**INSTRUCTIONS (remove before pasting letter to letterhead):**

SUBMIT VIA THE ADVOCATES PORTAL AT <https://calegislation.lc.ca.gov/Advocates/> BY 5 PM APRIL 16, 2024, AND EMAIL A COPY TO mreynolds@schoolhealthcenters.org AND sarah.meza@asm.ca.gov

[Date]

The Honorable Al Muratsuchi

Chair, Assembly Education Committee

1020 N Street, Rm. 159

Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Support for AB 2052 (Jones-Sawyer) – School-Based Health and Education Partnership Program**

Dear Chair Muratsuchi,

On behalf of [organization’s name], I am writing in support of Assembly Bill 2052 (Jones-Sawyer) which will reinforce the Public School Health Center Support Program through collaboration between the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and the Office of School-Based Health, and through updated criteria for grant preference.

The Public School-Based Health Center Support Program (Program) was established in 2009 and since then the number of SBHCs in California has grown to 377 centers spread across 37 counties. After 15 years of implementation and administration, the California School-Based Health Alliance has identified areas of improvement in the Program.

SBHCs provide accessible and integrated physical and behavioral health care services to students and their families, regardless of their ability to pay for health services. A 2023 study found that students who had access to SBHCs were significantly more likely to have regular dental visits, a regular source of medical care, and health insurance. For some students, the only healthcare they receive is through a SBHC.

Additionally, SBHCs have been proven to improve attendance, academic achievement, and aid in school climate, which allows students to focus on their goals and thrive. This is seen in a Los Angeles study from 2021 which showed that attendance improved by an average of 5 days following “any type of visit to a school based health center.” This is possible because students who have access to SBHCs experience better health outcomes and as a result miss less school days due to illness. The increased attendance associated with SBHCs also translates more school funding which is invested back into the students.

[Insert organization’s background and/or specific stories or cases to emphasize the need for this bill]

In order to ensure the Program is administered effectively and to schools with the greatest need, a few refining changes need to be made to existing law. First, this bill would improve communication and collaboration by requiring the overseeing department, the Office of School-Based Health in CDE, to coordinate with the grant administrator, CDPH. Second, this bill would make changes to the criteria for grant recipient preference in order to align the program with existing definitions in the Education Code and prioritize SBHCs that increase access to care for California’s most underserved students and communities.

For reasons previously stated, [Name of organization] is pleased to support AB 2052 (Jones-Sawyer). We thank you in advance for your support for this bill when it is heard in the Assembly Education Committee.

Sincerely,

[Signature

Name

Address

Contact Information]

cc: Assemblymember Reginald Byron Jones-Sawyer, Sr., Assembly District 57