

May X, 2013

Governor Jerry Brown
State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Darrell Steinberg
Senate President Pro Tempore
State Capitol, Room 205
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable John A. Pérez
Speaker of the Assembly
State Capitol, Room 219
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Brown, Senator Steinberg, and Assembly Member Pérez:

We, the undersigned organizations and individuals, urge you to include in the 2013-14 California state budget \$10 million, outside of the Proposition 98 guarantee, for the Public School Health Center Support Program (PSHCSP). Established in 2006 by AB 2560 (Ridley-Thomas), the PSHCSP would provide technical assistance and funding for school-based health centers. The PSHCSP includes a grant program, created in 2008 by SB 564 (Ridley-Thomas), and will include, pending passage of AB 174 (Bonta), a program focused specifically on trauma. To date, the PSHCSP has not been funded, severely limiting school-based health centers' (SBHCs') ability to meet all students' needs.

California's 200 SBHCs provide health, mental health, and oral health services to children and youth from disadvantaged communities. At the same time, they benefit the entire school population by preventing violence, promoting healthy eating and fitness, and maximizing insurance enrollments.

Now is the time to invest in student health:

- **SBHCs are an innovative way to deliver cost-effective health care.** With their focus on prevention and chronic disease management, SBHCs control short- and long-term costs.
- **SBHCs are a key part of a reformed educational system.** Students who are physically and mentally healthy are less likely to be absent, suspended, and expelled. They are more likely to earn higher grades and test scores, as well as to graduate from high school.

With \$10 million, the Public School Health Center Support Program could do all of the following:

- Provide planning grants to 10 new SBHCs, to be located in areas with the greatest numbers of children who remain uninsured after January 1, 2014.
- Provide start-up operational grants to 20 newly constructed SBHCs, including those who received capital and equipment grants funded by the Affordable Care Act.

- Provide sustainability grants to 30 SBHCs to expand obesity/diabetes prevention or asthma management initiatives that have been shown to reduce health care costs.
- Fund trauma-informed mental health services in 35 schools in communities most heavily impacted by violence. Pending passage of AB 174 (Bonta).
- Provide technical assistance to all of California's 200 SBHCs to increase health insurance outreach and enrollment into Medi-Cal and Covered California.

Further delay in funding California's SBHCs will force many of our most disadvantaged students to continue waiting for essential services. We ask that you invest today in their health and success.

Sincerely,



California School Health Centers Association



California Pan-Ethnic Health Network

CHILDREN NOW

Children Now



California Primary Care Association



Los Angeles County Education Foundation



Partnership for Children and Youth



PolicyLink



The Children's Defense Fund



The Children's Partnership



The L.A. Trust for Children's Health

DRAFT