

Alexandra Lowell
HB 5534 Oral Hearing Testimony
May 7, 2021

Co-Chair Holvey and Girod Members of the Capital Construction Sub-Committee, For the Record my name is Alexandra Lowell, and I am the program Manager for Student Health Centers Multnomah County Health Department, but I need to note that I am here today on my own time to speak to the benefits of Student Health Centers and the capitol funds needed for the Reynolds School District Health Center.

- **For over 30 years, Multnomah County has delivered high quality health services at schools**
 - Over the decades, we've fine tuned our Student Health Center model to serve K-12 aged youth who otherwise wouldn't have access to health services
 - Our services are on par with anything you could get in a traditional primary care setting and families are not burdened by out-of-pocket costs--this is something that we see families struggle with each and every day
 - Our mission is to keep kids healthy so they can focus on success in school and beyond
 - Over 30 years, we've seen it work. This model is proven nationally.
- **We've prioritized investing in communities with high unmet medical need--and there is no higher need than Reynolds School District**
 - In 2017, we commissioned a report to look at the distribution of low income, medicaid qualifying families in our region
 - The largest number of Medicaid insured school-age individuals reside in the Reynolds area
 - A similar report conducted by Health Share and the State Adolescent and Student Health Unit found the greatest concentration of youth ages 11-19 in Multnomah County who did not receive any health services between

June 2014 and May 2015 are in the Reynolds High School catchment area.

- I need to repeat this to emphasize that these kids are not getting basic health services--like annual exams and mental health services.
- When we talk about mental health concerns for teens or students struggling in school, our primary care system can be the first line of defense.
- Upon receipt of notice that Reynolds School District SHC Capital Construction proposal was approved for Lottery Bond funds, we worked hard and fast to build the health center so that we could get needed services to the youth community as soon as possible and because there was a time-sensitive need of ensuring that our SHC program didn't lose ongoing State School Based Health Center Certification funding from OHA. Additionally, we had no historical reason to think the funds wouldn't come through.
- **As the program manager for Multnomah County Student Health Centers, I can say that funding Student Health Centers will have the long-term benefits that far outweigh any costs.**

Thank you for your time.