

CBA CONTRACT LANGUAGE

SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

CARRIE SYVERTSEN, MSW LICSW

OLD LANGUAGE
CBA
2015-2018

SECTION K: SCHOOL COUNSELORS AND SOCIAL WORKERS

1. Pursuant to rules established by the State Board of Education, all school counselors employed by the Seattle Public Schools shall hold a valid Educational Staff Associate (ESA) Counseling Certificate. The District will implement a counseling program as established in RCW 28A.410.043. The purpose and role of the school counselor is to plan, organize, and deliver a comprehensive school guidance and counseling program that personalizes education and supports, promotes, and enhances the academic, personal, social, and career development of all students, based on the national standards for school counseling programs of the American School Counselor Association. Counselors will not be required to be the test coordinator at their school. As outlined in Article IX, Section A. 4, counselors will not have any more duties assigned before the student day, during lunch time, or after the student day, than other certificated staff in the building.
2. Each counselor shall be accountable to the principal/program manager of the building to which he/she is assigned.
3. Each secondary school shall be allotted five (5) days for each full-time equivalent counselor at per diem pay. These days shall be assigned to the building counselors by the building principal/program manager after discussion with the counseling staff.
4. Each secondary counselor will have five (5) additional days at per diem pay a year for working on scheduling, registration, and other counseling activities.
5. Except in unusual circumstances there shall be no more than one (1) part-time counselor in any one (1) secondary building. Part-time secondary counselors shall retain their preparation periods.
6. Secondary counselors are assigned on a ratio of approximately 400:1.
7. Middle School and Elementary counselors shall hold either a valid Educational Staff Associate (ESA) Counseling or School Social Workers Certificate. Whenever feasible elementary counselors shall be assigned to one (1) building.
8. Counselors may attend professional meetings and conferences during school hours as recommended by and approved by the appropriate building principal/program manager.
9. Nothing in this provision prevents the SPS from determining that an ESA certificated School Social Worker be hired at the high school level to fulfill duties appropriate to the certificate.

SECTION K: SCHOOL COUNSELORS AND SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS

1. Defines School Counselor

2. Defines School Social Worker (using 1377 language!!!)

3. Each school Counselor or school Social Worker shall be accountable to the principal/program manager of the building to which he/she is assigned.

4. Each secondary school shall be allotted five (5) days for each full-time equivalent school Counselor or school Social Worker at per diem pay. These days shall be assigned to the building school Counselors and school Social Workers by the building Principal/Program Manager after discussion with the counseling staff.

5. Each secondary school Counselor or school Social Worker will have five (5) additional days at per diem pay a year for working on scheduling, registration, and other counseling activities.

6. Except in unusual circumstances there shall be no more than one (1) part-time school Counselor or school Social Worker in any one (1) secondary building. Part-time secondary school Counselors and school Social Workers shall retain their preparation periods.

7. Secondary school Counselors are assigned on a ratio of approximately 400:1. will be allocated at a ratio of 375:1. Allocations will be based on AAFTE and rounded to the nearest .2 FTE.

8. Middle School and Elementary School Counselors and school Social Workers shall hold either a valid Educational Staff Associate (ESA) Counseling or School Social Workers Certificate. Whenever feasible, Elementary School Counselors and school Social Workers shall be assigned to one (1) building.

9. School Counselors and school Social Workers may attend professional meetings and conferences during school hours as recommended by and approved by the appropriate building Principal/Program Manager.

10. Nothing in this provision prevents the SPS from determining that an ESA certificated school Social Worker be hired at the High School level to fulfill duties appropriate to the certificate.

STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Being in the 'know" (on counselor email communication/knew their priorities)
- Joined a counseling/social work team to address language (met 7 times with continual email communication)
- Identified school social workers hiding under titles
- Organized SSWers (met 5 times and in continual email communication)
- Wrote our Union
- Showed up! Asked Questions! Educated!

Dear Ms. ~~Compano~~, Mr. Tamayo and Mr. Donaghy:

We are the ESA School Social Workers for Seattle Public Schools and are writing to formally ask that certain language be added on our behalf for the upcoming contract. **We also ask to be invited to any meetings whenever contract discussion occur that relate to or impact School Social Workers.** In order to provide context for this, here is the current state of School Social Workers in Seattle Public Schools:

- School Social Workers have lacked union representation as a group. We pay our union dues and are in need of representation from the union.
- School Social Workers have been largely working under the School Counselor title, which means that the School Social Work profession has not received the credit or visibility it deserves for work done by ESA School Social Workers.
- According to OSPI, the current number of ESA School Social Workers in SPS is 33. 13 or more of those 33 are currently working under the title "School Counselor and or School Social Worker". The remaining School Social Workers have current ESA's but are working as administrators, safety and security case managers, behavior specialists, and program managers, among others. Many of us have worked in Seattle Public Schools for 10+ years (one of us 20!) and our jobs have been retained because our work is highly regarded.
- School Social Worker positions have not been listed in SPS's budgeting "Gold Book" that lists positions that can be built into a school budget.
- School Social Workers are organizing because School Counselors have proposed 6 potential ways of handling the School Counselor/School Social Worker ESA issues. Among consideration are requests to change the current contract language on page 100, Section K in a way that would either directly or in effect limit the ability of School Social Workers to hold School Counseling roles, at some or all levels. In particular, they likely will request that a School Counselor position must only be held by one with an ESA in School Counseling. With our current prototypical school funding formula, School Counselors have FTE allocation, while School Social Workers do not (partly due to the good work and advocacy of School Social Workers working under the School Counselor title!).
- Dual posting of positions as School Social Worker/School Counselor, is common in other districts. This approach garners a stronger and wider applicant pool, allows schools to screen applicants based on the needs of their communities, and allows each ESA to work under the title of their chosen profession.
- As a result of the proposals that have been presented to us on behalf of the larger counseling group, we find this to be a potentially divisive time between our two professions when it comes to contractual language.

As School Social Workers, our goals for our work are as follows: 1) students, families and staff have access to resources that fit their community needs 2) we are a united voice with School Counselors 3) School Social Workers have the ability to apply for jobs within Seattle Public Schools and 4) we begin to formally use our professional titles that will credit our profession.

As referenced on page 100, School Social Workers would like the following to be added. (please note #7 and #9 reference school social workers and we would like for that language to remain).

Section k: School Counselors and School Social Workers

1. Leave as is re: defining role of school counselor

2. ADD: Pursuant to rules established by the State Board of Education, all School Social Workers employed by the Seattle Public Schools shall hold a valid Educational Staff Associate (ESA) School Social Work Certificate as defined by the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB). The district will hire school social workers based on the needs of the community. In reference to SHB1377, the legislature defines the purpose and role of the school social worker is to provide an integral link between school, home, and community in helping students achieve academic and social success. This is accomplished by removing barriers and providing services that include: mental health and academic counseling; support for students and parents; crisis prevention and intervention; professional case management; collaboration with other professionals, organizations, and community agencies; and advocacy for students and parents. School social workers work directly with school administrators as well as students and families at various levels and as part of an interdisciplinary team in the educational system, including at the building, district, and state level. School Social Workers provide leadership and professional expertise regarding the formation of school discipline policies and procedures, and through school-based mental health services, crisis management, the implementation of social-emotional learning, and other support services that impact student academic and social-emotional success. School Social Worker also facilitate community involvement in the schools while advocating for student success.

3. ADD: The district will post counseling role positions as "school counselor/school social worker" and pursuant to RCW 28A.410.043, once hired, each role will keep their professional title.

Please reference the attached letter from the Washington Association of School Social Workers that highlights the critical importance of our role and the trend across Washington State of dual-posting counseling roles. Also attached is a statement from our respective national organizations, including school psychologists, about how our work collectively impacts students and their families and has unique and specific skills that each profession provides. I look forward to the time when our school system funds the necessary resources students deserve so that all of our ESA professions are represented and we can continue to work together on comprehensive supports that meet every child's needs.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Carrie Syvertsen, MSW LICSW, Robert Eagle Middle School
Jen Greenstein, MSW LICSW, Pathfinder K-8 (elementary) and Alki Elementary
Emilie Buter, MSW LICSW Pathfinder K-8 (middle school)
Darryl James, MSW, Licton Springs K-8
Rosslyn Shea, MSW LASW, Arbor Heights Elementary
Daniel Gagnon, MSW, South-Shore K-8
Angie Buenafe, MSW LICSW, Sanislo Elementary
Angel Dawson, MSW LICSW, West Woodland Elementary
Francesca Pennino, MSW Concord International Elementary School

Attached letters: state and national resources



Washington Association of School Social Workers
The Vital Link Between Home, School and Community

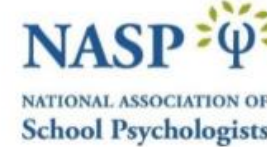
August 20, 2017

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing on behalf of the Washington Association of School Social Workers to inform you of the critical role of an **ESA certificated school social worker** in public schools. A school social worker is a professional in the field of social work and education who holds a valid school social work certification as defined by the Professional Educator Standards Board. The purpose and role of the school social worker is to provide an integral link between school, home, and community and help students achieve academic and social success by removing barriers. Services can include mental health and academic counseling, crisis prevention and intervention, assessment and referral to outside community agencies, professional case management, and integration of Social Emotional Learning. We are a necessary component to a school's Multi-Tiered System of Support and we provide leadership and professional expertise regarding the formation of school discipline policies and procedures.

We recognize it is district's discretion to utilize the prototypical school funding model to inform school staffing. When your district is posting certificated jobs that address student's social, emotional, and behavioral needs in order to reduce barriers to academic success, **we are asking districts to not only consider ESA school social workers for the job, but to actually dual-post open positions to allow either an ESA school counselor or an ESA school social worker to apply for the job.** Districts across the state are choosing to dual-post open positions because it garners a stronger and wider applicant pool and allows schools and districts to screen candidates based on the needs of their communities.

We are also asking that when you hire a school social worker for a position, you allow that person to work under the title of an ESA school social worker. This is in alignment with RCW 28A.410.043 that states that ESA school counselors retain their position title which reflects the training and specific certification of those staff members.



School Social Work
Association of America

Effective School Staffing Model: Teaming School Counselors, School Psychologists, and School Social Workers

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA), the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), and the School Social Work Association of America (SSWAA) support the mission of all schools to help students reach their fullest potential so they may become contributing members of society. To accomplish this mission, schools must ensure every student has access to a rigorous curriculum and a team of highly qualified professionals such as effective teachers and strong school leaders who can help create safe and supportive school environments. Essential components to the educational team are school counselors, school psychologists, and school social workers who help students overcome individual barriers to learning. The presence of each of these personnel, and improved student access to the assistance they provide, are essential to ensuring school and student success.

ASCA, NASP, and SSWAA understand there are real challenges in providing students with the access to assistance they need. Budgetary constraints, local site management, cultural and community norms, personnel shortages in certain geographical areas, and confusion about professional roles may have an impact on local school district and state policies and hiring configurations. Because we acknowledge that the ideal staffing model may not always be achievable currently, ASCA, NASP, and SSWAA have established a strong working relationship through which we advocate together for shared policy priorities and a larger federal investment to support increased numbers of school counseling and mental health professionals.

One example of successful collaboration and advocacy is the [Framework for Safe and Successful Schools](#), endorsed by over 100 organizations and scholars. This policy document stresses the importance of the supports and services that school counselors, school psychologists, and school social

WHAT I LEARNED/NEXT STEPS

- Collective voice and organizing WORKS!
- PLC with SSWers in the district
- Update/change SSW job descriptions
- Future CBA language: what's our ideal!?
- Power connections: Union, Counselors, Administrators, District, Associations