



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

## Critical Student Health Program Receives State Funding

JAMES L. SEWARD April 5, 2013

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**RICHFIELD SPRINGS, 04/05/13** – State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I-Oneonta) today announced that the 2013-2014 state budget includes, at his insistence, \$150,000 to establish a Bassett Healthcare Network school-based health center (SBH) at Richfield Springs Central School.

**“School-based health centers fill a great void in rural areas like those I serve,” said Senator Seward. “Bassett Healthcare has developed a successful operating model, the largest rural SBH program in New York State, and expanding services to Richfield Springs Central School will mean healthier children and added peace of mind for parents who choose to utilize the care option.”**

Dr. Chris Kjolhede, director of the Bassett Healthcare Network School-Based Health Program, said, “We are so grateful for Senator Seward’s support. School-based health is the right thing to do. Research shows school-based health care results in positive outcomes including lower absenteeism and fewer unnecessary hospitalizations. This means the students are spending more time learning in the classroom. It’s also better for students with chronic conditions like asthma and ADHD, because we’re better able to manage those conditions by being where the students are, in the school.”

Richfield Springs Central School Superintendent Robert Barraco said, “We are very excited and appreciative of the support from Senator Seward to help us secure the necessary funding for a school-based health center. The school community will benefit tremendously from this opportunity to assist students with their health care.”

The \$150,000 in state funding will provide about half of the money needed to establish a school-based health program in the Richfield Springs Central School. Once the remainder of funding is secured, Bassett will apply for state approval of a school-based health program in Richfield and recruit providers. It is hoped a program could be established by the fall of 2014.

**“If parents are unable to leave work to take their child to the doctor, or face other obstacles in accessing care, school-based health centers provide a vital lifeline. Adding this choice at Richfield Springs will help start many on a path of preventive care and stave off medical concerns before they become unmanageable, both in terms of cost and overall health,”** Senator Seward concluded.

#### **About Bassett’s School-Based Health Program**

Bassett’s School-Based Health Program currently provides primary, dental and mental health care to nearly 7,500 students in 19 schools in four counties: Otsego, Delaware, Chenango and Schoharie counties. No family ever pays out-of-pocket for services provided

in the school-based health centers. If the student has insurance, the SBHC will bill the student's health insurance for the services provided and may help the student enroll in Child Health Plus or Medicaid. Visit [www.bassett.org](http://www.bassett.org) to learn more about school-based health and the Bassett Healthcare Network.