



PORTLAND  
Public Schools

February 7, 2024

Chair Nosse, Vice-Chair Goodwin, Vice-Chair Nelson, and Members of the Committee on Behavioral Health and Healthcare:

On behalf of Portland Public Schools, Oregon's largest school district, I write to ask for you to support HB 4070, which will offer much needed flexible funding to expand school-based health and mental health care services.

Portland Public Schools has 6 school-based health centers. Our health services ensure that kids stay healthy, in school, and ready to learn. Research indicates that students with health care needs often face barriers in their education if their needs are not met. School health services are essential to students' physical, mental, and emotional health and academic success. These services remove obstacles to academic success, improve school attendance, increase health literacy, reduce risky behaviors, and promote healthy lifestyle choices.

HB 4070 will allocate \$7.85 million in mental health and substance use resources to Oregon schools, which are facing a growing health crisis. It also allocates \$10 million in construction grants so schools can more affordably and efficiently build high-quality school-based health centers. The bill will also offer a planning grant opportunities for local communities to implement a school-based health center or school nurse model according to their priority needs and provide an inflationary increase of 10% to the school-based health center base rate, and tied to inflation moving forward.

Portland Public Schools is eager and ready to expand our school-based health care services, and hire additional mental health care workers to ensure that our students have access to the care and support they deserve to thrive. Please support HB 4070.

Lisa Merrick  
Senior Manager of Government Relations