



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Terrence Murphy

Murphy: Act quickly to get NARCAN to school nurses

TERRENCE P. MURPHY April 16, 2015

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VALHALLA, NY - Experts say tools are needed to win the war on opioid addiction. Healthcare professionals joined Senator Terrence P. Murphy today at the Valhalla Ambulance Corps to call for quick implementation of an important budget item secured by Murphy which supplies school nurses with one such tool, Naloxone, or NARCAN, and trains them in administering the heroin antidote.

Senator Murphy called for the State Department of Health to expedite creation of the rules

and regulations necessary to implement this historic program.

"I'm very proud to have spearheaded this funding, but its one thing to get something into the budget, it's another thing entirely to get it implemented in the schools," Senator Murphy said. "That's why I'm calling upon the State Department of Health to move on this process of creating the rules and regulations so that we can get this life-saving medication into the hands of school nurses as soon as possible. It's time for action, not endless red tape."

The Senator also touted the good-government nature of this program. "Unlike so many other expenditures handed down by Albany, this is a funded mandate -it's paid for. And its only a mandate in that the school districts must be offered the program. They can opt-in if they want to participate. That's local control. This is a win win," he said.

Carol Bumbolow, president-elect of the NY State School Nurses Association said, "School Nurses protect student health and safety each day but there are times we must intervene in actual or potential health emergencies. As the legislation allowing school nurses to administer Narcan with non-student specific orders is enacted we will have another powerful tool to ensure student safety and prevent tragedy. We are grateful to Senator Terrence Murphy for his efforts on behalf of the youth and families we serve. Although we are required to await adoption of the Commissioner's regulations and guidelines written by the State Education Department we look forward to working with our District medical directors to implement this potentially life-saving program."

Jeffrey Veatch of Yorktown said, "Our son Justin, died of a heroin overdose on a school day when he was 17. It could have happened at school, and if it did, naloxone could have saved his life. Senator Murphy's support of naloxone in schools will hopefully prevent other tragedies."

Ellen Morehouse is the executive director of Student Assistance Services, the region's largest substance abuse prevention agency. "Many concerned professionals have been frustrated by the state's delay in allowing school nurses to administer naloxone," Morehouse said. "We applaud Senator Murphy, for his leadership and commitment to preventing substance abuse and overdose deaths."

Kristin McConnell, director of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependencies for Putnam County, said "We are in the midst of an unprecedented heroin and opiate crisis, and overdose deaths have increased at an alarming rate in our communities. By allowing school nurses to administer Narcan we are giving them the resources they need to save lives."