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Senator Richard Lugar
306 Senate Hart Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

February 16, 2009

Dear Senator Lugar,

The Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation (EVSC) has developed a strategic plan, part of which includes the reconfiguring of four schools into K-8 buildings. In the process of designing these schools, we have designated space that will allow for school-based health clinics. We are currently discussing partnerships with local health care providers to manage and staff these school-based health clinics.

I am sure you are aware of the difficulty those living in poverty have accessing health care on a regular basis. It goes without saying that despite the willingness of our local medical community to see those patients on Medicaid, often the numbers are such that people may not see a physician on a timely basis. Our youth are at the greatest risk and, because of the strong collaborative efforts in our community, we have determined a need to address this issue in partnerships between schools and community health care providers.

The Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation has a free/reduced lunch rate for the 2008-2009 school year of over 53 percent. We feel that it is probably higher than that as we know middle and high school students often do not apply for this rate.

The four buildings that will become K-8 schools, Cedar Hall, Glenwood, Lodge, and Lincoln all are located in high poverty areas and the average free and/or reduced lunch rate is 89 percent. It is our hope that adding clinics to these schools will be beneficial for not only students, but their families and possibly the staff, as well.

As we move forward to face the serious economic issues, we recognize the need to make sure that our young people have a level playing field in order to succeed in life. Ensuring access to health care for our students and families can play a vital role in student academic success.

We are asking, as the Senate plans for fiscal year 2010, that it consider allocating funding of \$836,491.84 for these four school-based health clinics. This would give our community partners and EVSC the opportunity to staff, equip, and work with a national school-based health consultant to develop these clinics as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and the hard work that you do for the people of Indiana.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vince M. Bertram".

Vincent Bertram, Ed.D
Superintendent
Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation