School-Based Health Centers:
Medicaid Savings and Reduced ER & Hospital Utilization

Research and evaluations have demonstrated that school-based health centers represent cost-effective investments of public resources.

- A study by Johns Hopkins University found that school-based health centers reduced inappropriate emergency room use, increased use of primary care, and resulted in fewer hospitalizations among regular users. (7)

- A study of school-based health center costs by Emory University School of Public Health attributed a reduction in Medicaid expenditures related to inpatient, drug and emergency department use to use of school-based health centers. (1)

- The total annual cost of hospitalizations decreased by 85 percent (nearly $1,000 per child) for children in Cincinnati schools with SBHCs. (3)

- Emergency room visits for asthma were more than halved for students in New York City schools with SBHCs compared to those in schools with no SBHC. (8)

- Adolescents with Medicaid in Denver were 4 times less likely to access urgent and emergent care if they used a SBHC. (5)

- In South Carolina, prevention-oriented health care provided in SBHCs can decrease utilization of emergency departments. (6)

- New York’s SBHCs saved approximately $3 million in hospitalization inpatient costs for children with asthma in 2004. (2)

- Adolescents with commercial managed care insurance and SBHC access in Denver had an after-hours care visit rate of 38-55% less than those without SBHC access. (5)

Sources
2. Analysis by the Empire Health Group for the NY Coalition of School Based Primary Care, 2005.

SBHC = school-based health center

The National Assembly on School-Based Health Care (NASBHC) is an advocacy organization that is the voice for those who work in, are served by, and support an important model of health care that delivers services where children and adolescents learn and grow: their schools.