



In 2013, the Education Law Center (ELC) conducted a survey of Philadelphia-based parent organizations, special education and disability rights organizations, and school nurses regarding the impact of the sharp reductions in the school nurse workforce.

Here are a few quotes from school nurses who responded to ELC's survey that vividly describe the significant problems faced by students and schools:

"The school nurse layoffs have affected the safety of all of our children as schools are left without any coverage as school nurses are pulled in and out of schools."

"Children that have chronic health problems such as asthma, diabetes, food allergies are not safe in schools without a full-time school nurse. School-based staff administer medication on days where no nurse is present. Numerous medication errors have occurred as a result. In addition, most [lay staff] are not aware of the signs and symptoms warranting further evaluation. If the District continues on the current path, we will soon realize the real cost."

"There is no room to develop a rapport with our young clients, we are in and out. Without the ability to get to know our students, gain their trust, and become aware of their needs, our role is severely compromised. The impact of these cutback may not be fully understood for several years."

"Last month my school principal called 911 three times. The three incidents could have been handled by the school nurse."

"Students with known medical issues that require full-time nurse assist[ance] are being transferred to schools that have nurses full time. This is not fair to a student who may have siblings in that school or may have already attended that school for years."

"Poorer, younger, grandparenting families, families in shelter or with a member incarcerated all need additional support. Lack of school nurse presence in a school means we may not even be cognizant of a family's unique situation."

"Students are sent home for things that could have been taken care of by the school nurse. Instead of going back to class they are going home missing class instruction. Less time to do follow ups on medical conditions, screening failures (vision, hearing and weight.) Less time to do mandated screenings and monitor immunization compliance."