

**COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO
CALIFORNIA**

For the Agenda of:
June 17, 2008

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Department of Human Assistance

Subject: Report Back On Alternate Funding For The Truancy Program Position At Inderkum High School

Contact: Bruce Wagstaff, Director, 875-3611

BACKGROUND

The Board has requested information regarding alternate funding for the Truancy Program Position at Inderkum High School.

DISCUSSION

The Department of Human Assistance (DHA), Sacramento Police Department, Natomas Unified School District, and Sacramento City Unified School District have partnered in the development of the Truancy Program. As a partner in the program, DHA provides one half-time (from 8 a.m. to noon, when the Truancy Center is open) Human Service Social Worker for the Luther Burbank High School Truancy Center and one full time Human Services Social Worker for the Inderkum High School Truancy Center. Social workers assigned to the centers provide the following:

- Research student attendance records and transcripts
- Interview and assess students to make appropriate referrals
- Interview and assess parents/guardians to make appropriate referrals
- Verify CalWORKs eligibility
- Conduct home visits
- Collaborate with CalWORKs Human Services Specialist regarding CalWORKs clients.

Funding for the DHA social worker at Luther Burbank comes from the Department's CalWORKs allocation. The social worker provides services, including home visits and related Welfare-to-Work (WTW) services, only to CalWORKs clients and their children who come through the Center. The social worker provides only referral services to children who are not on CalWORKs.

Funding for the DHA social worker at the Inderkum Truancy Center comes from the County General Fund. Because there are no claiming restrictions for this funding, the social worker is not precluded from seeing non-CalWORKs clients. Under the terms of the agreement with Natomas Unified School District, the worker makes home visits and follow-up visits to non-CalWORKs clients. Since the Inderkum Truancy Center opened on November 27, 2007, the DHA social worker has seen 194 students, 161 (83 percent) of whom were children of CalWORKs recipients.

Based on this data, it might appear that the department could budget this position within its CalWORKs allocation and not require general funds. However, DHA's CalWORKs allocation is capped, so budgeted staff costs paid from CalWORKs cannot exceed that limit. If the Department shifted the funding source for the Inderkum position to its CalWORKs allocation, it would have to reduce another social worker position elsewhere within the program.

While this is an option to consider, the department does not recommend reducing social worker capacity in other areas of its WTW program. Preliminary data from the evaluation of the Luther Burbank social worker, whose focus is exclusively on WTW clients with high school children who are exhibiting significant school attendance problems, suggests that a large percentage of these parents have exceeded their 60-month CalWORKs time limit. This population of WTW clients is very difficult to engage in employment activities. It is more cost-effective to devote social worker services to other WTW clients who, with the assistance of social workers to remove barriers, are more likely to engage and ultimately find employment.

Therefore, the department does not recommend reducing a CalWORKs-funded social worker position elsewhere in the department in order to maintain the Inderkum social worker position.

Could the Department shift the work of other out-stationed social workers to the Inderkum social worker and thereby claim costs to CalWORKs?

The Department has eight (8) other social workers out-stationed.

- Sacramento Police Department - Six (6) social workers are assigned to various Sacramento Police Department offices working as members of the Domestic Violence Prevention and Response Team (DVPRT). They work collaboratively at all sites to facilitate domestic violence referrals and follow through. They participate in monthly cases review team meetings to review the on-going status of active files to facilitate the provision of needed services, and participate in cross-discipline training to include: domestic violence, child abuse, medical examination, documentation, law enforcement procedures and outcome evaluation/data collection for this project. Funding for these positions comes from a combination of the CalWORKs Mental Health/Substance Abuse Allocation from the State and from the generic CalWORKs Allocation.

The work that these social workers do is substantively different from truancy services provided at Inderkum. It would not be appropriate to shift that work to the Inderkum social worker.

- Franklin Boulevard Sacramento Employment and Training Agency (SETA) office - Two (2) social workers work from this office. They are assigned to the Phoenix Park Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) working with Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency staff, the police, Children's Protective Services, Black Infant Health Program, and Birth and Beyond. Their focus is on Welfare-to-Work. Funding for these positions comes from the generic CalWORKs Allocation.

Shifting the caseload of these two social workers to the Inderkum social worker would not be practical geographically and would preclude the Inderkum social worker from providing truancy services to other than CalWORKs clients.

Respectfully submitted,

APPROVED:
TERRY SCHUTTEN
County Executive

BRUCE WAGSTAFF, Director
Department of Human Assistance

By: _____
PENELOPE CLARKE, Administrator
Countywide Services Agency

BW:PL