

California Association of School Social Workers

Newsletter



September 2009

2009 Annual State Conference

“Safe Harbors: Creating Healthy and Resilient Schools and Communities”

Hilton Harbor Island

October 23-24, 2009

San Diego, California

The California Association of School Social Workers and School Social Work Council of the National Association of Social Workers, California Chapter is excited to announce the 2009 Annual Conference.

This year's theme is “Safe Harbors: Creating Healthy and Resilient Schools and Communities.” The conference will be held Friday and Saturday October 23-24 2009 at the Hilton Harbor Island Hotel complex.

The purpose of the 2009 Conference is to bring together practitioners to share strategies for creating healthier and more resilient schools and communities to support youth. Workshops should be interactive, skills-based, and informed by theory, research, and practice.

The weekend will be both inspiring and informational; an invaluable time to connect and network with other school social workers from around the state while obtaining CEU credits for workshops SPECIFICALLY for school social workers. Please contact Kimberly Israel or Debbie Boerbaitz at CASSWSanDiego09@yahoo.com if you have any questions regarding the Conference.

Conference Update



At our annual CASSW Board Meeting at the Hilton Harbor Inn, the San Diego Region conference committee gave a great presentation on their efforts regarding the October conference. The presentation was made by Debbie Boerbaitz, Kimberly Israel, Steve Manos and Judy Parker. There will be more than 25 workshops presented by School Social Workers and school based professionals from throughout California and several national presenters. Information regarding conference program and workshops, conference and hotel registration is now posted on our website: www.cassw.net. Early Registration deadline is September 22, 2009 and take advantage of discounted Hotel rate of \$137 /night (rate is good for 10/20-10/25.



California Association of School Social Workers (CASSW)
Annual State Conference

Safe Harbors: Creating Healthy and Resilient Schools and Communities



Friday, October 23rd – Saturday, October 24th, 2009

**San Diego, California
Hilton Harbor Island**

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Mark Katz

Author, *On Playing a Poor Hand Well*

Opening Session Speaker:

Helice Bridges

Creator, Difference Makers International



Featured Speaker:

Mike Eichler

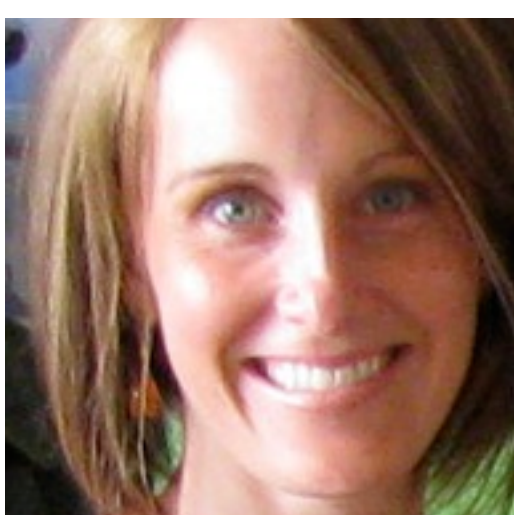
Director, Consensus Organizing Center

Workshop Highlights:

◆ Law & Ethics (6 CEUs) ◆ Clinical Supervision Workshops (6 CEUs) ◆ Foster Youth Services
◆ Gang Prevention ◆ Grant Writing Skills ◆ Positive Youth Development
◆ Mediation ◆ Problem Solving Strategies for Students ◆ And more...

For more information, please contact: casswsandiego09@yahoo.com

Registration will be available online at: <http://www.cassw.net>



CASSW Presidents Report

Welcome back to school!

As School Social Workers, the start of each new year is a very busy, yet significant time for the students we work with. Each September I am reminded just how important our work is for our schools to be physically, mentally, and emotionally healthy. With all said, during these tough economic times in California, I hope that this newsletter finds you well.

This past June, the Board had the opportunity to meet in San Diego for the annual Board meeting. During this productive meeting, many action plans were produced to help moved CASSW in a positive direction, providing you the upmost professional support possible. Many of the Board members worked on a committee to rewrite the constitution and bylaws for CASSW. The final versions have been uploaded on the webpage (www.cassw.net). Please review these documents as they construct the foundation for our organization.

As you might have noticed, it was also decided that CASSW would design a survey to gather data about the multiplicity of School Social Work profession in California. The survey has been sent out to the CASSW listserve. **Please** take the time to complete the survey to help establish a large sample size and reliable data. As appreciation for taking the survey, CASSW will be raffling **one free registration** for the San Diego Conference!

During the Board meeting, the San Diego Conference Committee presented the program for the upcoming conference this October. I am both excited and thrilled to be connected to this outstanding program providing high-quality professional development for School Social Workers. Currently, CASSW is also developing a new website offering many tools and resources for School Social Workers. I want to encourage you to renew your membership with CASSW. In the next six months, CASSW will begin to offer benefits to members only, such as job announcements.

May the start of your school year be fruitful, and I look forward to seeing each of you in beautiful San Diego on October 23rd for our state conference!

Heather Gomez, President

School Social Work



National School Social Work Connections

The School Social Work Association of America / National Association of Social Workers

The California Association of School Social Workers is affiliated with both national organizations that support school social workers/social workers: the School Social Work Association of America and the National Association of Social Workers, California Chapter. The executive director of SSWAA is Frederick Streeck who can be reached at fstreeck@comcast.net or through their website www.sswaa.org. The executive director of NASWCA is Janlee Wong and he can be reached at naswca@naswca.org or through their website www.naswca.org. Both these national organizations are of great support to our effort to increase the influence of school social work practice in California.

Issue Agenda

I would invite articles on issues any of us find a need to explore for further study, action and advocacy. Especially with the intent of trying to gauge membership interest in trying to improve a situation. I like ideas expressed of trying to get together an action team to study a situation and to outline a possible action plan.

First, I have to tell you that the situation about CTC's interpretation of hiring of SSWers is a moot point for now. Funding related to the "*Middle & High School Supplemental Counseling Program*" (in Ed Code § 52378–52380) has changed completely. But of course there are other issues that have come up that merit your knowledge, involvement, and advocacy. And I'll talk about those later.

In my discussions with David Kopperud, our SSW Consultant at CDE, I have learned the following: The 1802 funds for the *Middle & High School Supplemental Counseling Program* have been put into a Tier 3-Block Grant status, reduced by 20% and are to be reduced an additional 5% next year. In fact most other categorical funding programs for students have also met the same fate and have been thrown into the same pool to be used by districts (refer to Ed Code Section 42605) for "any educational purposes". Some of those other categorical programs included in the pool are: English Language Devel.; Class Size Reduction; Safe and Drug Free Schools; Remediation for the CAHSEE; and others. All the categorical funding is lumped together and treated the same. There is estimated to be around a billion \$ or so in the pool?

As I said, school districts may now use this "reduced" money at their discretion for "any educational purposes". They do not have to use the funds for their original purposes. This is for a 5 year period that could be extended depending on the economic and budgetary situation. This was done through ABX4 2 (Flexibility Law) and is now Ed Code, Sec. 15, Section 42605 (sited below).

CDE sent out letters to districts statewide asking districts to continue using the funds for the purposes of the *Middle & High School Supplemental Counseling Program* and other programs as they were intended. Of course Jack O'Connell the State Superintendent (CDE) can only request and advise, and cannot require districts to use those funds in any particular way.

A good news part to all this is: New regulations have recently been put into place for to the use and accounting of this general "flexible" pool of Educational funds. Some control and safe guards have been put into place:

- 1). Districts must hold open public hearings when planning to request/use these funds. The "any educational purposes" must be delineated and the public must have a chance for input as to the use of these funds at the district budget meetings.
- 2). Districts must account for their use of these funds and relate them to what they stated their intended use would be.

So it appears that SSWers still have a chance to be hired with this pool of "flexible, unrestricted" funds provided they develop a plan, attend these public School Board meetings, and can convince districts to hire them for various needed Student Support Services. Some districts will be influenced to use the funds as intended by the "*M & HSSC Program*" and those other programs for at risk youth and other student needs. Here is where SSWers may enter the scene and influence those districts to use the funds for at risk youth and other student needs.

Influencing district Governing Boards on the use of this pool of funds for at-risk students and other student needs is key. Consensus building with various groups: with administration, teachers, parent groups, outside community interests, etc., will be crucial to getting access to these funds for student support services. Each district will of course have their individual constellation of needs that SSWers will need to be familiar with and address. It appears to be a daunting task, but there seems to be no other way but to get involved in the process proactively.

SSWers who are district employees will have to build a consensus with their employer (principal, superintend, other administrators) at the least to approach Governing Boards with convincing plans and programs for use of these funds. And it seems that the support and consensus of school staff, parent, and community groups will be necessary for success.

In summary the issues and advocacy opportunities as I see them for now are:

- 1). Get involved with your school district and school community to obtain the educational funds and use them as needed for student benefits. If its possible, the best strategy for school social workers is to present data that shows the difference their work makes. Let the data do the persuasion. Data that shows that school social work reduces the dropout rate, for example, can be very persuasive.
- 2). Let's try to find a candidate who is a member of CASSW and who we would support to make application for appointment to fill the PPS (CTC) Commissioner vacancy that has recently been vacated by Loretta Whitson, Exec. Dir. California Association of School Counselors (CASC).
- 3). It appears that CTC is preparing to rewrite the PPS Standards in 2010, as CTC does every 10 years or so. We need to start to look for the representatives who we think will represent SSW in a knowledgeable and strong way. In the last round (1998-2000) we had 4 SSWs on this (rewrite) PPS Advisory Panel of 25. Of the 4 SSWs two were SSW educators and two were SSW practitioners. That is probably what our representation will look like this next round. There are some very important credential issues to be considered for our benefit and image so we can be seen as a viable PPS Professional functioning and being hired on an equal playing field with SCs and SPs.

This is it for now. A lot of food for thought, I know. Let's keep the conversation alive, share your ideas and plans. See you at the CASSW Conference in San Diego, October 23 and 24.

Steve Manos, CASSW Board Member

Membership Information



CASSW is your advocate for school social work in California

Membership application forms and information can be found on our website

www.cassw.net

The membership dues for CASSW are \$65 for Active and Associate Members

\$50 for Retired School Social Workers

Unemployed/Transition is \$40

Students are \$0 Free for one academic year + one year after graduation

This newsletter is published by the California Association of School Social Workers (CASSW). The current editor is Daniel McCarthy LCSW (mccarthym@comcast.net). Please submit articles, photos and information of interest to California School Social Workers.