

The California Commission on Health and Safety and Workers' Compensation



Summary of June 27, 2008 Schools Injury and Illness Prevention Program Roundtable

CHSWC Members

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Catherine Aguilar
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December 2008

**Summary of Schools Injury and Illness Prevention Program
June 27, 2008 Roundtable**

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Schools Injury and Illness Prevention Program

Background

California school districts face a number of occupational safety and health issues as maintenance and operations departments and other school employees struggle to address these problems in a climate of reduced funding. In some cases, school districts have been fined by Cal/OSHA when health and safety issues result in violations of Cal/OSHA standards.

Labor Code Sections 75 through 78 mandate the Commission on Health and Safety and Workers' Compensation (CHSWC) with the continuing examination of the health and safety and workers' compensation systems in California and recommending administrative or legislative modifications to improve their operation.

Labor Code Section 78 (a) specifies that "The commission shall review and approve applications, from employers and employee organizations, as well as applications submitted jointly by an employer organization and an employee organization, for grants to assist in establishing effective occupational injury and illness prevention programs. The commission shall establish policies for the evaluation of these applications and shall give priority to applications proposing to target high-risk industries and occupations, including those with high injury or illness rates, and those in which employees are exposed to one or more hazardous substances or conditions or where there is a demonstrated need for research to determine effective strategies for the prevention of occupational illnesses or injuries."

Labor Code Section 6434 requires that civil or administrative penalties assessed under this chapter to school districts, county boards of education, county superintendents of schools, charter schools, community college districts, California State Universities, Universities of California and joint powers agencies performing educational functions be held in trust for a period of two years and six months. During that time, educational facilities may apply for a refund of their civil penalties if certain conditions are met.

Introduction

CHSWC recently received funding to develop and administer an injury and illness prevention safety program to assist California schools in addressing these issues and establishing effective occupational injury and illness prevention programs (IIPPs).

To develop this program, CHSWC convened a roundtable on June 29, 2008, to solicit input from state-level agencies and organizations that represent school employees and are familiar with school health and safety issues. (See Attachment A.) Roundtable participants representing

***Schools Injury and
Illness Prevention
Project Team***

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CHSWC

Irina Nemirovsky
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LOHP, UC Berkeley

Laura Stock
LOHP, UC Berkeley

Linda Delp
LOSH, UCLA

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schools districts, agencies, the Governor's Office of Homeland Security, and labor identified the key elements of a model IIPP program for schools to address their occupational safety and health issues. Participants also discussed the importance of priority training going to school districts with high incidence rates and the importance of a pilot being conducted with schools from around the State.

Welcome

Christine Baker, Executive Officer, CHSWC, welcomed participants to the roundtable. She introduced John Duncan, Director, Department of Industrial Relations (DIR), who stated that the subject of IIPPs is timely for all organizations. IIPPs depend on compliance with health and safety guidelines and on partnership with state-level agencies and other organizations. The Schools IIPP project is an ideal project for state agencies and organizations to partner to reduce injury and illness rates. The objectives of the Schools IIPP project are to make use of available penalty funds to develop an ideal model for school health and safety. Roundtable participants will act as an advisory group providing direction and feedback. Data on schools health and safety indicate that worksite injury and illness incidence rates are high. The Commission's Worker Occupational Safety and Health Training and Education Program (WOSHTEP) has developed materials on health and safety that might be used in the model Schools IIPP project.

Christine Baker also introduced Catherine Aguilar, Commissioner, and Kathleen Webb from the Governor's Office, and then participants introduced themselves. (See Attachment B.) Robin Dewey from the University of California (UC), Berkeley Labor Occupational Health Program (LOHP) stated that other unions that were not able to participate in the roundtable, SEIU, AFSME and CSEA, are interested in supporting this new schools safety program.

Briefing from Governor's Office of Homeland Security

Robert Samaan, Deputy Director, Governor's Office of Homeland Security (OHS), stated that OHS works closely with the Office of Emergency Services (OES) to prepare for terrorism and disaster incidents. Eighty percent of OHS funding goes to the local level and 20% is spent at the state level. OHS conducts training needs assessments and threat assessments and would provide emergency services resources. Less than a year ago, OHS started to look at what the State is doing on school safety, and it is now starting to work on a school safety initiative. Schools are identified as a critical infrastructure by the federal government and by the State of California. OHS would look at safety issues, including violence and evacuations. OHS would work with best practices of schools to be sure that there are standardized prevention strategies and coordinated responses. Working partners would be the California Highway Patrol, the Office of the Secretary of Education, the Department of Education, and OES. A needs assessment will be conducted for the new school safety initiative to identify where state programs are needed. Some ideas include shared resources such as: a secured web portal to share information; uniform procedures for lockdown drills and school safety preparedness plan templates; training modules for teachers; a separate place where schools, teachers, principals and parents could share best practices; resources for campus risk assessments; private sector partnerships for schools safety and emergency kits; and coordination with training partners, public and private, on safety

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curriculum, including a school terrorism liaison officer course. A key goal is sustainability from year to year, even if the funding is reduced or not available over time.

Briefing from the Division of Occupational Safety and Health

Bob Nakamura, Senior Safety Engineer, Division of Occupational Safety and Health, reported on OSHA data on the history of citations for safety hazards in schools and the source of penalties. The 11 most frequently cited areas include: an IIPP, with not having an IIPP ranking the highest of the 11 most frequently cited areas; hazard communication; portable fire extinguishers; asbestos; sanitation, including mold; air conditioning systems; emergency eye wash and showers, mostly for laboratories and janitorial areas; electrical safety; workspace safety; reporting of serious injuries; and slips and falls in working areas, especially due to obstructed passageways. There has not been much specific discussion on schools in OSHA. Key areas to focus on would be reporting and recordkeeping requirements for schools and how to eliminate confusion about reporting.

Key Issues from Roundtable Participants

- Have members of the roundtable act as an advisory group.
- Get top down buy-in from key audiences:
 - Superintendents:
 - Superintendent groups -- Association of California Schools Administrators (ACSA).
 - Schools Boards:
 - If something is adopted into school board policy, it will be ongoing even if there are changes in the top level of administration.
 - Unions.
 - County Offices of Education:
 - Some have more active approaches to school safety than others.
 - Joint Powers Authorities (JPAs), which can help disseminate best practices and models, as well as articulate the case for benefits.
 - Coalition for Adequate School Housing (C.A.S.H.) and California Association of School Business Officials (CASBO).
 - Schools Site Health and Safety Committees:
 - These on-site committees are often critical to school safety efforts.
- Emphasize benefits, especially fiscal benefits and fiscal sustainability, and that the impact on the bottom line will help lower workers' compensation costs and will affect all available resources to schools/school districts:
 - This will be the critical factor for Superintendents and will also be the most critical impact on teachers.
- Implement the program with all employees.
- Employ client-centered selling techniques to get specific messages to each constituent group.

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- Document best practices and disseminate them.
- Communicate/motivate stakeholders re. the importance of the program and the rewards/benefits:
 - Teachers.
 - Parents.
 - Administrators.
- Have a pilot group with similar participant schools/school districts:
 - Select participants based on similar size, similar demographics, and similar health and safety issues.
 - Have a strategic timeline.
 - Stress accountability.
 - Document best practices.
- Focus on one goal, e.g., to make the programs that are in place more effective.
- Focus on one requirement – IIPP is a good one.
- Do not fund areas already funded.

Partnering with State Agencies:

- Find out available resources from state agencies including:
 - Department of Homeland Security.
 - Office of Emergency Services.

Sales Campaign:

- Communicate with all audiences and focus specifically on what the benefits are for each.
- Get a cross-section of large, small, urban, and rural schools or school districts with a geographic distribution.
- Have a key, visible spokesperson.
- Focus on the target audience, i.e. schools that:
 - Have a high incidence rate.
 - Have demonstrated interest.
 - Have programs/structure already in place.
 - Show change from “good to great.”
 - Demonstrate change from “bad to better.”
 - Have school site safety committees.
 - Have greatest need – this could lead to having a model of change for others.
 - Have the ability to give release time.
 - Have outcomes that are fiscal and educational.
 - Have examples of best practices.

Design of Training:

- Change the name of the program to have a strong acronym.
- Make it quick (short modules) and easy to use.

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- Have actual training for employees:
 - School site health and safety committees.
 - Teachers at the ground level.
 - School Human Resources departments – include training in new employee orientations.
- Think of leadership training as a way to create participation and more widespread use. The CHSWC injury and illness prevention program, WOSHTEP, is a model leadership training program.
- Think of continuing education opportunities that will make widespread use possible and ensure sustainability through:
 - Other professional organizations.
 - Community colleges.
 - Continuing education programs.

Strategic Planning and Implementation:

- Develop a strategic plan:
 - Model program.
 - Integration of available health and safety resources across all levels.
 - Timelines to budget for training, etc.
 - Quality control.
 - Measures to evaluate.
 - Certification or credentialing – this is both an incentive and an occupational reward.
- Develop a policy statement.
- Develop a “sales” campaign.
 - Emphasize benefits.
 - Emphasize sustainability:
 - Help districts to budget for a new schools safety program.

Roundtable Recommendations and Next Steps

Roundtable participants suggested the following recommendations and next steps:

- The IIPP would be an effective vehicle for setting standards and for merging existing health and safety resources and programs:
 - This standard touches on all health and safety efforts. Implementing the standard would prevent OSHA penalties.
 - One approach would be to define the roles and responsibilities for everyone involved in and affected by school safety and to provide resources and training on this objective.

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- If there is one program, it should be institutionalized to save costs for schools and school districts. A benefit of this would be that a global spread of risk management would lead to insurance cost efficiency as well.
- There are no models for this approach as yet.
- The program should have a different name with an appropriate acronym. The focus on the IIPP might be too limiting as it is directly related to the Cal/OSHA standard.
- The first step should be conducting a needs assessment:
 - Identify all safety requirements.
 - Identify available safety and emergency preparedness resources and plans, determine the gaps, and determine the appropriate scope (this might be as focused as one key area) for the new program to make a contribution to.
 - Include surveying the private sector.
 - Identify the key parties responsible.
 - Add legislative authority, as appropriate.
 - Identify codes and regulations that are needed.
 - Identify the opportunity for schools to carve out their own initiative.
 - Identify pieces of the program that roundtable participants and their agencies can take on.
- Roundtable participants could participate in sub-committees addressing specific aspects of the new program and reporting back to the larger group:
 - OHS is considering bringing together a statewide task force on the broader school safety issue, so it would be important to know what the main focus of the new program will be, whether the IIPP or a broader focus.
- Long-term goals of the model program should be to:
 - Expand partnerships with key constituents throughout the State.
 - Expand the target population statewide and develop/expand a network of expert trainers.
 - Ensure that measures of accountability are applied.
 - Institutionalize the program by identifying continuing health and safety education opportunities for schools.

Closing

Christine Baker thanked participants for their comments and support for the new school safety program.

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Attachment A

**Commission on Health and Safety and Workers' Compensation
California Schools Injury and Illness Prevention Program Roundtable**

When: Friday, June 27, 2008
Where: Elihu Harris State Building
1515 Clay Street, Oakland
Second Floor, Room 12
Time: 10:00 pm – 2:00 pm

AGENDA

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|-------|--|------------|
| I. | Welcome, Introductions and Brief Program Overview
Catherine Aguilar, Workers' Compensation Manager
San Diego County Schools Joint Powers Authority
Commissioner, CHSWC
Christine Baker, Executive Officer, CHSWC | 10:00 a.m. |
| II. | Overview of School Health and Safety Issues | 10:15 a.m. |
| III. | Office of Homeland Security Briefing | 10:30 a.m. |
| IV. | Proposed California Schools IIPP Training and Grant/Stipend Program | 10:50 a.m. |
| V. | Proposed Program Structure <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Criteria and selection process• Targeting high-risk school districts• Activities eligible for grant/stipend funding• Range of grant/stipend funding• Types of follow up with grant/stipend recipients• Evaluation of program | 11:00 a.m. |
| VI. | Lunch (provided) | 12:00 p.m. |
| VII. | Outreach Strategies | 12:45 p.m. |
| VIII. | Next Steps | 1:30 p.m. |

Roundtable Participants

Catherine Aguilar

Workers' Compensation Consultant

Lee Taylor Austin

Loss Control Analyst

San Diego County Schools Risk Management Joint Powers Authority (JPA)

Denise Banker

Governor's Office of Homeland Security (OHS)

Margie Brown

Assistant Superintendent and C.A.S.H. Board Member

Coalition for Adequate School Housing (C.A.S.H.)

San Ramon Valley USD

Michael L. Brown

Deputy Secretary for Public Safety

Business, Transportation and Housing Agency

Robert Chacanaca

California Federation of Teachers (CFT)

Christine Dektor

Emergency Services Coordinator

Redwood Empire Schools' Insurance Group

John Duncan

Director

Department of Industrial Relations (DIR)

Vern Gates

Regional Uniserv Director

California Teachers' Association (CTA)

Emily Kephart

Prevention Services Manager

North Bay Schools Insurance Authority

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Lisa Konarski

Prevention Services Manager
Schools Insurance Authority

Barbara Materna, Ph.D.

California Department of Public Health
Occupational Health Branch

Bob Nakamura

Senior Safety Engineer
DIR, Division of Occupational Safety and Health

Ian Padilla

Lobbyist
Coalition for Adequate Schools Housing (C.A.S.H.)

Manolo Platin

Special Assistant
Office of the Insurance Advisor
State and Consumer Services Agency

Inez Reed

California Association of School Business Officials (CASBO)

Robert Samaan

Deputy Director
Governor's Office of Homeland Security (OHS)

Julie Smith

Liability Manager
Schools Insurance Authority

Kathleen Webb

Director of the Office of the Insurance Advisor
State and Consumer Services Agency

Mark Weber

Governor's Office of Homeland Security (OHS)
State Capitol

Charles Williams

Loss Prevention Manager
CSAC Excess Insurance Authority

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