainable funding for school mental health services, but makes a policy recommendation for Alaska to expand Medicaid billing to include school-based mental health services for all Medicaid eligible students, which HB 343/SB 240 would accomplish.

HB 343/SB 240 supports school districts in attending to the physical and emotional wellbeing of their students. By removing barriers to accessing school-based Medicaid services, this bill would ensure the presence of healthy students whose needs are attended to, and who are ready to learn.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Lisa S. Parady'.

Dr. Lisa S. Parady
Executive Director