

SMAA LEA WORKGROUP
December 6th @ 9am
Call in number 866.881.4501

- **Deferral Discussion- latest developments**

DHCS has officially sent the original deferral letter to CMS. However, they did not include the background information that the SMAA LEA workgroup and CTA provided. This information will be resent to DHCS.

The state has also been asked to clarify the data sent out by the department and verify if they studied the functions grid and how 17% was determined. If the data is accurate then it would mean districts should have received almost 83% of their money back.

Vendor fees are an issue. If a district lost 60% of its reimbursement, the vendor fee even though 5% of the original invoice may go above the 15% limit on the final invoice. Districts are refiguring the amount and must pay back the difference.

DHCS is saying that owed funds can be paid back out of the invoice payments but this appears to be only for one year. It may mean districts will have to write checks for the remainder. DHCS cancelled the call when this would have been discussed but has rescheduled later in December.

- **Implementing Free Care: Report from Washington DC**

A two-day collaborative meeting between 15 states and federal officials took place in early December. The discussion included an update from federal officials who shared new resources (mainly information) with the group. Topics included addressing substance abuse prevention and early intervention, privacy and confidentiality and tying in the Every Student Succeeds Act provisions on chronic absenteeism with state efforts to deliver health care through the schools and the role of managed care. **The meeting materials packet and slides are available electronically here:** <https://healthyschoolscampaign.org/healthy-students-promising-futures-learning-collaborative-meeting/>.

Three areas were highlighted regarding new school-based health strategies for California.

1. A draft plan laying out the background on Free Care to districts encouraging them to participate should be developed and circulated soon. (drafts attached)
2. California has proposed to exam and assess the gaps in services in services within the schools. It was instead suggested that instead we start with one area,

mental health and do an assessment and use this as a model as we work through other areas of need such as referrals to pediatric specialists etc.

3. CMS still seems interested in the role of Managed Care Organizations in schools. Other states reported at the conference that the main issue is Medicaid not paying twice for services. The California Association of Health plans will be invited to meet with DHCS and CDE to formally include them in the discussion of Free Care implementation.

- **Report on DHCS Mental Health and Substance Abuse Meeting**

THK and Sac City Unified Student Services Director met with DHCS Deputy Director of Mental Health, Karen Baylor. She recommended that districts work with the Oversight and Accountability Commission to review how districts and county mental health can work together. There are funds that may be available for districts to use for school health services (see attached). Most counties require that any mental services contracted by the county be provided by Medi-Cal providers. These are some of the questions raised: If a school district was to become an official Medi-Cal provider what would that entail? What are the positive and negatives of this option? As mental health becomes a more critical piece to student services needed what part can the school district play? Are there models being done between other districts and counties that can be shared or replicated?

- **Outreach to Parents- Upcoming webinar on ESSA issues and involving parents per LCAP on health-related issues**

THK is coordinating a webinar with the group Families in Schools to discuss how districts can connect with parents/families. They will review best practices and new strategies. LAUSD will be sharing details from their new pilot project that has health educators presenting to parent groups and helps them to use resources from health plans and local community organizations. Also, The Coalition of Chronic Absenteeism will be presenting on health issues being tied to absenteeism.

Please include and invite others at your district to participate in this webinar as it will highlight resources and discusses issues that touch multiple departments within school districts.

- **Data use agreement**

THK met with Michelle Kristoff at DHCS to review a draft of the Data Use Agreement. It is now being reviewed by lawyers. This updated agreement clearly states that LEAs may

use LEA BOP and MAA data for outreach, enrollment and retention activities at school sites.

A recent FERPA HIPAA workshop stated that data can be used by school personnel. Also, if school districts have universal consent forms signed by the parent more can be done with the data, possibly even collaborating with an outside organization, as long as districts retain control. Further clarification on data sharing is [LINK](#).

Link: <https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/>

Next SMAA LEA Workgroup call

Wednesday, December 20th at 9am

Call Number: 866-881-4501, no pin required