



# Todos Juntos

“Creating connections that empower, educate and inspire children, youth and families. We value and celebrate diversity.”

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“Chair Nosse and Members of the Committee:

My name is Eric Johnston, and I am the Executive Director of Todos Juntos a non-profit serving the schools and communities of Canby, Molalla, Sandy, and Estacada.

I’m writing in support of HB 4070, which provides critical resources that youth and families across Oregon need now. Oregon is ranked last in the nation for youth mental health, and it’s showing in our schools through rampant behavior issues and high rates of chronic absenteeism. HB 4070 provides evidence-based resources that will be quickly available for schools to support youth mental and physical health. A study conducted in Oregon found that youth are 10-21x more likely to seek mental health support at a school-based health center (SBHC) and that SBHCs that increased mental health capacity were 12% less likely to report a depressive episode; 16% less likely to report suicidal ideation; and **18% less likely to report a suicide attempt.**

Rural communities lack the resources that urban communities enjoy. After school and summer support programs and school health resources are critical to the wellbeing of our students, faculty and community.

Our youth need this **now** and these resources will allow for an immediate increase in our capacity to support them. I urge you to vote yes on HB 4070.”

Sincerely, Eric Johnston

Todos Juntos, Executive Director

1/5/2024