



INTERCOM

January
2003

Official Publication of the California Association Supervisors of Child Welfare & Attendance



CASCWA INTERVIEWS MR. JERRY HIME, LOS ANGELES COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION
TOPICS: THE IMPACT OF AB 1859 ON CWA, STATE SPECIAL EDUCATION LAWS & REAUTHORIZATION

In this January 2003, edition of the Intercom, you will find:

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STATE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



SUE CHAMBERS

Mt. Diablo Unified School District

Wow! What an amazing year. I am so proud of our four CASCWA Sections and the great work that is being done locally. As CASCWA President, I wish to thank all of our membership and in particular, our section executive boards for the outstanding events that are underway.

We are all especially excited about the up-coming State Conference in Monterey. Our "State Conference" will bring together many of the finest professional minds in California. We will need their expertise as we address the "No Child Left Behind" legislation and face the state's budget crisis, which will have an effect on all of our districts. Please keep in mind that our "State Conference" is an authorized expenditure of School Safety, Drug Free and Safe Schools, Title I, Title VI, SIP and Staff Development Funds. Thank you Audrey Keebler & your entire "Bay Section Conference Committee".

Also, I have been informed that there will be a new format for "CASCWA 2003" publication and that our membership should expect delivery at the time of the State Conference in Monterey.

I wish to thank Tom Mangione and Joe Brucia for their work on our website. I know they are updating on a regular basis and have plans to include current and past editions of our Intercom on line. They are great!

Each of our "CASCWA Sections" are preparing workshops or legal forums in your area. Please keep in touch with your local section and network with your fellow CASCWA members. I look forward to personally meeting with each of you at our up-coming "State Conference" in Monterey, April 16-18, 2003.

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CASCWA SECTION INFORMATION

BAY SECTION: The Bay Section is busy! Their efforts are being directed towards the State Conference! Please take the time to fill out your priority registration form found on page 7. Be sure to make your hotel reservations as early as possible. This years conference is one of the most important conferences in CASCWA's history. For specific information on the "State Conference" or "Bay Section" events, please contact Darlene Rourke at (510) 787-1286 x 101 or email Darlene at drourke@attbi.com.

DELTA-SIERRA SECTION: This year was kicked off with the Truancy Symposium in Shasta County on October 10, 2002. Karen Frost from the Shasta County Office of Education and Delta-Sierra Board Member coordinated the event. The section will also be partnering with The Elk Grove Unified School District on February 25, 2003, when Erin Gruwell will be presenting her message of developing potential in youth. Ms. Gruwell empowered 125 high school students to write and publish, The Freedom Writer's Diary. For registration information call (916) 686-7568, at extension 7409. On December 3, 2002, Section President, Matt Collier and CASCWA State Legislative Representative, Sherman Garnett, participated on the California Department of Education, "Persistently Dangerous" advisory committee. In order to comply with the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, the advisory committee has recommended that school districts submit specified expulsion data to the State Department of Education at the end of June for this current school year and the previous two school years. The State Department of Education has also established the Uniform Management Information and Reporting System (UMIRS) advisory committee, which will likely replace the California Safe School Assessment (CSSA). UMIRS will be asking for district data on, truancy rates; suspensions and expulsions; types of prevention programs and curricula being used; and likely the Healthy Kids survey results. Delta-Sierra Section President, Matt Collier will also be participating on this advisory committee. The Delta-Sierra Executive Board will continue to keep CASCWA members informed of any section activities or news from Sacramento that may impact us as CASCWA members. May the 2003. year bring all CASCWA members a stronger passion for the youth we work with and a commitment to think outside the box as we face difficult budgetary times up and down the state. For information on coming "Delta-Sierra" events, contact Matt Collier at MCollier@edcenter.egusd.k12.ca.us.

SAN JOAQUIN SECTION: Once again the San Joaquin section is off to a strong start to another school year. Plans are currently under way for a mid-year luncheon on January 24, 2003, in Los Banos at the "The Wool Growers Restaurant", 609 H Street, Los Banos. Topics will include CIF Regulations and student discipline, Fisher Laboratory will be demonstrating their metal detector systems and the latest on "State-Wide Happenings". If you are planning to attending to attend this event or wish to inquire about future events, please contact Mr. Tom Nebb at (209) 826-6467 or email Tom at tneeb@losbanosusd.k12.ca.us.

SOUTHERN SECTION: President Betty Folsom can take great pride in Southern Section's "No Child Left Behind" legal forum held in Downey, California on November 1, 2002. There were close to two hundred members in attendance. Phil Kauble introduced the keynote speaker, Timothy Murphy, Senior Project Director, Statewide System of School Support, LACOE. Timothy Murphy's presentation was outstanding as he systematically described the enormity of the NCLB Act (1,200 pages of legislation at a cost of \$26.5 billion, compared to the original ESEA of 1965 which cost \$1 billion). Southern Section has planned their next legal forum for March 7, 2003. at the Quiet Cannon Restaurant in Montebello. For information regarding the next "Southern Section Legal Forum" or other section events, please contact Jerry Hime at (562) 922-6234 or e-mail at hime_jerry@lacoedu.edu.

Please visit www.cascwa.org for up-to-date section information

CASCWA INTERVIEWS MR. JERRY HIME
LOS ANGELES COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION
TOPIC: IMPACT OF AB 1859 ON CWA AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

CASCWA thanks you for agreeing to be the "featured interview" in this edition of the Intercom. With the passage of AB 1859, it is important that our CASCWA membership have an understanding of the new legislation to use on their everyday job site?

Mr. Hime, please tell our CASCWA members a little bit about yourself and your background as it relates to CWA and Special Education.

My educational background has primarily been in "Special Education". My MA is in "Special Education" and I did post graduate work in administration at UCLA. I spent 26 years in special education as a teacher and administrator before becoming involved with CWA and pupil personnel work. I have been in the "Attendance and Administrative Services Unit" with the Los Angeles County Office of Education since 1993. I am a member of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) and was the President of the international CEC during 1996-97. I continue to be active in CEC at the local, state, and international levels, currently in the areas of public policy and legislation. I am also on the CASCWA Executive Committees for both the "State" and "Southern Section" (Treasurer for the "State" and "President Elect" of the "Southern Section").



On January 1, 2003, AB 1859 will take effect. This bill will have a lasting impact on CWA and Special Education throughout the State of California. What can you tell our fellow CASCWA members about this important legislation?

The major impact for special education will be bringing California Education Code into compliance with the federal regulations of the "Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)". Most notably, AB 1859 repealed EC § 48915.5 which was the discipline procedures for special education suspension and expulsion. The new EC § 48915.5 refers to sections 300.519 through 529 of IDEA which is the discipline section. Throughout AB 1859 there are other references to IDEA for compliance. To truly understand the changes I would recommend that the bill be read in concert with those sections of IDEA referenced.

There have been several California Special Education laws in place that exceeded Federal requirements. This will change on January 1, 2003. What changes should our CASCWA members focus on as a result of new laws?

The primary change that comes to mind is the 45 day alternative placement for a special education student who brings a weapon to school or sells drugs on campus. This change was part of IDEA when it was reauthorized in 1997 but the California State Department of Education advised districts that it was not to be implemented as "stay put" applied. Under AB 1859 the 45 day alternative placement is now an option. However, I recommend that CASCWA members read the language of the law to be sure that the proper procedures are followed.

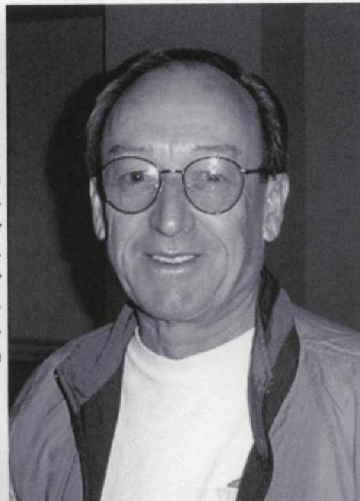
It is my understanding that IDEA will be authorized by the Federal congress in their next session. What is reauthorization and what do you anticipate as future outcomes?



When a bill is passed, it has a "life span" or is "sunsetting" and then must be reauthorized or new legislation enacted. In the CASE of IDEA it was reauthorized in 1997 and was due to be reauthorized this past year. However, Congress has not fully undertaken the reauthorization process yet but is expected to after the first of the year. Those of us who have been following the process realize that the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) act will strongly influence the reauthorization process. Additionally the report of the President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education, released in July 2002, will also have an impact as it has some strong recommendations. No one is certain as to when the reauthorization will be completed. There have been guesses that it could happen very quickly when Congress reconvenes or it might be further delayed because the international situation will occupy the legislators to a great extent.

CASCWA has several new members. What advice would you give to our new CWA administrators to learn the ropes of CWA administration in working with families and school administrators in addressing serious issues of "Special Education", while remaining a "Child Advocate"?

Networking!!! I have found the best way to learn the ropes is from experienced colleagues. Ask questions and become familiar with the various California Codes that we refer to on a daily basis: Ed Code, Penal Code, Welfare and Institution Code, Family Code, and others. The internet is a great resource both for California and federal laws and regulations. Also attend meetings and conferences. The annual CASCWA conference provides a wealth of resources for new members. County offices frequently hold meetings which provide professional growth. At the same time, it is important to keep in mind the parents' perspective. We need to be aware of how our actions are impacting the lives of the students and their parents.



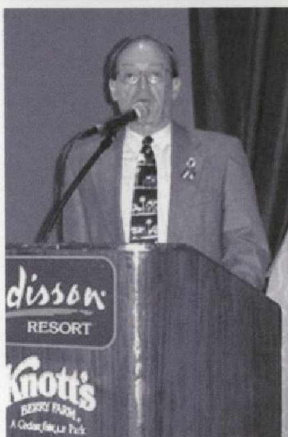
The IEP is a legal document that is binding on school districts and school administrators. What advice do you give to our membership regarding CWA and the IEP process?

Become best friends with your local special education administrator. Typically the Special Education Local Plan Areas (SELPA) have training materials that will be of assistance. If the responsibility for special education happens to fall into the CWA job category, keep up to date by purchasing California Special Education Programs: A Composite of Laws that is published by CDE. It is revised annually and includes both Ed Code and Title 5 provisions for special education. Make it an essential part of the professional reference library. A good web site for federal laws is www.idea.practices.org. This particular site has a wealth of information including questions and answers on the IEP process as well as other areas.

You are well known in the field of CWA and Special Education throughout the United States. As you travel up and down the State of California, what are your thoughts about the "State of the State" of "Special Education" in California?

Since my early days in special education I have felt that California is the leader. This also comes from having met with special education personnel around the country over the years. Before Public Law 94-142, now known as IDEA, was enacted in 1975, California already had the "Master Plan" for "Special Education" in place. Much of the "Master Plan" is replicated in the federal law. Generally I feel that California has gone to great extremes to ensure that the rights of students with disabilities are protected and appropriate programs and services are provided. I am continually impressed by the level of dedication of CWA administrators and special education staff throughout California. And, as we move forward into the reauthorization process, California will be at the forefront. There are several coalitions working together to insure that we will continue as leaders.

CASCWA wishes to thank you for your interview. If any of our CASCWA members wishes to contact you with specific questions, how can you be reached?



I am available through my office with LACOE: Telephone (562) 922-6234; FAX (562) 922-6781; and by e-mail at hime_jerry@lacoedu.edu.

On December 6, 2002, the Los Angeles County Office of Education "Division of Support Services" conducted their "Annual Legislative Update" in Downey California. The update was led by Mr. Phil Kauble. Jerry Hime, Catherine Terry-Puentes, and Robert Jacobsen spoke individually on specific legislation. There was also a special presentation by Dr. Gimilla Moore, LACOE Government Relations Representative, who discussed the state of the budget and the challenges all districts are facing.

We are currently in a time when the state budget crisis and the "No Child Left Behind" legislation is paramount on everyone's agenda. Focusing on federal guidelines for special education and dropout procedures will change the way we do business in 2003. Thank you Jerry Hime for this excellent interview. You have truly been a "Child Advocate" your entire life. You are an important CASCWA member and have contributed greatly to the success of our organization and to children throughout our nation.



California Association of Supervisors of Child Welfare and Attendance



**MARK
THE
DATE**

**APRIL 16-18
2003**

**Hyatt Hotel
Beautiful
Monterey**

**Put these
dates in your
calendar!**

**Early
Registration
Priority!**

*This conference is an
a u t h o r i z e d
expenditure of School
Safety, Drug Free and
Safe Schools, Title I,
Title VI, SIP and Staff
Development Funds*

**Additional
Conference
Information at
www.cascwa.org**

STATE CONFERENCE



BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

Come to Monterey for the annual CASCWA State Conference. Experts from throughout California will share the latest and best strategies in our profession.

- **No Child Left Behind Legislation**
- **Successful SARB's**
- **Safe Schools**
- **Student Resiliency**
- **School / Law Enforcement Partnerships**
- **Legal Workshops**
- **Special Wednesday Academies For New CWA's and School Site Administrators**
- **Main Conference April 17 and 18**

2003 STATE CASCWA CONFERENCE

Thursday, April 17, 2003 & Friday, April 18, 2003
Pre-Conference Academy on Wednesday, April 16, 2003
Hyatt Regency Monterey - Resort and Conference Center
One Old Golf Club Road
Monterey, CA 93940

Priority Registration Form

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____ CITY: _____ STATE: _____

ZIP: _____ COUNTY: _____ EMAIL: _____

REGISTRATION INCLUDES THURSDAY LUNCHEON AND FRIDAY BREAKFAST

1. Pre Conference Academy Registration	Until 2/28/03 After 2/28/03	\$75 \$100
2. Conference Registration Thursday and Friday Includes 2003-2004 Membership	Until 2/28/03 After 2/28/03	\$200 \$225
3. COMBO PAK – Pre Conference Academy and Conference	Until 2/28/03 After 2/28/03	\$225 \$250
4. One Day Conference Registration (does not include membership) Thursday only (includes breakfast and lunch) Friday only (includes breakfast)		\$125 \$75
TOTAL AMOUNT DUE:		

Registration fee must accompany this form. No Purchase Orders. No refunds after March 15, 2003.

Make checks payable to: CASCWA

Mail to: **Darlene Rourke**
1076 Serrano Court
Lafayette, CA 94549
drourke@attbi.com
(510) 787-1286 x101
(510) 787-4770 fax



Yes, I am interested in knowing more about tee times.

Yes, I would be interested in a private reception Thursday evening at the Monterey Aquarium.

Hotel Reservations at the Hyatt Regency Monterey

Special CASCWA Conference Room Rate \$124 per night

(800) 233-1234 or (831) 372-1234

There are a limited number of rooms available at this rate.

Reserve early and be sure to specify CASCWA!

THE MINIATURE EARTH

Submitted by Matt Collier

If we could turn the population of the earth into a small community of 100 people, keeping the same proportions we have today, it would be something like this:

61 Asians
12 Europeans
14 Americans (from North and South America)
13 Africans
1 Australian (Oceania)

50 women
50 men

10 are homosexuals
33 are Christian (Catholics, Protestants and Orthodox)
18 are Muslims
16 are non-religious
6 are Buddhists
11 practice other religions

41 live without basic sanitation
16 live without an improved water source

6 people own 59% of the entire wealth of the community

13 are hungry or malnourished
14 can't read
only 7 are educated at a secondary level
only 8 have a computer
only 4 have an internet connection

1 adult, aged 15-49, has HIV/AIDS.

Of the village's total
annual expenditures of just over US \$3,000,000 per year:
US \$181,000 is spent on weapons and warfare...
US \$159,000 is spent on education...
US \$132,000 is spent on health care.

If you keep your food in a refrigerator and your clothes in a closet,
If you have a roof over your head and have a bed to sleep in,
You are richer than 75% of the entire world population.

If you have a bank account you're one of the 30 wealthiest people in the world.

25 struggle to live on US \$1.00 per day or less...
47 struggle to live on US \$2.00 per day or less.

Work with passion
Love without needing to be loved
Appreciate what you have
And do your best for a better world.

www.minature-earth.com



Dr. Victor Thompson

In October of 2002, CASCWA Member, Dr. Victor Thompson, Coordinator of Student Services, Paramount USD, was named ACSA's 2002 Pupil Personnel Administrator of the year.

Southern Section knows Dr. Thompson as a valuable member and contributor to our organization. His work in the area of SARB is outstanding and for the past few years, he has chaired the scholarship committee. Recently, he submitted two articles for the intercom.

Can SARB help the 18-year-old?

By Dr. Victor C. Thompson
Paramount Unified School District

"I'm 18, you can't do anything to me" is the clarion call of the just turned-eighteen-year-old. Is it true that if a student is eighteen or close to it, that attendance laws do not apply?

Compulsory education laws mandate that all students between the ages of 6 and 18 must attend school. Failure to attend without a valid excuse results in the classification of the student as a habitual truant, subjecting the student to prosecution. It is probably true that it is more difficult to prosecute a student that is eighteen years of age or close to eighteen. By the time a case goes through the filing process with the District Attorney and the court, the judge may be hesitant to sanction a student that is near the age where school attendance is not compulsory. In other words, why place a student on probation or impose other sanctions when they are nearly an adult?

Under Vehicle Code 13202.7, a habitual truant can be cited to the juvenile traffic court where their driver license could be revoked, or the opportunity to receive a driver license suspended for up to a year. This is one tool that school districts can use for students nearing age eighteen. A driver license is an important asset for the soon-to-be-adult!

(Continued on page 9)

Can SARB help the 18-year-old (continued)

The School Attendance Review Board (SARB) hears cases of students up to the age of eighteen. SARB's purpose is to keep students out of the juvenile justice system, but may refer repeat truant offenders to the District Attorney for prosecution. The court may place a student on probation, and subsequent trancies could result in a referral back to the court for violation of probation and contempt of court-imposed orders.

In the case of one student, he had missed over a year of school. He also was defiant towards teachers and did not obey his mother at home. The situation became so serious that he refused to come to school and stayed at home, taking drugs and threatening his mother that if she told his probation officer, he would harm her. Immediate follow-up on this case with the court by school district officials and the district's probation officer resulted in the student being placed in a group home. He also remained on probation until he was nineteen. Today, he has kicked his drug habit and re-enrolled in the adult school. Another near eighteen-year-old was also on probation via a SARB referral. She continued to not attend school and became very active in gangs. Her probation officer recommended that she remain on probation past age eighteen and also enroll in the adult school.

These are some examples of what SARB and the court can do to intervene with students who believe "nothing can happen to them." It should be noted that in these and many cases, they return to school because they find that they cannot support themselves financially. It is the ongoing goal of schools, SARB, and the court to help students realize that a high school diploma and post-high school education are the keys to a brighter future. The doors of school officials are always open to help any student,

THE SARB CONTRACT: What if I ignore it? Consequences for parents under Education Code 48293

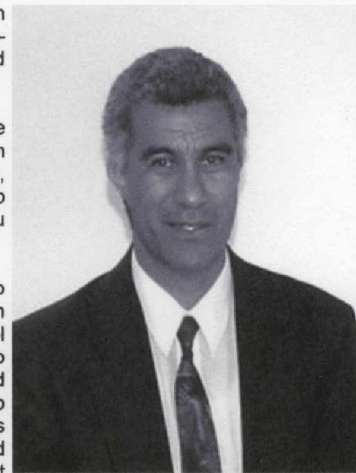
By Dr. Victor C. Thompson, Paramount Unified School District

Parents have the responsibility to ensure that their children attend school. The School Attendance Review Board (SARB) works with parents to support them in their efforts to see that their children arrive on time and attend school daily. At the weekly SARB hearings at the Bellflower Superior Court, SARB representatives from the District Attorney's Office, the Probation Department, school officials, and counseling agencies offer suggestions to parents on how they can improve their child's attendance, then place the student and parent on a contract with SARB. SARB may recommend an earlier bedtime for the late riser, or tutoring for students who struggle academically. Counseling, mentoring, and enrichment programs are available through the Teens Are Paramount (TAP) program. SARB refers students to TAP, the Su Casa Teen Outreach counseling program, and the Community Family Guidance Center. A new resource is the Long Beach Police Athletic League located near South Street and Paramount Boulevard in Long Beach. Students can participate in recreation programs such as basketball, weight lifting, boxing, and karate, or use the computer lab or tutoring services under the direction of Sergeant Walker.

Students who are out of control of their parents may be referred to Probation Officers Kevin Piggee, Joe Franco, and Catherine Phelps, who work with the students on an informal probation status. Students are asked to check-in daily prior to class with their newly assigned probation officer, which encourages them to arrive on time.

Parents may also participate in parenting classes at the Paramount Adult School, where they can learn strategies on how to work with their children, and meet other parents in an effort to support one another. Some parents are resistant to participating in such classes, because they feel they are being "punished," but as District Attorney Dennis Pagenkopp says at each SARB hearing, "it is not a punishment, it's a help, an education to help you raise your children."

What consequences do parents face who do not comply with the SARB contract, and do not ensure that their children attend school? I recently went to a hearing at the Compton Superior Court, Adult Traffic Division, for a parent who had allowed her elementary school age child to miss over 100 days of school. The parent had violated the SARB contract, to see that her child attends school every day and arrives on time. Also, SARB had directed her to either bring her child to school to be checked and sent home if he was sick, or to bring a doctor's note verifying the illness. The parent failed to comply with this condition as well. Under Education Code 48293, a parent who fails to compel his/her child to attend school and comply with the SARB contract is guilty of an infraction, and may be fined. I sat for two hours of listening to traffic violation cases such as "trying to drive around the railroad crossing and beat the Blue Line", and then the judge heard this unprecedented case. Those in the courtroom were surprised to learn that a parent could be fined for truancy. The parent was ordered to pay \$270 in fines. Subsequent absences could result in additional fines.



SARB's purpose is to deter parents and students from the juvenile, or in this case adult, justice system. However, parents must understand the importance of complying with the SARB contract, or they may face financial penalties.



CASCWA RECOGNIZES LAURA EWING INTERCOM'S - OUTSTANDING SECTION MEMBER

by Mark Michels

The "Energizer Bunny" built a reputation on it's ability to keep on going on and on and on. Southern Section's "Energizer Bunny" is also known as Laura Ewing, District Counselor for Pupil Services and Attendance for the Los Angeles Unified School District.

Laura Ewing is always busy serving the needs of the students and staff in the District whether she's making home calls, providing in-service training to school personnel on attendance accounting and motivation programs, or providing school and community resources to students and families. Laura is a member of the local district SARB and is a frequent participant on "Expulsion Review Committees". Her current assignment is in Local District "G" which encompasses parts of South-Central and South-West Los Angeles.

When she is not busy tracking down truant students, Laura can be found at the gym, mountain biking, or snow skiing. During vacations, she loves to travel and has visited Mexico, Hawaii, the Caribbean, and Europe. Someday, she plans to go on an African Safari.

Laura graduated from the University of California at Santa Barbara and has completed graduate studies at California State University Northridge (CSUN) as well as at Cal State Dominguez Hills and Chapman University. Her introduction to CASCWA was at Chapman University. She was taking a class from Mr. Ron Lackey and listened to a guest speaker from CASCWA. She immediately joined and has been an active member ever since. She is currently serving as Southern Section's Executive Board Secretary.



Laura's career in education began as a middle school science teacher, but CASCWA is fortunate that she discovered "Pupil Services and Attendance". When asked about what she likes most about her job, Laura responded, "I like helping students in crisis become success stories rather than dropout statistics".

Thank you Laura. We are proud of you!



THE HIGH SCHOOL ANSWERING MACHINE

The following message was reportedly recorded on a high school voice answering machine in "Southern California" after the school and teachers were being sued by parents who wanted their children's failing grades changed to passing grades even though those children were absent 15-30 times during the semester and did not complete enough school work to pass their classes. Whether this is true or not is uncertain, but the message is classic!

"Hello! You have reached the automated answering service of your school. In order to assist you in connecting the right staff member, please listen to all your options before making a selection:

To lie about why your child is absent - Press 1

To make excuses for why your child did not do his work - Press 2

To complain about what we do - Press 3

To swear at staff members - Press 4

To ask why you didn't get information that was already enclosed in your newsletter and several flyer mailed to you - Press 5

If you want us to raise your child - Press 6

If you want to reach out and touch, slap or hit someone - Press 7

To request another teacher for the third time this year - Press 8

To complain about bus transportation - Press 9

To complain about school lunches - Press 0

If you realize this is the real world and your child must be accountable/responsible for his/her own behavior, class work, homework, and that it's not the teachers' fault for your child(ren)'s lack of effort, hang up and have a nice day!"



CASCWA HOT PAGE

This page is dedicated to the latest information in our field to help all of our CASCWA friends!



BEWARE OF BLOGS: Students have found a great source to express their feelings for everyone to see. They are using weblogs, commonly called "blogs." Bloggers are web-based tools that help people publish to the web instantly - whenever the urge strikes. They are like instant messages. A blog web page is usually made up of short, frequently updated posts that are arranged chronologically—like a journal. The content and purposes of blogs varies greatly—from links and commentary about other web sites, to news about a company/person/idea, to diaries, photos, poetry, mini-essays, project updates, even fiction. Many blogs are personal, "what's on my mind" type musings. Some blogs are for play. Some are for work. *Some are to harass and/or threaten teachers or students.* Such blogs are read by other students and are disruptive to the school. School district who have not revised their student behavior policies can find it difficult to suspend or expel a student. For example, can a student be expelled or suspend if he/she threatens a teacher on a home computer? Perhaps it's time for districts to review their acceptable-use and behavior policies to address this issue. Students need to clearly know that this use of blogs is unacceptable and subject to consequences. You can find examples of blogs at: www.blogger.com, www.weblogs.com and www.sammydman.com.

(Submitted by Joe Brucia) .

SOMA: Effective January 1, 2003, California Education Code 48900 has been changed. Section (p) becomes (q) and the new (p) reads, "Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma. There is also a new (s) that reads, "As used in this section, "school property" includes, but is not limited to, electronic files and data bases". Please refer to Amended Stats 2002, Ch. 643, Sec. 1.5) on the governor's website.

What is "SOMA"? Soma (Carisoprodol) is a schedule IV controlled substance used legally (prescriptive), along with rest, physical therapy, and other measures, for the relief of acute, painful muscle strains and spasms. "Mild Soma Side Effects" include blurred or double vision, clumsiness, dizziness, drowsiness, faintness, or lightheadedness are the most common side effects, but are not usually a cause for concern. Less common, though not generally dangerous, side effects include abdominal cramps, confusion, excitement or restlessness, flushing, headache, heartburn, insomnia, irritability, irritable bowel, weakness. "Serious Soma Side Effects" include bloody urine, bloody or black stools, chills, cough, depression, difficult urination, difficulty breathing, eyes that are red, bloodshot, or stinging, fainting, fast breathing, fever, hives, itching, paradoxical muscle cramping, racing heartbeat or tightness in the chest, rash, sore throat, sores in mouth, stuffy nose, swelling around eyes, swollen or tender glands, unusual fatigue, weakness, vomiting bloody or black material, yellow eyes or skin.

If you think you have heard the word "SOMA" before, you are probably right. It was in 1931, that Aldous Huxley produced his most remembered novel, "*Brave New World*". Huxley's novel described social dissatisfaction that is controlled not only genetically but also with the use of a drug, "SOMA" in a world devoid of genuine emotion or happiness. Also, if you study Eastern Indian culture, you will discover that for nearly 150 years Vedic Scholars have been in search of the mysterious plant of the Rigveda known as "SOMA". "SOMA" was the plant around which the Vedic sacrifices took place and that was said to cause an ecstatic altered state of consciousness. But "SOMA" was more than a plant, it and its expressed juice were also considered a god which was commonly used interchangeably with the god Agni, the god of fire. It was believed that "SOMA" was in fact not a common plant, but a fungus (Mushroom) with inebriating and potentially hallucinatory effect. For the purpose of 48900, let's stick to the first definition of a prescription drug. As with any new changes in the law, you will need to take appropriate steps to revise your district's policies, regulations, handbooks, letters and forms.

(Submitted by Frank Boehler)

The Federal CWA Influence: This fall, over 300 California schools were required to send letters home informing parents that they had the option to transfer their child to another school with free transportation. These were the schools identified for "Program Improvement" under the new federal law: HR1 "No Child Left Behind." This law incorporates some new challenges for CWA administrators. Some will require policy or procedural changes. Complicating the process is the fact that there are few State Department of Education guidelines. The guidelines that are available may even differ from federal guidance. For example, there is a differing of opinion of the definition of "capacity" as related to space available in non-program improvement schools. The following is a list of district CWA related requirements that must be addressed: (1) Inform parents that they have the right to request and receive their child's teacher and paraprofessional's academic and credential qualifications; (2) Inform parents of a substitute teacher's qualifications when the substitute is assigned to their child's class for four or more weeks; (3) Inform parents of their right to transfer their child to another school *if* their school of residence is identified as a "Program Improvement" school. [The law gives specific details as to what should be in the letter]; (4) Inform parents of their right to transfer their child to another school *if* their school of residence is identified as an "unsafe" school; and (5) CWA administrators will also need to inform their school registrars that students without a permanent residence (homeless) have a right to enroll and remain at their nearest school for the remainder of the grades being served by that school. They must be immediately enrolled without waiting for immunization or other records.

(Submitted by Joe Brucia)

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