



As Students Head Back to School, Memphis Street Academy Expands Access to Vital Health Services—All Under One Roof

PHILADELPHIA, PA; September 16, 2025 — With the new school year underway, Memphis Street Academy (MSA) is putting student well-being front and center by offering a full spectrum of physical, behavioral, and preventive health services through its on-site, full-time Student-Based Health Center. With cold and flu season approaching—and many families juggling work, transportation, and healthcare access—MSA is removing major barriers by providing no-cost, in-school services to keep students healthy, present, and learning.

“This time of year is a trigger for many of our students with asthma,” said Julie Stewart, a nurse practitioner who has led the school’s Health Center for the past decade. “Instead of missing days of school, we can treat them here with scheduled inhaler doses throughout the day and call parents with updates. They stay in class, and parents stay at work.”

A Lifeline for Working Families

For many families, a child’s illness or health need means missed school and missed work. Nearly [1 in 4 parents](#) reported last year being fired from their jobs due to the continuing breakdown of child care for their kids. MSA’s Student-Based Health Center changes that equation.

With parental consent on file, students can receive immediate care during the day without leaving school or waiting days for a doctor’s appointment. Parents are contacted after the visit—no need to take off work, arrange transportation, or disrupt learning.

Comprehensive Care, All in One Place

The Health Center’s offerings, in partnership with [Education Plus Health](#), go far beyond the traditional nurse’s office:

- Daily management of chronic conditions (asthma, diabetes, seizures, food allergies)
- On-site medication dispensing through a school-based pharmacy
- Sick visits & injury treatment
- Sports & annual physicals
- Mental health screenings & confidential counseling with a behavioral health coach
- Preventive screenings (vision, hearing, dental, height and weight)
- Dental care through partnerships with Smiles Dental and St. Christopher’s Hospital
- Vision exams and free glasses via a new partnership with The Eye Institute at Drexel

- Asthma education from the American Lung Association (ALA) & screening for Asthma Control Test (ACT) conducted by trained Community Health Workers (CHWs)
- Wellness coaching for students with weight or nutrition-related conditions through counseling and education in partnership with parents and guardians
- Family support & social services through on-site CHWs

Meeting the Whole Child and the Whole Family's Needs

The school's community health workers serve as trusted bridges between families and the healthcare system. Their comprehensive model addresses medical care and social determinants of health, helping families navigate insurance enrollment, access food through MSA's on-site pantry, and connect with housing or utility resources.

"At Memphis Street Academy, we believe supporting students means supporting the whole child and family," said Steven Bilski, CEO of Memphis Street Academy. "Our Student-Based Health Center, paired with resources like our Wildcat Pantry, reflects our deep commitment to removing barriers to success, whether that's access to healthcare, nutritious food, or emotional support. We're here to be a reliable resource for our community and ensure every student has what they need to thrive both in and out of the classroom."

MSA also screens for behavioral and mental health, offering short-term counseling and linking students to community-based therapy if needed to address growing concerns around youth mental health.

"We catch small issues before they become big problems," said Mary Lauren Salvatore, Executive Director of Education Plus Health. "This is about health equity and meeting families where they are and keeping kids in the classroom, not in waiting rooms."

School-Based Care That Works

More than just a convenient offering, the program makes a tangible difference. It helps kids stay healthy, attend school more consistently, and allows working parents to stay employed without sacrificing their child's well-being.

"The trust we've built with families is what makes this work," added Stewart. "Parents know they can count on us to care for their children—from physicals to asthma flares to nutrition support—all right here at school."

About Memphis Street Academy

Memphis Street Academy Charter School (MSA) is one of four American Paradigm Schools located in Northeast Philadelphia that aims to enhance, support and promote critical thinking and problem-solving skills of its school-aged learners as they master Pennsylvania and national Common Core Curriculum standards. The mission of Memphis Street Academy is to transform

the learning environment for its scholars in grades 5 through 8 — who not only reside in the catchment area of the school, but who also comprise a diverse learning body from all over the City of Philadelphia, and from all ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds. For more information, visit: www.ap-schools.org/Memphis-Street-Academy.

About American Paradigm Schools

American Paradigm Schools (APS) is a nonprofit charter management organization that supports and serves four charter schools in North and Northeast Philadelphia. These schools are: First Philadelphia Preparatory Charter School; Lindley Academy Charter School; Memphis Street Academy; and Tacony Academy Charter School. For more information, visit www.ap-schools.org.

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