

**Regular Meeting of the Board of Education
April 07, 2020**

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment was submitted in writing to the board prior to the start of the board meeting:

Isabella Villarreal

Good evening. For the record, my name is Isabela Villarreal and I am the Youth Leadership Coordinator with Next Up, a local nonprofit that amplifies the voice and leadership of diverse young people in order to create a more equitable and just Oregon. We urge you to fund plans for the school-based health center at Lincoln High School.

Without a health center located within the school, students will be much more at risk for not receiving the proper, confidential medical and mental health care they need. By not having a health facility on campus, students will continue to face numerous barriers to getting proper care, including transportation, time, cost, and confidentiality.

Through the health center, High School students would be able to access the health and mental care resources they need and deserve. The health center would allow students to access confidential mental health resources without having to face the barrier of family pressure and judgment - a huge barrier that prevents many young people from getting the help they need.

I suffered from anxiety and depression during high school, and it was incredibly difficult to reach out to my family to ask for help. My counselor at school was a safe, stable, and non-judgmental space that I felt that I could come to - creating a pathway for me to receive the proper care that I needed. The stigma surrounding mental health is very real and has very real implications. The Lincoln High School health center should not be seen as an optional resource but as a vital one. It is the school's place to be a resource to students in every aspect of their lives, especially in areas where students struggle the most - young people cannot face anxiety, depression, and trauma alone, and schools must be there for them.

I urge you to fund this necessary resource. Thank you for your time.