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**Press Release**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**HCS Hosting Breakfast for Policy Makers**

BATON ROUGE, LA– Health Centers in Schools, a local non-profit, is hosting a breakfast for local policy makers this Friday at Glen Oaks High School library from 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. The event is to better inform state and federal legislators, metropolitan council, and school board members about how HCS helps students learn better by keeping them healthy and in school.

HCS receives a large part of its funding from the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals' Office of Public Health. With state budget cuts threatened, HCS wants to ensure legislators are informed on the importance of the health services it provides.

Because of advanced technology and changing government policies, many children with severe medical challenges now attend school in wheelchairs, accompanied by breathing machines or feeding tubes. Schools must now have the capability to provide immediate medical attention to children like these on a daily basis.

With parents' consent, HCS helps ALL children regardless of income get the preventive and emergency health care they need to be able to stay in school. When primary needs are cared for, a child can concentrate on completing his or her education to be better prepared for the job market and to be a better contributor to society. The future of Baton Rouge is its children, and access to health care where children are is a primary need that allows the community to improve and grow in many other areas.

Sue Catchings, CEO of HCS, explains, "Besides the everyday care our school nurses and health centers give EBR students, HCS provides many additional programs such as the free seasonal and H1N1 flu vaccinations. We also partner with other organizations to provide services otherwise unavailable to many students, such as complete eye exams and dental sealants."

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Begun in 1987, Health Centers in Schools, a 501(c)3 organization, provides health care to approximately 45,000 children through operating 11 school-based health centers at East Baton Rouge and Recovery District public schools and managing the school nursing program. HCS delivers innovative, quality, cost-effective school-based health services for children in the greater Baton Rouge area. Certified professionals take care of daily maladies and return kids to the classroom. HCS professionals also provide preventive primary care, immunizations, mental health counseling, eye and hearing screening.

HCS expansion efforts are currently underway, so by 2013 HCS will provide services at 16 health centers geographically dispersed across the city, with 11 providing year-round care. The EBR Parish School System is building the structures and HCS is raising the \$3.8 million for start-up funding for staffing and equipment.

To learn more about HCS in EBR public schools, call 225.343.9505 or visit the website at [www.healthcareinschools.org](http://www.healthcareinschools.org).

**\*\*\* News media are encouraged to attend this event. \*\*\***

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