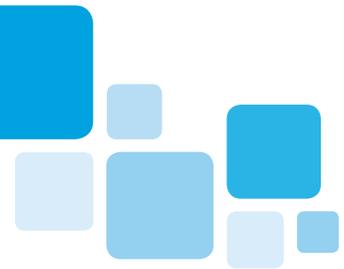


MSSWA



MINNESOTA SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS ASSOCIATION

Newsletter

FALL 2019

President's Message



We are here at the start of the 2019-2020 school year! Summer flies by so fast as we check all the things off of our lists to get done to rejuvenate. I hope you have all been able to make some memories with friends and family and that

you have taken some time for yourself! I am excited for the opportunity to be President of the Minnesota School Social Work Association it is truly an honor and I have already met so many new School Social Workers from all over the U.S. It is so interesting to hear other's stories about their practice and what sparked their interest in working in schools. We are so lucky to be a part of this amazing professional group and all the connections and support it provides. If you have colleagues who are not members encourage them to join MSSWA for another layer of support in their work. Our national organization SSWAA is another amazing entity of our profession which adds so much value to our practice. Take some time to look at the SSWAA's site and become a member. It will only give you more connections, resources, opportunities and the ability to grow and learn. You won't be disappointed!

I want to extend a big thank you to Liz Hommerding who is the past President of MSSWA. She has done so much for this organization and continues to be a part of the board and mentor me on my journey with MSSWA.

Some background about my career. I was lucky enough to start my journey working in the human service field in 1992 specifically with youth and families as a Youth Counselor at a residential facility. There I learned so much about mental health, kids, families and what can be put into place to support family systems to be successful. I then moved to the Minneapolis area and worked in a day treatment

program collaborating with schools, counties and community resources. This experience taught me so much about outside services and systems to

support youth in difficult times of their lives. I also had the opportunity to work for the county as a child protection worker. Collaborating and working with kids and families to support them in their journey with county involvement and assisting them in navigating to make changes to better their families. There was so much that I learned, and I feel fortunate to have had those experiences for my practice as a Social Worker. In May of 2000 I completed my Masters in Social Work and started my journey as a School Social Worker. I have worked with all ages throughout my career working in schools. When I started with the Mankato Area Public Schools, I was the only School Social Worker in the district. Within 2 years we started to add School Social Workers which has been a remarkable impact on our student support teams throughout the district. It is so awesome to have all school student support services around the table when problem solving and working with kids and families. We all have so much to offer to provide growth opportunities for social emotional learning, academics and mental health. Our direct connection and relationships that every student needs throughout their academic career makes an extraordinary difference. Mankato Area Public Schools now has 13 amazing School Social Workers that I have the privilege to lead. We have a total of 50 student support team members as a whole throughout the district. Thankful is the word that comes to mind when I think about all of the changes and the increase of support that allows for tremendous positive shifts for all students and families. My passion is working with youth around trauma, anxiety and grief and building tools and



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SAVE THE DATE - MSSWA

MSSWA 2019 Fall Conference
October 28-29, 2019

MSSWA 2020 Day on the Hill
March 4, 2020

MSSWA 2020 Spring Conference
April 6, 2020

MSSWA 2020 Summer Institute
June 15-17, 2020

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President's Message continued

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collaborating for students to be successful. My goals for MSSWA presidency are to build more tools for our MSSWA members to access online. To continue to grow our membership so that we continue to support each other and the students and families that we work with. Lastly, to offer more learning opportunities around secondary trauma in taking care of ourselves as well as the ability to take notice when our colleagues are experiencing secondary traumatic stress.



This summer I also had the opportunity to attend the Delegate Assembly in Washington DC with Michelle Halverson from Region 2B. What a great experience and a perfect chance to look at School Social Work at the macro level and the work that is being done throughout the United States. At the legislative level we dove into some of the legislative priorities. For example, lifting the budget caps, the status of the Student Support & Academic Enrichment Grant, School Safety/School Climate funds, Medicaid funds and Private School funds to name a few. All legislative topics that we reviewed impact youth and the work that is being done daily to inform legislators increases the understanding of the pulse of our youth and their needs. We have to continue to do a good job in making sure that as professionals we are advocating about what our social work license and degrees uphold within the school system and amongst our teams that we work with in the school and community. We want to take the time to articulate our skills, knowledge and professional practices that we have acquired through our degrees, board exams and licensure so we are utilized in our buildings effectively. We also want to advocate for kids and families at the state and federal level so that student's best interests are at the forefront when it comes to funding and resources for support that is needed in every building and community. We want to continue to collaborate and support each other within our student support teams for the success of all.

Our yearly fall MSSWA conference is quickly approaching. I would love to see each of you at the conference and to invite others to be a part of our state MSSWA group. There are so many great things happening with MSSWA and so many wonderful people that you have not met yet that you need to! Please encourage your colleagues to join MSSWA and SSWAA too. The fall conference will be held October 28-29th 2019 at the Hyatt Regency Bloomington, Bloomington MN. Details are on the MSSWA website.

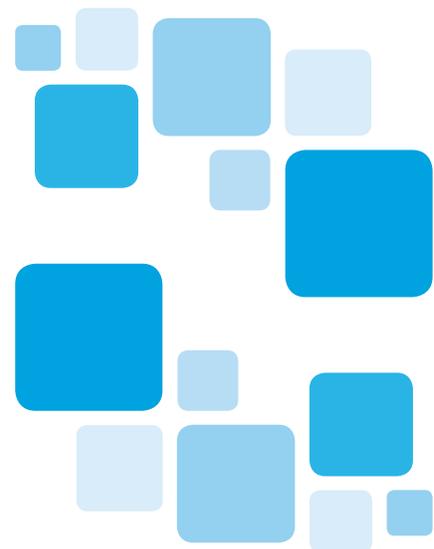
Thank you all for being members and all of the work that you do each and every day to support your students, colleagues and community. Have a fantastic 2019/2010 school year and please feel free to reach out to me any time! mnorri1@isd77.k12.mn.us I look forward to meeting you!

(MSSWA Summer Institute)



Sincerely,

Molly Fox, LICSW
MSSWA President



SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA (SSWAA)



Pictured above: School social work leaders from the Midwest gathered in July at the SSWAA Delegate Assembly in Washington D.C. where the weather was hot, but the school social workers were cool!

Can you feel the energy? Can you feel the excitement? School is starting and SSWAA is working on a number of exciting projects aimed at supporting you and our profession. Consider joining to help strengthen our collective voice and gain access to resources and support helpful to your practice. Here are just some of the great benefits for members:

- Professional Liability Insurance (Malpractice Insurance) **included for free** with your membership!
- Bi-weekly ‘E-Bell’ electronic news briefs located with resources and information pertinent to school social work.
- Full access to SSWAA’s website including practice tools, evidence-based practices, research findings, position papers, SSW promotional products, etc.
- Technical assistance on key issues affecting SSWs.
- Publication discounts on the SSWAA Workshop Series & SSW Journal.
- Conference discounts and get this one on your calendar now!

- SSWAA’s annual national conference will be in Baltimore, MD from March 18-21, 2020. More information at <https://www.sswaa.org/nationalconference>
- Membership discounts: MSSWA is affiliated with SSWAA, so if you are a member of MSSWA you can ALSO save \$25 on your SSWAA membership.

Check out the full details on membership at <https://www.sswaa.org/join-sswaa>. Once you’re with us, it would be great to connect! The next Zoom meeting for Midwest members of SSWAA will be on Saturday, September 21st at 4pm. Email me at stephanie.ochocki@gmail.com to get added to the invite.

In August 2019, the School Social Work Association of America (SSWAA) and National Association of Social Workers (NASW) launched a public education campaign to increase public knowledge about the value school social workers bring to students, schools, students, families and communities, and encourage school districts to hire more school social workers. Full details, including a promotional video & other resources you can use are located at <https://www.sswaa.org/communication-campaign>. This exciting collaboration between SSWAA & NASW offers all school social workers the opportunity to be a part of the action and support the cause to increase public awareness about the importance of school social work.

So, be sure to mark your calendars and get your #s ready! One component of this campaign is that SSWAA will be promoting a monthly Twitterstorm to raise awareness for the school social work profession and the vital and valuable role we play in school communities!

- **WHY?** In order to raise awareness for our profession, every voice is needed! We need all to participate in this “storm” to further our reach and achieve greater impact. This message is important if we want stakeholders to understand our role and to advocate for more school social work positions.
- **WHEN?** The 2nd Wednesday of each month between 9:00am and 12:00pm CST. I’ve already got my calendar set with reminders so if you’d like, email me at stephanie.ochocki@gmail.com to be added in!
- **WHO?** All school social workers’ “tweets” are needed!
- **WHAT?** Tweet during 9am-12pm CST.
 - Use these hashtags:
 - #Back2SchoolSocialWork
 - #ClosingthegapSSW

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- #SchoolSocialWork
- #SchoolSocialWorker
- Use these handles:
 - The School Social Work Association of America: @TheSSWAA
 - National Association of Social Workers: @NASW
 - American Civil Liberties Union: @ACLU
 - American Federation of Teachers: @AFTunion
 - National Education Agency: @NEA
 - National Association of Elementary School Principals: @NAESP
 - National Association of Secondary School Principals: @NASSP
 - National School Boards Association: @NSBAComm
 - School Superintendents Association: @AASAHQ
 - US Department of Education: @usedgov

Full information and how to participate in the campaign (including sample Tweets to make it storm school social work!) are located at <https://www.sswaa.org/communication-campaign>.

Join In And Be Heard!

Stephanie Ochocki, DSW, LICSW
Midwestern Rep. SSWAA



THE POWER OF ADVOCACY

by Christy McCoy MSSWA and SSWAA Legislative Chair

As we embark on a new school year, the current climate of our nation certainly weighs heavily on our hearts. Our united voices are needed now more than ever to fight for inclusion, respect for diversity and equitable access for all individuals from birth to death. Our nation is in the midst of a public health crisis that demands immediate action not only from our policy leaders but from our communities as a whole. Our expertise and unique position as school social workers provides us the opportunity to facilitate courageous conversations, spearhead initiatives to promote inclusion and safety as well as support the healing process when tragedies like the recent shootings in El Paso, Texas and Dayton, Ohio occur.

Advocacy is one of the cornerstones of our work and is guided by our professional values of **service, social justice, dignity and worth of a person, importance of human relationships, integrity and competence**. Although the roles and responsibilities of school social workers can vary from school to school, district to district and state to state; every school social worker engages in advocacy. To increase our impact and disrupt systems, policies and practices that create inequities, school social workers must engage and extend our advocacy efforts beyond our school buildings. As Robert Lucio, PhD., LCSW Associate Professor in

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Graduate Social Work Department at Saint Leo University in Florida explains, “*the goal of advocacy is to protect rights, educate the public and encourage stakeholder participation. Advocacy can seek fundamental institutional change or seek to address issues that need to greater focus to create lasting change. Advocacy gives a voice to people and causes that are often neglected, and at its best supports students and families rights, creates access to needed services, reduces barriers, and promotes a safe and healthy learning environment for all children to be successful.*”

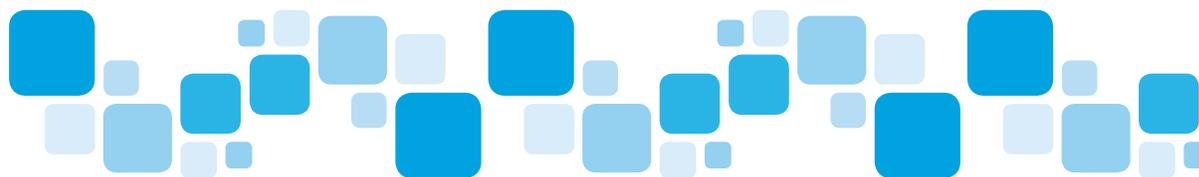
As school social workers we have increasingly recognized that the question is not “**should we embark in advocacy initiatives**” but rather “**how can we get involved to be true agents of change to help our students, families, schools, and communities.**”

Advocating for change and dismantling social injustices takes place at all levels but we either often struggle as to know where to start or feel overwhelmed by the magnitude of the charge. A great way to begin is to remember that you are not alone! One of the benefits of being a member of MSSWA and SSWAA is that the more members we have, the stronger our voices. At the same time, MSSWA and SSWAA work diligently to ensure our school social work perspective is always at the table and that our decision-makers understand the value of school social work interventions in decreasing barriers, promoting safe school climates, holistically meeting the needs of the whole child and promoting academic achievement. Finally, MSSWA and SSWAA have created a variety of tools and resources to support and enhance your practice such as position statements, PowerPoint presentations, Webinars, etc. Collectively we have the ability to transform systems and communities.

What steps can you take this year to strengthen your advocacy efforts? Think about what is manageable as well as the assets you bring to your practice. How can you utilize these same assets to be a true agent of change? Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- Join MSSWA/SSWAA
- Respond to Action Alerts – MSSWA and SSWAA make it easy by providing a template where you can simply add your name, share an example from your practice then cut and paste to an email to your state and U.S. Senators and Representatives
- Present to your local school board
- Attend MSSWA Day on the Hill March 4, 2020.
- Become a member of building or school district leadership committees such as school safety.
- Get involved, volunteer for a MSSWA or SSWAA committee where your assets can be shared.
- Stay informed about issues impacting children, families, mental health, education and the profession of social work by following your legislators on social media.
- Attend town hall meetings hosted by your legislators.
- Invite a school board member, legislator to your school.
- Write an article about “A Day in the Life of a School Social Worker” or about initiatives you implement to ensure all students feel safe, valued and respected for a local newspaper, MN School Board Association Quarterly Journal, Education MN Magazine.
- Present on Role of School Social Work in Crisis Prevention/Trauma Informed Schools, etc. conferences like MN School Mental Health, MN Secondary Principals Association, MN Elementary School Principals Association, MACMH, etc.
- Create a School Social Work Bulletin Board.
- Provide professional development to your staff showcasing your mental health expertise on topics like suicide prevention, trauma informed schools, etc.

As always let us know about the results of your advocacy efforts as it helps inform our work as a state and national association. To learn more about MSSWA and SSWAA Legislative Priorities for 2019 please visit www.msswa.org and www.sswaa.org advocacy pages. Stay tuned for Legislative Updates from MSSWA/SSWAA Legislative Committees. Thank you for all you do on behalf of students, families, staff, communities and the profession! Have a great school year!





SAVE THE DATE

MSSWA 2019 Fall Conference

October 28-29, 2019

Hyatt Regency Bloomington

3200 East 81st Street, Bloomington, MN 55425

MSSWA 2020 Day on the Hill

March 4, 2020

Education Minnesota Building

41 Sherburne Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55103

MSSWA 2020 Spring Conference

April 6, 2020

Shoreview Community Center (Shoreview Room)

4580 Victoria Street N, Shoreview, MN 55126

MSSWA 2020 Summer Institute

June 15-17, 2020

Chase on the Lake Resort

502 Cleveland Boulevard W, Walker, MN 56484

JOIN US



ALL MINNESOTA SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS!

Please consider taking the opportunity to join MSSWA, your state organization. Learn new skills, contribute to your profession, and enjoy the comradery of belonging to an association specific to the needs and concerns of school social workers. Your membership is a way to demonstrate strength in the political arena and is seen by some as a professional responsibility. With every school social worker in the state of Minnesota joining the movement and providing quality services to Minnesota students, we can make a difference!

1. Receive discounts for all MSSWA sponsored conferences
2. Be part of a forum for communication and networking through regional meetings and workshops
3. Be connected to school social work issues in our state, Midwest region and at the national level
4. Know your profession is receiving advocacy through our MSSWA lobbyist at the legislative level, in issues impacting students, families and support services
5. Ability to apply for a \$500 or \$750 mini grant to support your work; these grants are offered twice annually
6. Download the MSSWA developed Early Warning Signs of Mental Health Disorders PowerPoint presentation & Bullying Presentation
7. Get current news through email and our electronic quarterly MSSWA newsletter
8. Gain a reduced membership fee with the School Social Work Association of America (\$95 annually)
9. Get a reduced subscription to the Illinois School Social Work Journal (\$20 annually – 2 publications) This professional journal is directed primarily to the interests of social workers practicing in the public schools and school social work educators.
10. Gain access to all kinds of online practice resources on our members only website page -

MSSWA has 14 regions throughout the state. Each region has a representative you can reach out to with questions and receive support through. To find out your region and region representative(s), go to your website: www.msswa.org Click on **Membership** on the home page and then **Region Representatives**.

5 Levels of Membership – Membership year is a full 12 months from the date you join - Join on-line or by mail

- **Full Membership:** \$65 a year for school social workers working full time or **\$150 a 3-year membership**.
- **SSworkers who are in Graduate School:** Full membership for \$35
- **Retired:** Full membership for retired school social workers \$35 per year
- **Affiliate:** For those in related professions, the cost is \$35 per year.
- **Affiliate Plus:** On-line access to resources is available to Affiliate members for an additional \$30
- **Students:** Graduate Students - \$35 year
Undergraduate social work students receive **FREE** membership

TO JOIN on-line or print membership form and pay by check: Go to www.msswa.org

- Click on the Membership button, join/renew tab
- Enter your email address or if you haven't joined in the past, click on check email address
- Fill out your information and pay your membership via AffiniPay (we no longer use Paypal)
- You will receive a welcome letter, by email, that provides you with the login information to the Members Only portion of the website.
- Your region representative will be in touch with you soon after you join.
- To join by mail, go to www.msswa.org, click on Membership, print membership form and pay by check



MINNESOTA SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS ASSOCIATION (MSSWA) 2019 Fall Conference - October 28-29, 2019

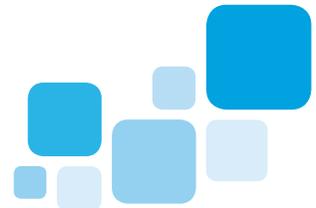
Registration is OPEN- (Brochure, breakout, keynote info will go out this month)! Early Bird Registration discount ends Oct. 1!

Hyatt Regency Bloomington, Bloomington, MN

Please join us at our brand-new location, the Hyatt Regency Bloomington for 2 days of learning and networking with peers at the 2019 MSSWA Fall Conference. The Hyatt Regency is an upscale, hip hotel located just blocks from the Mall of America and only steps from the Blue Line Light Rail, running from Downtown Minneapolis to the Mall of America. Complimentary hotel shuttle to/from MSP Airport and the Mall of America. Check out our new conference location: Hyatt Regency Bloomington



*Conference Session Details Coming Soon!!
Registration Now Open for Sponsors and Exhibitors!*



REGION 2A *update*

My name is Melissa Ahlschlager. I am the Region Rep for 2A. I have been a school social worker for 23 years; the last 21 years for Jackson County Central Schools. I started out in the elementary and moved to the middle school. My goal is to continue to grow our attendance at region meetings. Our Fall meeting will be a Friday in Oct. Exact date TBD. Our speaker will be a Suicide Prevention Coordinator speaking about SafeTALK and QPR training.



Please contact me at Melissa.Ahlschlager@jccschools.com or 507-662-6625

REGION 2B *update*

Hello MSSWA members!

I am excited to be one of the new region reps for Region 2B! I wanted to start off by telling you a little bit about myself. Currently, I am employed as a school social worker at Sibley East Elementary in Gaylord. I am going into my second year at Sibley East. Prior to my current job, I worked as a school social worker at Delano Elementary. In addition to my new role as a region rep for 2B, I am also the current chair for the networking/outreach committee. I know some school social workers from 2B, and I am looking forward to getting to know more of you at our region meetings. Speaking of region meetings, we are planning to have a region meeting this fall, hopefully early November. Stay tuned for date and details! I hope everyone enjoys the rest of their summer and starts off the new year feeling rested and rejuvenated!

Sincerely,
Michelle Halverson, MSW, LICSW
MSSWA Region 2B Rep



REGION 3 *update*

Greetings MN School Social Workers and welcome to the 19-20 school year! We hope you have been able to relax and refresh over the summer and that you are rejuvenated for to get back to working with our amazing students! See below for region 3 meeting information to get on your calendars. Have an outstanding year and thank you for all you do!

-Tara Prom & Carmen Tschida, Region 3 Reps

Fall Meeting: *Wednesday, September 25th from 11-3 at Jimmy's Pour House in Sauk Rapids*

- *Topics - suicide prevention, ethics, & MSSWA website information*

Spring Meeting: *Wednesday, April 1st from 11-3 at Jimmy's Pour House in Sauk Rapids*

- *Topics TBD*



REGION 4A *update*

Welcome back everyone! My name is Julia and I work at Northdale Middle School in the Anoka-Hennepin School District. I am very passionate about working with students to understand their feelings and experiences within their environments. I love working with MSSWA to bring you opportunities for trainings, crucial updates for our practice, and support through networking and connection.

Another summer has flown by and I am eager to begin another school year! We are in such a wonderful position to have time to rest and refresh our minds and bodies before returning to give our all to our students and families. Thank you for all of your dedication and time that you spend each fall re-connecting families to the school systems and community resources. "We are hardwired to connect with others, it's what gives purpose and meaning to our lives, and without it there is suffering." -Brene Brown

***Look for emails about our Yoga Calm and Mindfulness gathering for Region 4A coming up in October!**

Julia Messenger, MSW, LICSW Region 4 A Representative



REGION 4B *update*

Hello Region 4B! My name is Nancy VanHorne. I am so excited to be back representing our region. I am entering my 23rd year as a school social worker, currently working at Prior Lake High School. I started out with MSSWA as a Region 4 rep. I have also served as Secretary and President of MSSWA. I am happy to continue serving on the board. With that said...I would LOVE to help transition a couple of new region reps in our area to the board. If you have any interest or would like to talk more potentially serving on the board, please email me at nanvan37@gmail.com. I welcome your questions and comments at any time. Please look for an email in the next few weeks regarding a region gathering/training opportunity. Have a GREAT school year!!!!

Nancy VanHorne, MSW, LICSW
nanvan37@gmail.com



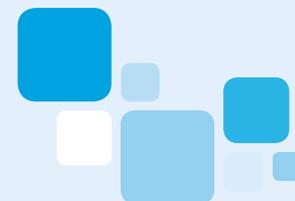
REGION 7 *update*

Hello Region 7! I hope you are enjoying your summer and feeling refreshed for the start of another school year. Don't forget to renew your MSSWA membership! If you are considering membership, check out the 'Benefits to MSSWA Membership' article in this newsletter and other resources on the website at www.msswa.org. Please also feel free to contact me with questions about MSSWA's mission and activities and the benefits for members. Let me know if you have ideas for a regional get-together, we do have a budget that we can use for speakers, refreshments, etc., and it would be great if we could make this happen. I would love to see you at the MSSWA Fall Conference on October 28 & 29!!

Region 7 Representative:

Heather Rappana, MSW, LICSW

heather.rappana@duluthedison.com



REGION 8 *update*

Hello Region 8! We are so excited to begin another school year with you all in NW Minnesota.

Sherry and I are looking forward to the opportunity to see so many of you that we already know, and to meet all the new members this year. We are once again planning on meeting in Bemidji in the early fall. Watch your email for news about the location and date. Please do not hesitate to contact either one of us with any questions or ideas that you may have. We look forward to hearing from you and love to support you in the amazing work that you all do!

Here is a little info about us. We are excited to learn about you as well.

I have been a School Social Worker for 11 years. I currently work as an elementary School Social Worker at New Heights Elementary for District 595 in East Grand Forks, Minnesota. I have served on the MSSWA board as a Region 8 Rep for 5 years and in Region 3 prior, I previously served as the Recognition Committee Chair for 3 years and I am currently the Secretary for the MSSWA board.

Co-Representative: Sherry Murphy, MSW, LICSW smurphy@egf.k12.mn.us

I have been a School Social Worker for 25 years. I work out of a special education cooperative (NWRIC) and currently serve in 2 districts, Viking Elementary and Tri-County Elementary School. I have been involved with the MSSWA board for 23 years as a Region Representative, Recognition Chair, Promotions Chair and State President.

I was also honored to be selected as the MSSWA School Social Worker of the Year in 2010. Region *

Co- Representative: Jeri Nomeland, LSW nomjer@tricity.k12.mn.us





REGION 10 *update*

It's that time again, the steep summer slide into another new school year. We hope you have had a wonderful summer! August can be a stressful time when getting ready for going back to school. We encourage you to stay active in your self-care practice as your year gets under way. Here is a great resource for you to check out: <https://socialwork.simmons.edu/blog/self-care-for-social-service-professionals/>

We are looking forward to seeing all of you soon at our upcoming Region 10 Meeting! Our 1st region meeting we will be showing the movie "Resilience" with discussion and dinner (includes CEU's) FREE to region 10 members! Watch your email for the invite!

-Warmly,

Dan & Cara

danpporter@msn.com

cara.m.mcglynn@gmail.com



REGION 11 *update*

Hello! My name is Melissa Sutlief. I am a Co-Region Rep along with Tammie Knick for Region 11. Together we welcome you back and hope that you had an amazing summer and are refreshed and rejuvenated. Tammie is a school social worker at Dream Technical Academy, in Willmar, MN. I am a school social worker in the Browerville Public School working with k-12 students. As a board member of MSSWA, I participate in the Network and Outreach Committee. We are honored to be able to speak to the incoming social workers at several colleges, encouraging them to be a part of MSSWA and take advantage of all that MSSWA has to offer its members, including opportunities for training, critical updates for our practice and support through networking and connection. It's important that we speak of our profession and support the upcoming generations of social workers.

Going forth, as we start a new school year, we have the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of the children we serve. Tammie and I are here for you if you have any questions. We look forward to seeing you at our first Region 11 meeting, which is currently in the works. If you have any suggestions or ideas for topics and/or presenters, please feel free to

Melissa Sutlief, MSW, LGSW



*"What matters most is whether we are able to help a child develop a very different set of qualities, a list that includes persistence, self-control, curiosity, conscientiousness, grit, and self-confidence."
--Paul Tough*



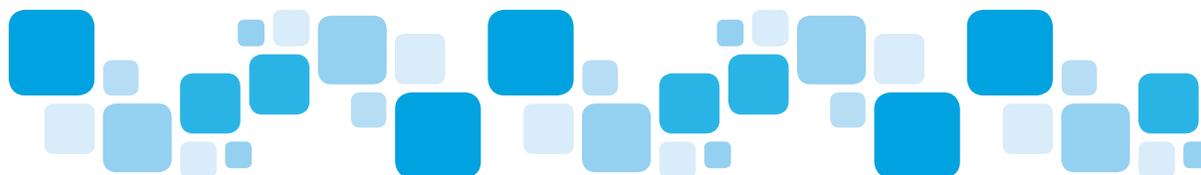
REGION 12 *update*

It's the most wonderful time of the year...the beginning of the school year!! For those of you who are fortunate enough to work in a charter school or alternative learning program in MN, Courtney Stenseth and Carolyn Disch are your Region 12 Representatives. We are excited to be with you on this journey for the 2019-2020 school year. Here is a little about us:

Courtney Stenseth is a School Social Worker at MN Transitions Charter School (MTS) in the Secondary program, which is located in South Minneapolis. MTS is the largest charter school district in MN serving 3800 students across MN. She is going into her 9th year at MTS and her 13th year as a School Social Worker. She is also the Homeless Liaison for her district and a Restorative Coach for her building. In addition to the Fall and Spring Region 12 meetings, Courtney hosts a monthly meeting for charter school and ALC social workers to connect, share resources, navigate the field, and support each other. We meet the first Tuesday of the month from 9-11, at MTS in Minneapolis. We will have our first meeting on October 1st. If you want to be added to this email list, please email Courtney at cstenseth@emailmtcs.org.

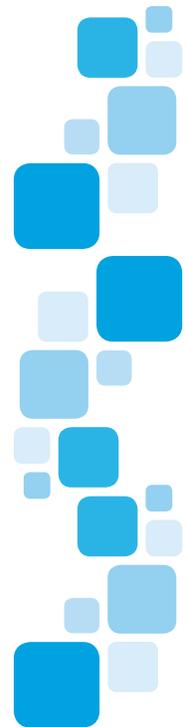
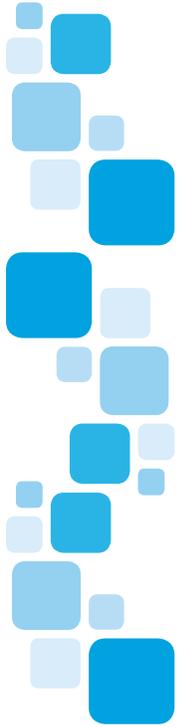
Carolyn Disch is a School Social Worker at BlueSky Online Charter School serving about 500 students statewide in grades 7-12. She is starting her 11th year with BlueSky and 18th year as a School Social Worker. BlueSky has an office and learning center in West St. Paul, offering opportunities to work with students in person, although most support and learning occurs online. Carolyn attends the monthly meetings hosted by Courtney and looks forward to seeing fellow School Social Workers there and at the MSSWA region 12 meetings.

Cheers to all the challenges and victories that the 2019-2020 school year has in store for you!





MSSWA 2019 SUMMER INSTITUTE





The 2019 MSSWA Summer Institute was a great success with ___ School Social Workers and other professionals in attendance June 17th-19th at the Sugar Lake Lodge in Cohasset, MN. Attendees were able to learn from a great variety of professional trainers including licensed social workers, teachers, attorneys, licensed psychologists, and marriage and family therapists.

The first day kicked off with a screening of *Resilience: The Biology of Stress*, a film that digs deeper into trauma and resilience, ACEs research, and practical applications in fields such as education and medicine. The screening was followed by a discussion facilitated by Dan Porter who shared evidence-based strategies to build and promote resilience in our lives and the lives of our clients. These include practicing gratitude, self-regulation exercises such as meditation, mindfulness, and yoga, and building self-efficacy.



*MSSWA has the rights to the films **Resilience** and **Paper Tigers** – this could be a great opportunity to host a MSSWA-sponsored professional development or event in the future. Reach out to your region rep. if this is something you are interested in!*

In the following session, Michael D. Hagley presented on “Special Education Law: Trends, Strategies, & Ethical Considerations”. Mr. Hagley provided a brief overview of special education law, including FAPE, IEPs vs. 504s, options for resolving disputes and due process, as well as ethical considerations when doing so. The final session of day one was “Integrative Play Therapy: A School-Based Perspective” presented by Kathryn Jurado, MA, LMFT, CCTP, RPT. Kathryn discussed the importance of play for our clients (and adults, too!), and outlined several integrative models of play therapy.

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She dove into the five “gauges” that we are constantly assessing and monitoring throughout the therapeutic process with clients: development (cognitive, language, etc.), relationship (attachment patterns), regulation, play style, and therapeutic stage (from Bryan Norton’s Therapeutic Stages of Play Therapy). The presentation was interwoven with lots of case examples and sharing of great resources!

Day two kicked off with a full-day session on Collaborative Problem Solving, presented by Ed Morales, MPP, MSW, LICSW. Ed brought a wealth of experience to the session as a former school social worker and foster parent. The CPS model helps shift adult mindset from a child’s will or motivation to an understanding of skill deficit. The session provided ways to assess for various skill deficits a child might have, and how to help the child build the identified skills.

Day three began with a presentation on Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports by Erin Engnes, Lisa McCleod, LSW, and Raina Askin, MS. This unique PBIS presentation outlined the basics of the three tiers and included many helpful online resources for school social workers to bring back to their school sites. The presenters also incorporated information for utilizing Culturally Responsive Classrooms, Social Emotional Learning, and Trauma-Informed School models within an overall PBIS model in your school. They recommended embedding expected SEL skills and culturally defined values based on your specific school’s demographics in the PBIS values and matrix (see PBIS Cultural Responsiveness Field Guide). They reminded attendees that students need eight repetitions to learn something new (adults need even more!), and 28 repetitions to unlearn an old behavior and replace it with a new behavior.

The final presentation of the institute was “How to Influence When You Don’t Have Power (Getting Through to Teachers, Administrators & Students)” by Stanley Thiele, JD, MA, LP, LMFT and Samantha Franklin, MA, LMFT. This fascinating presentation dove into the differences between power and influence, and helped social workers understand productive ways to exert influence even when we don’t have power in our work setting. The presenters outlined some ways that social workers experience resistance from other staff and clients, and ways to work with and overcome that resistance.

Greetings fellow MSSWA members!

This summer I had the amazing opportunity to attend the SSWAA Delegate Assembly and Legislative Institute in Washington D.C. with MSSWA President Molly Fox. I wanted to take a moment to share the empowering experience I had meeting with legislative staff on Capitol Hill.

First, I met with James Ricci, legislative fellow for Senator Amy Klobuchar. I mentioned that MSSWA honored Amy as 2017 legislator of the year with her work related to truancy prevention, funding IDEA, promoting early childhood education, etc. Mr. Ricci was familiar with school social work but wanted to hear more specifics of our day to day role. I had a great thirty-minute conversation with him in which I gave personal stories of my school social work experience in working with youth who have intensive mental health concerns. I felt that Mr. Ricci was very receptive to what I had to say about the importance of employing school social workers. I discussed a few of SSWAA’s legislative priorities, including the Title 4 block grant and expanding HEA-Title 2 to include SISPs. I asked James what we could do to support the work they are doing. He said that the most important thing is having constituents come talk and share their personal stories. He was also very appreciative for the folder of information (thanks to Christy McCoy) that highlights the work of school social workers, MSSWA legislative priorities, and position statements. Mr. Ricci also mentioned that it is vital for school social workers to keep in touch with legislative staff regarding the unmet mental health needs we see in our districts as well as shortages of SISP’s (specialized instructional support personnel), including school social workers.

I also visited with Brenna Barber, education policy advisor for Senator Tina Smith. This was another great conversation about the vital role of school social workers. I told Ms. Barber that we are in full support of the mental health bill Senator Smith has authored. Ms. Barber was quite familiar with the vital role of school social workers. I also made sure to emphasize the need for the continuum of mental health services. Again, I

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was able to share some personal stories of my work as a school social worker. Ms. Barber also mentioned the importance of keeping in touch and following up regarding MSSWA and SSWAA current legislative priorities.

Overall, I felt it was a very productive day at the hill! I have to say that I never thought I would be brave enough or enjoy the experience of meeting with legislative staff. I attended MSSWA day on the hill for the first time this past March. That experience definitely led me to feel confident in my visits to Capitol DC. I left my visits feeling so empowered that I had advocated on behalf of the children and families that we work with each day. I learned that I can develop my macro social work practice by developing my advocacy skills and the best way to accomplish that is by taking advantage of opportunities such as day on the hill and legislative institute. I was so encouraged by doing the visits at Capitol Hill. Myrna Mandalwitz, director of government relations for SSWAA, did a debriefing with our group in which she stressed the importance of EVERY school social worker talking with their state representatives about the legislation and policies that directly impact our students and families.

I strongly encourage all of you to use your voice to advocate at the state and/or national level. This can be as simple as making an appointment to meet with one of your legislators in your hometown. Get to know your representatives and develop a collaborative relationship in which you can openly express your role as a school social worker and how legislation directly impacts students and families in our schools. Share your personal stories. We can and will make a difference, but it takes all of our voices!

MSSWA MINI-GRANT UPDATE

During the 18/19 school year, MSSWA mini-grant funding made the purchase of Hoberman Spheres for the 28 classroom teachers at Wilson Elementary, a K-5 elementary school in the Anoka-Hennepin School District, a reality. Wilson Elementary served approximately 750 students in the 18/19 school year.

The goal of the grant was to ensure that each classroom teacher at Wilson Elementary had a Hoberman Sphere within their classroom to guide breathing instruction & practices. Wilson Elementary teachers utilize Educational Non-Verbal Yardsticks (ENVoY), a classroom management practice that emphasizes the use of non-verbal communication to maintain & enhance positive student-teacher relationships. The effort of equipping the teachers at Wilson with a Hoberman Sphere was to augment the school's current Tier 1 SEL instruction with additional strategies for self-regulation by providing teachers with a tool that would increase student engagement and provide an essential visual aid for the use of the breathing strategies across settings within the school.

During the first year of implementation, classroom teachers utilized the Hoberman Sphere to guide breathing practices at frequencies ranging from daily to monthly. Here were some of the highlight's teachers shared about their use of the tool:

- Students love when I take out the sphere to practice belly breathing & calming down before an activity.
- I have given it to students that needed support or felt stressed. I have used it to help calm down frustrated students. I have used it to transition students from body break time to learning time.
- I use it to calm students and myself.
- We used it after recess some days to reset. We also used it when we were struggling with on-task behavior.
- I used it after big transitions (or any transitions to another subject area), or on harder days when you could see a rise in energy and students were going to have to complete a more difficult task.

Building on the success noted by the classroom teachers, some ideas teachers suggested to support implementation in 19/20 included getting started using the tool right at the beginning of the school year, using their collaboration/PLC time to share ideas & teaching strategies for the sphere, and creating video materials to support the teaching and use of the tool with students.

Thank you MSSWA for your support of this project. We are grateful!

Stephanie Ochocki, DSW, LICSW
District School Social Worker
Anoka-Hennepin Schools



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WORK GROUP UPDATES

MSSWA Record Keeping Project

We ran into some snags in our efforts to provide members with an online tool for record keeping. Liability and financial costs are two areas we are still working out. More information will be coming as we attempt to resolve those issues. The references below outline our responsibility to keep clear and consistent records of our work with students, regardless of your current documentation method.

Social Work Record Keeping

Related to Social Work record keeping, this excerpt from MN statute 148E.225 offers guidance for school social workers, at all levels of practice: 2018 MN Statute - 148E.225 TREATMENT AND INTERVENTION SERVICES

Subd. 4. **Records.** (a) A social worker must make and maintain current and accurate records, appropriate to the circumstances, of all services provided to a client. At a minimum, the records must contain documentation of:

- (1) the assessment or diagnosis;
 - (2) the content of the service plan;
 - (3) progress with the plan and any revisions of assessment, diagnosis, or plan;
 - (4) any fees charged and payments made;
 - (5) copies of all client-written authorizations for release of information; and
 - (6) other information necessary to provide appropriate services.
- (b) These records must be maintained by the social worker for at least seven years after the last date of service to the client. Social workers who are employed by an agency or other entity are not required to:
- (1) maintain personal or separate records; or
 - (2) personally retain records at the conclusion of their employment.

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#### From the NASW (National Association of Social Workers) guide for School Social Work on pg. 10:

Standard 6. **Record Keeping** School social workers shall maintain accurate data and records that are relevant to planning, implementation, and evaluation of school social work services.

Interpretation - School social workers shall maintain timely, accurate, and confidential records that document school social work services, demonstrate outcomes, and promote accountability to the local education agency and community. Records shall be maintained according to federal, state, and local laws

[https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/426a18\\_a9bc671ba3d54d379163d7e9a541b82b.pdf](https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/426a18_a9bc671ba3d54d379163d7e9a541b82b.pdf)

### Summer 2019 Mini Grant

Amy Brouwers from Halverson Elementary School in Albert Lea was awarded a \$500 grant for a Sensory Regulation Room revitalization project in her school. Congratulations Amy!

### Finance

We continue to enjoy a comfortable financial position as a 501c6 non-profit organization.

### Membership

The list we received from the State of MN this summer shows that there are 1,260 school social workers licensed through the MN Department of Education. We are maintaining a membership base of just under 500 members or about 39% of those employed.

Do consider joining and encourage your colleagues as well. See the insert that highlights the Ten Top Reasons to join MSSWA!

Susanne Schroeder, Treasurer & Membership Coordinator



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### **Networking/Outreach**

The networking/outreach committee continues to strive to build and foster connections with social work programs in the state of MN. Our university contacts are kept informed regarding upcoming MSSWA conferences and/or anything that may benefit future school social workers. Our committee is always looking for ways in which we can actively promote MSSWA and the school social work profession. We have and will continue to do this by making visits to social work programs as well as exhibiting at conferences, such as MACMH, MSSA, etc. Another thing our committee would like to do is have student representation on the board. We are going to try to reach out more to our current MSSWA student members so that they can hopefully help us reach more students who are exploring a career in school social work. Lastly, we are working with our university contacts to ensure that there is a school social work course taught in each social work program. We have asked our contacts if they would like assistance in developing a syllabus.

Sincerely,  
Michelle Halverson, MSW, LICSW

### **Message from Brad Lundell – MSSWA Government Relations Specialist**

Summer is coming to an end and that means school social workers will be back on the front lines dealing with student challenges. As your lobbyist, I am proud to work for a client dedicated to improving the lives of students and families throughout Minnesota. These are challenging times with on-going tensions over immigration and instances of gun violence burdening many students with even greater anxiety.

There is a little boost in one-time school safety revenue that will likely be distributed to school districts this fall. The Legislature passed an additional \$34 per pupil unit in one-time aid to help school districts upgrade their school environments both in terms of improvements to physical plant and increases in personnel to help meet the needs of students. The problem with one-time money, of course, is that it is extremely difficult for districts to add staff and make a long-term commitment to any increase in staff if the funding is not on-going. One of the goals for the next Legislative Session will be to make this funding permanent so that districts can put needed student support personnel in place and keep them there.

One of the most positive developments at the Legislature in 2019 was the prominent discussion of the need for student support staff—school social workers, school psychologists, school nurses, school counselors, and chemical dependency counselors—and how there needs to be a stronger commitment to getting the services provided by student support staff more universally available. While direct attempts to provide funding for these positions through a grant program were not adopted, it was refreshing to hear the discussion surrounding school safety extend to staff positions that help improve the environment inside the school building. Schools can be made safer through secure entrances and camera systems, but those improvements don't provide benefits that students can continually apply on a daily basis.

The MSSWA Legislative Committee will be working over the next few months to develop the organization's platform for the 2020 legislative session. Two priorities in addition to making the increase in safe school revenue permanent are expanding the allowable uses of Medical Assistance dollars to include services performed by school social workers as directed in an Individualized Education Plan and giving school social workers who are also licensed clinical social workers the ability to make an initial referral for students who may qualify for special education services in the Other Health Impairments disability category, particular students who exhibit characteristics of ADHD. If you would like to provide input, I am sure Legislative Chair Christy McCoy will welcome your comments.

I truly enjoy working with MSSWA and I can always be reached if you have questions or comments on all things legislative. If I don't have an answer off the top of my head, I will do my level best to get you the information you need.

I can be reached at either [lundelllegislative31@gmail.com](mailto:lundelllegislative31@gmail.com) or 612-220-7459. Thanks, and here's to a great start to the 2019-2020 school year.

MINNESOTA SCHOOL  
**SOCIAL WORKERS**  
ASSOCIATION *Newsletter*

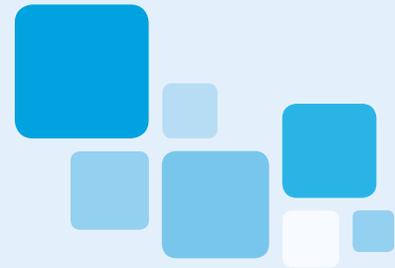
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# MSSWA

*Save the Dates For...*



**MSSWA 2019 Fall Conference** - *October 28-29, 2019*

**MSSWA 2020 Day on the Hill** - *March 4, 2020*

**MSSWA 2020 Spring Conference** - *April 6, 2020*

**MSSWA 2020 Summer Institute** - *June 15-17, 2020*