

August 15, 2025

Dear School Community Partners,

We are writing to express our shared concern about the unprecedented and ongoing decline in children's enrollment in Pennsylvania's Medicaid program (also known as HealthChoices). As organizations committed to the health and well-being of students across our region, we are alarmed by the number of eligible children who are losing critical health coverage.

Recent changes in Medicaid redetermination processes have caused a steep drop in coverage, leaving many of our most vulnerable students without access to behavioral health care, medication management, and school-based Medical Assistance services. The consequences are already being felt in our schools—missed therapy sessions, gaps in crisis response, and increased pressure on educators and support staff.

Magellan Behavioral Health of Pennsylvania, Inc. (Magellan), the Colonial Intermediate Unit 20, and Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit 21 are jointly urging school districts to assist in a renewed outreach and education effort to families.

This includes:

- Encouraging families to check their Medicaid status and renew coverage through COMPASS, Pennsylvania's online benefits portal, at www.compass.state.pa.us.
- Sharing information about the PH-95 "loophole," which allows children with disabilities to qualify for Medicaid regardless of family income.
- Promoting school-based Medical Assistance programs that rely on active Medicaid enrollment to deliver essential services.

Families may not be aware that their children have lost coverage—or that they can reapply today. Many only learn when a service is denied or a need arises. Schools are uniquely positioned to support this effort by including messaging in newsletters, back-to-school packets, and during IEP/504 planning meetings.

For additional background and state-level resources, we encourage you to visit the PA Department of Human Services Medicaid Resources page at www.pa.gov/agencies/dhs/resources/medicaid.html.

We've enclosed the following materials for your review and potential distribution:

- A flyer about PH-95 eligibility.
- A COMPASS application and renewal overview.
- A customer service resource to help families navigate the process.
- A newsletter blurb that schools could include in communications to families.

Together, we can help close the coverage gap and ensure students have uninterrupted access to the supports they need to thrive in school and beyond.

We welcome collaboration with school leadership to coordinate outreach, and we would be happy to provide additional information and support upon request.

Sincerely,

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