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Dear California Diabetes Families & Friends,

We must give children with diabetes a voice.

Children with diabetes in California need our help like never before. It will take each and every one of us to protect their rights and give them a voice. This is the first in a series of dialogues and action alerts about the diabetes care crisis in California public schools.

Join our fast-growing coalition of citizens, medical professionals and organizations who are extremely concerned about the immediate safety and welfare of children with diabetes in California's public schools.

To join this coalition of concerned California citizens,
send an email to DiabetesCareInCASchools@gmail.com now.

We support training unlicensed school personnel to administer insulin as a safe and appropriate means to support the needs of children with diabetes in California's public schools.

We agree with leading diabetes medical professionals who know that training unlicensed school personnel to administer insulin is a safe and viable way to meet the medical needs of children with diabetes. [1, 2] Diabetes medical experts, like world-renowned pediatric endocrinologist Dr. Francine Kaufman, know that "the foundation of modern diabetes management is lay people – not medical professionals – administering insulin." [3]

We agree with California Superior Court Judge Lloyd Connolly's conclusion that the "evidence presented in [the lawsuit between the nursing organizations against the California Department of Education] indicates unlicensed persons with adequate training may safely administer insulin" [4]. The court's written ruling, however, states that under current California law unlicensed school personnel may no longer administer insulin to students on a regular basis. This ruling reflects the court's interpretation of *existing* statute. Yet, Judge Connolly also acknowledges that opportunity exists for our state Legislature to establish policy that will support training of unlicensed school personnel to administer insulin to students in California schools. In court, Judge Connolly, a former legislator, stated that if he was still in the legislature, he would support such legislation. We agree with him that legislation is needed to resolve this issue.

We are frightened by the consequences needlessly suffered by children with poorly regulated diabetes care at school. Short-term complications include loss of concentration and ability to learn, feeling ill, and in severe cases diabetic shock. Long-term complications include the more terrifying severe complications of the heart, kidneys, eyes and other health concerns. Immediate, responsive care at school is required to prevent these problems. [5]

We are very worried and concerned for the 15,000 children with diabetes in California and their families who may be directly impacted by the recent court ruling. Given the severe school nurse shortage in California's schools [6], **it is very likely that students with diabetes will not be able to receive insulin when needed during the school day.** While it would be preferable to have a school nurse on every school campus to promote the health of *all* children, this will not happen in the foreseeable future, nor does it fully support the needs of children with diabetes [7, 8].

Join us by taking action and giving children with diabetes a voice. Support the training of unlicensed school personnel to administer insulin to students with diabetes in California's schools.

Send an email to DiabetesCareInCASchools@gmail.com now.

Please include your full name and the California city and/or county where you live.

Your email will enable us to keep you well-informed. Join us and take action in the coming weeks and months. Together we *will* make all children with diabetes safe at school in California.

Diabetes Parents & Advocates,

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Notes:

[1] American Diabetes Association, *"Diabetes Care in the School & Daycare Setting"* Position Statement, January 2007, http://care.diabetesjournals.org/cgi/reprint/30/suppl_1/S66 (last visited Jan. 1, 2009)

[2]The National Diabetes Education Program, a federally sponsored partnership of the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control, and more than 200 partner organizations, including, medical, research, professional, educational, and other groups. *"Helping the Student with Diabetes Succeed: A Guide for School Personnel"*, 2003

[3]"What We Know About Diabetes: Children Are Not Pawns" by Francine R. Kaufman, M.D., Professor of Pediatrics, *Keck School of Medicine* posted on 12/18/08, <http://tudiabetes.com/forum/topics/what-we-know-about-diabetes> (last visited Jan. 1, 2009)

[4] California Superior Court, Judge Lloyd Connelly, No. 07AS04631, Judgment dated Dec. 29, 2008

[5] *Novo Nordisk and International Society of Pediatric & Adolescent Diabetes (ISPAD) DAWN (Diabetes, Attitudes, Wishes & Needs) Youth Study Focus on School*, Fall 2008, http://www.dawnyouth.com/documents/article_page/document/DY_Press_Release.asp (last visited Jan. 1, 2009)

[6] American Nurses Association, *he American Nurses Association, ANA/California File Lawsuit Against the California Department of Education* (October 10, 2007)

[7] "The current nurse-to-student ratio is 1 nurse per 2,700 students, far higher than the recommended 1:750 ratio." American Diabetes Association, *The American Diabetes Association Memorandum of Points and Authorities in Opposition to American Nurses Association, ANA/California, California School Nurses Organization, California Nurses Association*, (October 17, 2008)

[8]American Medical Association, *Report 4 of the Council on Science and Public Health (June 2008)*, <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/18643.html> (last visited Jan. 1, 2009).