

# Weiser Signal American

## Regence grant will help rural kids

**March 17, 2009**

Children in the Weiser School District will be among an estimated 27,000 in 15 rural Idaho school districts to benefit from a \$10,000 Regence Foundation grant awarded to Mountain States Group in Boise on Wednesday, March 11.

Among those attending the grant award presentation was Weiser School District Nurse Karma Laan.

The grant will help fund the Mountain States Group Cover Idaho Kids Project, a program that will help school nurses in 15 rural Idaho school districts enroll uninsured children in the Idaho Health Plan Coverage for Children and Teens program (formerly called the CHIP/Medicaid Program).

“It is estimated that 27,000 Idaho children are income-eligible for the state health insurance plan, but have not been enrolled,” said Michael Alexander, Regence Foundation board chair. “That is simply too many children without health care. At The Regence Foundation, we believe the Cover Idaho Kids Project can significantly increase the number of children with health insurance, especially in rural communities, through partnerships with school nurses.”

Besides the Weiser School District, the Regence Foundation grant will enable Mountain States Group to provide technical assistance and ongoing support to school nurses in 14 other rural Idaho school districts, including American Falls, Bruneau-Grand View, Caldwell, Cassia County (Burley), Glenns Ferry, Hansen, Kamiah, Minidoka County (Rupert), Murtaugh, Notus, Parma, Plummer-Worley, Valley (Hazelton), and Wilder.

The Cover Idaho Kids Project is operated by Mountain States Group. The Boise-based group is committed to increasing the number of Idaho children covered by health insurance and works with hospitals and clinics, schools and youth groups, community-based organizations and the media to encourage participation in Idaho's health coverage programs for children.

“I'm pleased that the Regence Foundation recognizes this important need in Idaho,” said John Stellmon, President of Regence BlueShield of Idaho and a Regence Foundation board member. “And the partnership with Mountain States Group will ensure that nurses in these school districts can assist the children in need.”

For more information about The Regence Foundation, please visit [www.regencefoundation.org](http://www.regencefoundation.org).