

BACKGROUND

Since first established in the 1980s, California's school-based health centers (SBHCs) have been growing in number. The state currently has 293 SBHCs which provide access to high-quality, comprehensive health care to 286,000 children in or near K-12 schools. Despite the growing number, only 3% of public schools in California currently have an SBHC. Children and youth served by SBHCs live in many of the state's most under-resourced neighborhoods where children and families experience barriers to accessing preventive, primary, and behavioral health care and have high rates of emergency room visits, obesity, asthma, and exposure to community stress and trauma. California's SBHCs have grown to become an important part of the health care safety net, providing access to a range of critical health care services for thousands of underserved children and adolescents.

The Public School Health Centers Support Program (CA Health & Safety Code 124174) has been a grant program in California law since 2008. State funds have never been appropriated to the California Department of Public Health to implement this grant program.

SBHCs ARE A PROVEN APPROACH TO HEALTH & EDUCATION EQUITY



EASY & SAFE ACCESS

Meet students
where they are—
in school



WHOLE CHILD APPROACH

Physical + Mental
+ Social Emotional
Health



INTEGRATED HEALTH CARE

Coordination between
school and community
health care providers

FUNDING FOR SBHCs BUILDS ON CURRENT INVESTMENTS IN STUDENT HEALTH

The 2021 California State Budget includes unprecedented funding for student support and health services. However, none of the funding directly supports SBHCs. The current investments (in Community Schools, school-based Medi-Cal projects, and child and youth behavioral health) focus on building partnerships, developing plans for new interventions, and identifying infrastructure needs. A one-time investment in SBHC construction would complement current programs by providing critical access to start-up and capital resources, at the right time, when these partnerships are identifying and creating plans to build and expand school-based services for students. One of the primary barriers to establishing new SBHCs is the significant upfront costs required to develop new or renovated centers.

REQUEST: \$50 MILLION FOR SBHCs IN 2022 BUDGET

With the COVID pandemic, SBHC development has stalled just when they are needed most. State funding is necessary to support the continued expansion of SBHCs. A one-time investment of \$50 would support **facilities and startup grants for 100 new SBHCs** to serve communities and provide an estimated 100,000 students with access to school-based health services on their school campus.

These would be competitive grants with eligibility established by the Public School Health Centers Support Program and prioritize funding for SBHCs in schools with the most need as determined by the [Student Health Index](#). Up to 10% of these funds may be used to administer the grant program and provide technical assistance to grant recipients. These funds shall be made available for up to three years.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT LISA EISENBERG: LEISENBERG@SCHOOLHEALTHCENTERS.ORG