



**Gustavo Balderas, Ed.D.**

Superintendent

**Beaverton School District**

1260 NW Waterhouse Avenue | Beaverton, Oregon 97006

503-356-4401 | [gustavo\\_balderas@beaverton.k12.or.us](mailto:gustavo_balderas@beaverton.k12.or.us)

[www.beaverton.k12.or.us](http://www.beaverton.k12.or.us)

February 7, 2024

To: House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care

Re: Support for Increased Funding for School-Based Health Centers

Chair Nosse and members of the committee,

I am writing in support of HB 4070 and increasing funding for school-based health centers to provide critical physical and mental health resources for youth and families across Oregon.

As superintendent of Beaverton School District (Oregon's third largest school district and among its most diverse) and in previous districts in Oregon, Washington and California, I have witnessed firsthand the positive impact school-based health centers have on the physical and mental well-being of our students. SBHCs play a crucial role in providing students and families vital services and access to care, and help create a supportive environment that fosters students' well-being and academic success.

SBHCs offer a wide range of services our students need, including preventive health care, immunizations, screenings, and mental health counseling and referrals. These services are crucial in identifying and addressing health issues early on, preventing them from becoming barriers to academic achievement.

Physical health and mental health are interconnected aspects of a student's overall development, and mental health challenges have been on the rise for our students, impacting their ability to focus, learn and succeed. However, the current level of funding falls short of meeting the growing demand for these essential services.

Raising funding for SBHCs in line with inflation will help ensure our students have access to the comprehensive care they need to thrive physically, emotionally and academically. Adding funding for SBHCs to expand their mental health services will help to fill a marked need and provide our community's youth the services they need now more than ever, so they can succeed in school and in life.

Our youth need this help now, and these resources will allow for an immediate increase in our school-based health centers' capacity to support them. I urge you to vote yes on HB 4070.

Thank you for your commitment to the well-being of our students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gustavo Balderas', is written over a blue horizontal line.

**Gustavo Balderas**

Superintendent

Beaverton School District

**Belong. Believe. Achieve.**

*The District prohibits discrimination and harassment based on any basis protected by law, including but not limited to, an individual's actual or perceived race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national or ethnic origin, marital status, age, mental or physical disability, pregnancy, familial status, economic status, veterans' status, or because of a perceived or actual association with any other persons within these protected classes.*