



PARKROSE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
10636 Northeast Prescott Street  
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[www.parkrose.k12.or.us](http://www.parkrose.k12.or.us)  
Superintendent Michael Lopes Serrao

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*Parkrose School District is an equal opportunity educator and employer.*

April 18th, 2025

Joint Committee on Ways and Means  
Oregon State Capitol  
900 Court St NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Co-Chairs Lieber and Sanchez,

On behalf of the Parkrose School District, I am writing in strong support of the University of Oregon's request for \$53.25 million in state bonding to construct a Child Behavioral Health Building to expand access to care and strengthen Oregon's behavioral health workforce.

Oregon ranks 49th nationally in Mental Health America's 2024 Youth Ranking, reflecting both the high rates of behavioral health challenges among adolescents and the limited availability of timely, effective care. These challenges affect children and families in rural and urban communities across the state.

Reversing this trend requires strategic investment in both behavioral health service delivery and the education and training infrastructure needed to expand the workforce. The Child Behavioral Health Building is uniquely positioned to address both.

- This 54,000-square-foot facility on the UO Portland campus will:
  - Expand access to free, evidence-based behavioral health services for youth and families.
  - Reach rural and underserved communities through a new telehealth center.
  - Support research and innovation to improve outcomes and strengthen care systems across the state.
  - Train a diverse new workforce of behavioral health professionals equipped to serve in schools, clinics, and community settings.

By combining clinical services, workforce training, and applied research, the facility supports a comprehensive approach to addressing Oregon's youth behavioral health needs. The building will house the Ballmer Institute for Children's Behavioral Health, which offers a first-of-its-kind undergraduate program focused on preparing students to identify and address behavioral health challenges early, and the Prevention Science Institute, which conducts research to develop effective behavioral health interventions and partners with schools and communities to put them into practice.

Bringing these two institutes together under one roof will align workforce preparation with applied research and service delivery, strengthening the pipeline from classroom to care and expanding support for children and families across Oregon.

Multnomah County has proposed cuts of \$3.5 million for school-based mental health services. This will significantly impact the support we can provide to our students. The loss of this funding highlights the



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critical need to support our partner, the University of Oregon, in continuing its work in developing behavioral health specialists who can work in our districts.

We respectfully urge you to prioritize funding for this high-impact, forward-looking investment in children, families, and the state's behavioral health infrastructure. Oregon's youth deserve access to the care they need, and this project will help ensure they receive it.

Sincerely,

Michael Lopes Serrao  
Superintendent  
Parkrose School District



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