

Final Report CalSWEC Strategic Planning Survey

November 11, 2001

Summary

In June 1999 the Board of Directors of California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) adopted a new, broader mission statement. In order to operationalize this mission in a strategic plan, the Board commissioned a study of key informants to identify issues, opportunities and directions for action. Individual and group interviews were conducted with over 50 individuals, including CalSWEC Board and staff members, leaders in state and county social services, legislators, foundation executives, and educators.

This report summarizes the process and findings of the survey in the form of suggestions and recommendations for action. It is not intended to be the strategic plan, but it offers raw material from which specific tasks and objectives can be drawn, with assurance that these steps reflect a broad consensus among CalSWEC members and stakeholders. A summary of a September 2001 workshop in which the findings were considered by breakout groups is appended. This document provides further evidence of consensus and should help the Board in identifying priority steps.

Introduction

The California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) was founded in 1989/90 as a coalition among the California Department of Social Services, county Departments of Social Services, the California Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), and all the master's-degree schools of social work/social welfare in the state. Its purpose was to increase and improve the training of master's-level social workers who would undertake employment in the publicly supported social services in California. With support from the Ford Foundation and a coalition of California foundations, CalSWEC sought to enhance financial aid opportunities for students as it worked to better define and deliver social work curriculum content.

Although early projects included efforts in mental health, school social work, and aging, child welfare captured the focus of CalSWEC's attention in its first decade. This occurred for a variety of reasons, including the well-identified need for MSWs in child welfare, policy changes at the state and federal levels, prior collaborations between child welfare agencies and schools of social work, the central role played by county social

service administrators in the creation of CalSWEC, and most importantly, the existence of federal funding sources that could be tapped to support MSW education for child welfare.

CalSWEC's child welfare efforts were quite successful. Funding for training and curriculum development grew from about \$500,000 to more than \$15 million in less than five years. Although the California mental health system continued to be represented in CalSWEC and other areas were discussed, the management and implementation of child welfare programs absorbed virtually all of staff time and resources. When foundation support, which had been extended for three years beyond the initial funding, was finally terminated in about 1993, CalSWEC lacked resources for anything but child welfare programming.

In 1999, as the Board contemplated the celebration of CalSWEC's first decade of operation, sentiment grew for a return to the original, broader mission of the organization. The Board engaged in a retreat and adopted the following new mission statement:

CalSWEC is a partnership among the schools of social work, public human service agencies, and other related professional organizations that facilitates the integration of education and practice to assure effective, culturally competent service delivery to the people of California.

In their summary of retreat outcomes Executive Committee members Theresa Morris and John Cullen explain, "This statement reflects the intention to broaden both the partnership as well as the focus of CalSWEC's efforts. ... While the graduate schools and counties will continue their core IV-E business of preparing and employing social workers for public child welfare practice, we will apply our expertise to address trends and changes in other public human service jobs."

Five goals were identified for a strategic planning effort to follow the retreat. These included:

1. Recruiting and preparing social workers for public human service careers;
2. Defining and operationalizing a continuum of social work education and training;
3. Engaging in research and evaluation of best practices;
4. Advocating for responsive social policies and appropriate resources; and
5. Exploring organizational models that provide maximum opportunity for achieving 1 through 4.

Specific developmental objectives were also stated, including the identification of:

- Alternative governance models;
- New funding sources;

- Emerging labor needs;
- A continuum of education services to meet demands;
- Key targets for work plan support and consensus building; and
- An implementation plan and budget.

Survey Design and Methods

As a next step, the Board felt that a qualitative survey of key informants from education, government, social services, and the CalSWEC Board and staff should be conducted to: (1) assess the level of support for the new mission, and (2) gather needed information and suggestions relevant to these goals and objectives. A proposal was developed, and in December 2000 the Board contracted with a consultant to conduct the key informants' survey.

The Executive Committee and the Board met with the consultant on several occasions to discuss the survey items and sample. The questions were based on the objectives identified in the initial retreat. The final items were approved by the Executive Committee in winter 2000.

Three methods of interviewing were to be employed:

1. In the case of selected government and organization officials, face-to-face visits were arranged.
2. In most cases, individual phone interviews lasting between 45 and 60 minutes were conducted.
3. In the case of CalSWEC central and project staff, one- to two-hour focus groups were held.

In introducing the survey, the consultant shared and explained the new CalSWEC mission and the Board's purposes with regard to testing support for the new mission and translating its vision into a strategic plan.

Survey Items

The following items were included in the final survey schedule:

I. Clarification of Mission

1. How should CalSWEC define itself in order to be a key player in future workforce development?
2. With what new constituencies must CalSWEC engage in order to be effective?
3. How should CalSWEC define its domain and expertise (MSW, BSW, social work, human services, professional, pre- and para-professional, education, training, practice, research and development)?

II. New Targets and Funding Sources

1. What are the most promising new service targets (mental health, voluntary agencies, employment, substance abuse, aging, health, schools, etc.) and how should they be pursued?
2. What new types of funding can CalSWEC access and how?
3. What do these directions suggest re: governance and auspice models?

III. Alternative Governance Auspice and Structure

1. What organizational capacities are most important in selecting a venue for CalSWEC (e.g., flexibility, credibility, resources, security, shared governance)?
2. What venues are possible (University consortium, ORU, State/Federal Planning Council) and what are their advantages and disadvantages?
3. How would a change in auspice affect the mission and programs of CalSWEC?
4. What changes should be made in the governance structure of CalSWEC to enhance effectiveness in addressing the new mission (e.g., spinning off programs, separating maintenance and development, regionalizing)?

IV. Are There Other Comments You Would Like to Offer?

Interview Sample

The sample of persons to be interviewed was developed in an iterative manner, beginning with a list of suggested names gathered at a Board of Directors meeting. This list was refined in two meetings with the Executive Committee based on the available time and preferred focus, and with a view toward representation of necessary sectors and key players. The intent was to focus primarily on persons close to current operations to test consensus, while reaching out selectively to important new constituencies. The final list of persons interviewed included, by sector (note a few individuals count in several sectors):

- **Social Services/Child Welfare**
State Department of Social Services (DSS) Administrators—3
County DSS Directors—4
- **Mental Health**
State Mental Health Administrators (including the State Department of Mental Health and the Mental Health Planning Council—3
County Mental Health Director—1

- **CalSWEC Board Members**
 - Deans—2
 - NASW—2
 - County Social Services—4
 - State DSS—1
 - County Mental Health—1

- **CalSWEC**
 - CalSWEC Director
 - CalSWEC staff—2 focus groups, 11 participants
 - Project Coordinators—1 focus group, all 14 schools represented

- **Other**
 - State Legislature—1
 - California Foundations—1
 - National Foundations—1
 - Child Welfare Directors Association—2
 - Mental Health Directors Association—1
 - California State University Administration—3

Findings and Suggestions

The purpose of this survey was to test agreement with the goals and objectives of the new CalSWEC mission and gather information and suggestions to translate the mission into a strategic plan. As the study was qualitative in design, no frequencies or other statistics are reported. No particular subjects are identified, but when comments reflect the views of a particular segment of the respondents this fact is noted.

Both findings and suggestions are presented in four clusters that emerged as distinct groupings from the interview comments. These are as follows:

- I. CalSWEC Mission and Domain:** What should be the central focus, identity, objectives and activities of the organization?
- II. New Constituencies and Targets:** What new service sectors and stakeholders need to be included and how should they be approached?
- III. Funding:** What new sources might be tapped and how?
- IV. Auspice and Governance:** What organizational form should CalSWEC adopt and how should it be structured and governed in order to best address its mission and goals?

Findings

Findings are presented first as they reflect the reactions of key informants to the new mission statement and their suggestions for refinement. Overall, there was a high degree of agreement with the new mission and objectives.

I. CalSWEC Mission and Domain

Most informants considered training of professional social workers to be the core CalSWEC mission. Many, including state administrators, hoped to expand the focus to include the full continuum of human services workers (para-professional and pre-professional as well as BSW, MSW and other professionals). Most saw a grounding in social work functions and values as a key CalSWEC strength. Some suggested supplementing training with technical assistance to the counties on related personnel functions like recruitment, retention, and staff development (“growing one’s own” staff).

A number of informants emphasized research concerned with “best practices” as an underpinning for training. Also mentioned as connected to training was the dissemination of information about effective policies and practices. The relationship with the universities was seen as important to the credibility of these research and curriculum development efforts. Staff saw the vulnerable family as the core focus across systems. Several Board members stressed the integration of services and the creation of new, integrative professional roles as a central objective.

II. New Constituencies and Targets

Most participants identified targets whose support is necessary for expansion of both CalSWEC domain and funding. These included:

1. DSS departments in addition to CW, stressing Employment/CalWORKS and Adult Protective Services;
2. Other social service sectors, chiefly Mental Health, Aging, law enforcement/probation/parole, non-profits and schools;
3. Consumer advocacy groups;
4. Unions and other practitioner organizations; and
5. Legislators and the Governor.

Some believed that the Board should be expanded to include a wider array of providers and advocates. Widening the participation and changing the perception of an exclusive connection to child welfare was seen as key to greater mental health involvement.

The most frequently mentioned targets for development (in order of frequency) were CalWORKS, mental health and aging services. Less frequently mentioned were schools, drug and alcohol services (AOD), criminal justice and health. Some felt that health was too broad and complex a field to approach at this time. It was suggested that where possible in these fields, voluntary providers should be included as well as county

and state agencies. Some cautioned about the danger of creating multiple parallel tracks and reinforcing current fractionalization of services. Therefore, it was seen as important that CalSWEC develop the theme of service integration as it moves into new fields.

III. Funding

A number of potential funding sources were identified. The most frequently mentioned source was existing governmental programs that might support training, including TANF/CalWORKS, Medicaid/MediCal, state and federal school counseling funds, and aging service funds (APS). Many participants believe it would be possible to secure core foundation funding especially in partnership with the state. Also mentioned was children's funding that might be available through Prop 10. It should be noted that each potential source mentioned would need exploration and development. Many would require forging partnerships at multiple governmental levels similar to the child welfare coalition.

IV. Auspice and Governance

This proved to be the most difficult area for respondents. Many felt they lacked sufficient background to evaluate the strengths and shortcomings of the current system. There was a reluctance to recommend changes in the current structure. Many respondents indicated they had benefited from the current arrangements and were unaware of the burdens and limitations of current funding and auspice arrangements, especially for future development. What emerged were a number of considerations and principles and some resources that will require additional exploration and research. The principles included:

1. The need to stay close to the university's intellectual resources and credibility with funders;
2. The need for curriculum developers and evaluators to have continued contact with students and trainers;
3. The need for continued state government support but avoidance of a hierarchical connection with government that might jeopardize survival in a changed political climate;
4. The potential advantage of connecting with the universities at a higher level than the schools to share the burden of management and secure support;
5. The need for mixed funding;
6. The need to acquire and protect developmental resources from the pressure of day-to-day operations; and
7. The need to broaden the support base to include more providers, consumers, and funders.

The following alternatives were described as possibilities:

1. A non-profit corporation (501C3);

2. An inter-University consortium (e.g., Western Public Health Consortium);
3. A state/federal planning council (e.g. Mental Health Planning Council);
4. A state created and appointed commission (e.g., Police Officer Standards and Training Commission);
5. An organized research unit within UC or CSU, or between them;
6. Continuation of the current arrangement, which might also include the spinning off of additional projects to other schools or increased regionalization (e.g., the Bay Area Training Academy, the Inter-University Consortium).

Some suggested that an ideal solution would involve more than one of these mechanisms. For example, it is probably advisable to maintain the current child welfare structure connected to a particular campus because of match considerations, but an independent development and planning entity could be created as a 501C3.

Suggestions

Specific suggestions for actions that derived from respondents' comments are presented below. Because the level of detail and specificity varied greatly from interview to interview, the consultant has taken the liberty of clarifying and integrating these suggestions and adding information on current activities to identify complete action steps. Where possible, the suggestions are ordered based on ease and arranged so that particular suggestions follow necessary prior steps. For example, outreach activities range from those involving current partners to those involving new constituencies.

I. CalSWEC Mission and Domain

1. Create a “map” of the human services professions in California, noting in what systems and roles professional social workers and related workers are located and the unmet staffing needs in each system.
2. Based on prior CalSWEC research and conceptual efforts, articulate a set of clear career development paths from client and/or volunteer to para-professional, pre-professional, and professional status in the various service systems. Further define the relationship between formal degree education and pre- and in-service training within the career development paths. Starting with child and family welfare (including CalWORKS), mental health and adult services, describe the roles and required training for each level and the ideal relationship among the levels. Emphasize paths that integrate training and degree education so that counties can “grow their own” workers from lower-level employees and clients.
3. Using the model career development paths above, assist the state and counties in creating coordinated multi-level workforce development plans.

4. Revisit curriculum competencies for mental health and explore formulating and/or adopting similar standards for additional priority fields (aging and adult services, CalWORKS/employment, school services, drugs and alcohol, etc.). Adoptable standards already exist in several fields, as a number of competency development efforts have been undertaken nationally.
5. CalSWEC's links with individual school faculty, other than those who receive research grants, are limited. Links between faculty and practitioners are also not widespread. Efforts in this direction could include:
 - a. Hosting curriculum conferences similar to the conference on Social Work in Mental Health that CalSWEC co-sponsored with the state in 1994, and the Child Welfare Competency Workshops. Such conferences could draw together educators, administrators and practitioners to discuss standards and implementation of training; and
 - b. Sponsoring educational exchanges between schools and agencies modeled on the child welfare fellows program.

II. Constituencies and New Targets

1. Organize brainstorming meetings with CWDA departments/sub-committees, such as Child Welfare, CalWORKS, Aging and Adult Services, Administration, etc. (perhaps in conjunction with CWDA state meetings), to discuss staffing and related needs and potentials for CalSWEC activity. Invite the appropriate state DSS administrators to participate. This process would help to reinvigorate the relationship between CalSWEC and CWDA.
2. Organize meeting(s) of California Health and Welfare Division Heads and the heads of recognized professional organizations (e.g., DSS and CWDA; State Mental Health Directors Association (SMHDA) and the Mental Health Institute and Planning Council; State ADP and CADPACC; Education and the NASW School Social Work Commission) to discuss staffing and related needs and the role CalSWEC could play. Separate sector meetings could be preliminary to a "workforce summit" in 2002–2003, hopefully timed to coincide with improvement in the state budget.
3. Form a development group for the mental health workforce consisting of CalSWEC, the schools, SMHDA, the Mental Health Institute and the Mental Health Planning Council. Review the competencies and sample contracts produced by the CalSWEC Mental Health Subcommittee in the mid-90s.
4. Look for opportunities in the debate regarding TANF/CalWORKS re-authorization, to lead discussion on the training needs of CalWORKS staff and

the roles social workers and others should play in transition to work and employment retention. There is likely to be a political consensus and, therefore, opportunities for expanded services for recent CalWORKS graduates and low-wage working families. CalSWEC could play a major role in training staff for these services.

5. Reach out, initially through a survey, to the leadership of key consumer and advocacy groups regarding their concerns about the human services workforce.
6. By the end of 2002, develop a plan to reconstitute membership of the Board in conjunction with any changed governance plan.
7. Incorporate a transformational, integrative services perspective to balance the system-by-system development approach. Suggestions to accomplish this end include:
 - a. To the extent possible, hosting training activities that cross-departmental and disciplinary lines (e.g., cross-training of child welfare, mental health, drugs and alcohol, and domestic violence on CPS issues);
 - b. Hosting “think tank” events bringing together administrators and policy leaders to explore inter-system cooperation in serving vulnerable populations; and
 - c. Disseminating information about and considering facilitating sponsorship of pilot interagency and interdisciplinary service programs. CalSWEC could draw on the experience of its early OHDS interdisciplinary child welfare program as a point of departure.
8. A meeting(s) with leaders of the BSW and BA programs (either together or separately) should be held to discuss objectives and possible resources.
9. Once more information is available about existing programs, a meeting should be held between CalSWEC representatives and key leaders in the community college system to discuss possibilities for expanded para- and pre-professional human service programs with conceptual and career development links to bachelor’s and master’s opportunities.

III. Funding

Only initial steps were suggested with regard to the various sources:

1. A funding task force should be established to assist the Board in organizing and coordinating its approach to the potential funders.

2. Funding sources and the potential coordination of new sources should be discussed in the various workforce development meetings (CWDA, mental health, state DSS, and intersystem) suggested above.
3. A summary of this strategic plan should be used to initiate discussions with selected foundations that might be willing to support, in full or in part, a core grant to provide multi-year development support for CalSWEC. Securing such a core developmental grant should be an early priority.
4. CalSWEC should coordinate its strategic planning with the legislative hearings on the social work workforce of the Assembly Human Services Committee and with the state DSS Stakeholders Group.
5. Initial contacts that have occurred with TANF/CalWORKS should be followed up with the state and CWDA to consider the possibility of a pilot training program for CalWORKS funded through TANF and Workforce Assistance funding.

IV. Auspice and Governance

A task force on auspices that includes appropriate expert advisors should be formed to help in distilling the alternative suggestions and drafting a model(s). The Executive Committee and the Board should discuss pros, cons, and informational gaps with regard to each model preliminary to preparation of a potential restructuring proposal. As a first step, some structure to house a developmental “arm” of CalSWEC should be created.

Conclusion and Next Steps

The strategic planning survey revealed a high degree of support for the new CalSWEC mission and goals. The current shortage of trained and degreed professionals seems to have increased the perception among most stakeholders that a common approach to workforce development is needed. CalSWEC is in an excellent position to extend a model that is perceived as successful. The Board is now in a position to plan a strategic approach utilizing the ideas and suggestions in this report. Although budget resources have tightened since the Board began its review, outreach and developmental steps now should place CalSWEC in a position to take advantage of opportunities based on an improving economy in the next few years.

Prepared by Bart Grossman, *Consultant*

Appendix 1

Results of Breakout Groups at Board Workshop—9/7/01

MISSION AND DOMAIN: (presented by Anita Bock)

Create a map of human services professions.

Comments: Agree with #1 (create a map), #2 (set clear career development paths from client/and or volunteer to paraprofessionals), #3 (with career paths model, assist the State and co. in creating coordinated multi-level workforce development plans).

-We will have to define "Social Worker"

-Agree with defining/identifying the "universe" in which "social worker" occurs.

-Greater global context- linked to #2 & then tied specifically to CalSWEC's Universe

-A "Matriculation Plan"

- Methodology
- Integrated
- Use Existing Models (e.g., education)

Funding?

Collaboration-would do best

Foundation Funding

CWDA

CalSWEC

Global Strategic Planning

Group decided that micro level not a good idea, need to expand our thinking to the private, universal, global analyst or matriculation plan. Industries get more attention when they deal with issues globally. Social Work is not associated with economic development.

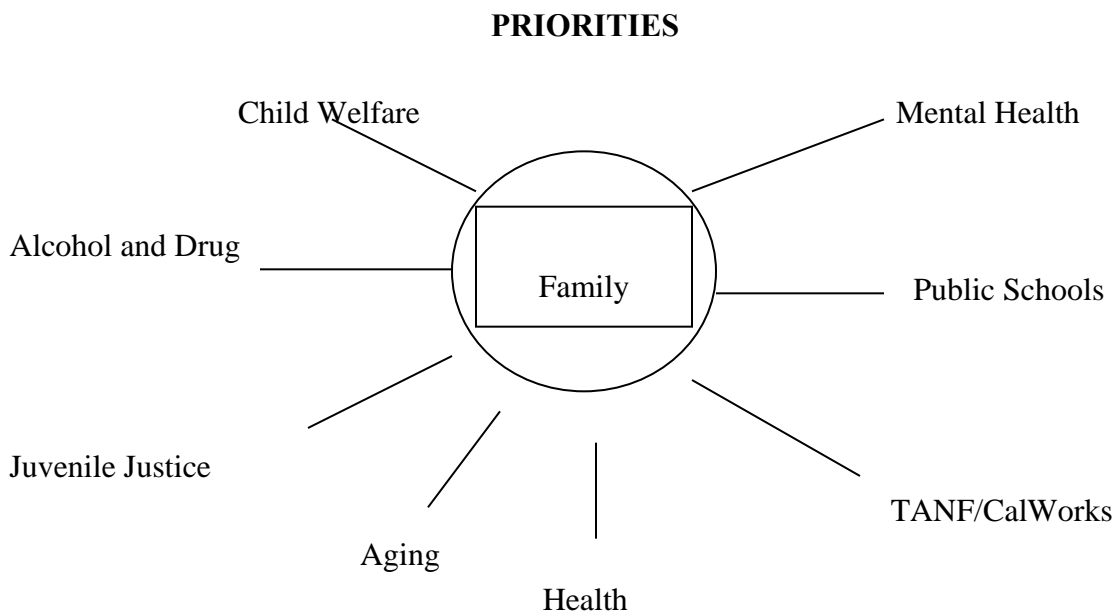
In a social work career path, how can you get where you'd like to be, how long will it take to get you there? Guidance to people who are thinking of coming into this industry is what's missing in our industry. There is a shortage of institutions that provide the kind of training that people need. Looking ahead to five, ten years, we need to know where our shortages will lead us and where in the industry there's going to be a need. This would drive a lot of essential dialog.

CalSWEC would do best in collaboration and this ought to attract some substantial foundation interest. We felt that the global approach touched on all the suggestions, macro and micro.

Comments: (Cecilia Espinola) The Irvine Foundation is funding various initiatives, (Santa Cruz being one of them), to do career mapping, the identical

thing that EDD, the State Employment Development Department, is investing in part of their workforce development strategy. The Irvine Foundation has identified three cluster industries: health care/ business services/ and child development, which they are mapping through the community colleges. They are also working with business and industry by identifying all the various levels of the jobs. The money is there; we just have to package it in an economic way. CDSS can be very helpful in working this in health and human services agencies. CalSWEC needs to be tied back to economic development, employment, growth for community, and career development. All of those things put you on the other side of the equation, out of the “social work” world.

TARGETS AND CONSTITUENCIES: (presented by Diana Edwards)
 Prioritize around themes: *Vulnerable Family*, thread of priorities with constituencies. Start with what we already know, organize around Child Welfare and build on that.



Child Welfare being the building block, fan out to those areas and disciplines that support families most directly.

Constituencies

1. Consumers
 - a) Students/employees
 - b) Clients from several systems
2. CSWE

3. Collateral disciplines (gerontology, child development, law, nursing, education)
4. BBS/ nonprofits (providers)
5. Criminal/juvenile justice
6. Labor
7. Drug and alcohol services
8. Public health
9. Public schools

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 Labor
 Drug and alcohol services
 Public health
 Public schools
 Child advocacy/advocate groups

*Stakeholders' good way to think about contacting those groups.

FUNDING: 3 Steps (presented by John Cullen)

Step 1

Case statement for funding, a short document describing what CalSWEC is about, what our ten-year view is and to show what we are trying to achieve. This would serve as a marketing piece that we could use to approach foundations and others to go after this first section:

Discretionary Funding (infrastructure building money) used for hiring staff and start the work required to fulfill plans. Foundations- many of them would have a vested interest in co-funding an evolution of CalSWEC, perhaps even going back to Ford and saying your money from ten years ago has gotten us to this point, look at what we are planning for the next ten years. Also, some of the big foundations that are doing a lot of business in the California in families and children's areas:

- Stuart
- H. Packard
- Zellerbach
- California Endowment
- California Foundation
- Aspen

It would be attractive to have matched money already identified. If we could pull together money from the county social service departments, perhaps the state department, the department of mental health, EDD, other organizations that really have something to gain here. If we put together a little bit of money from that effort we could include that in our case statement, which would go to the foundations. This would show them and prove to them that we are not just asking for their money, but that we are asking for a levered partnership.

Step 2

Program Tracks

Mental Health	Medicare/ MediCal
TANF	State CalWORKS \$, County CalWORKS \$, Federal reauthorization, Fed \$ tied to Training for people in TANF
Prop 10 (State)	Child development related training which is built in to the various subject matters
Aging	Medical, Hartford, AARP grant requests, statewide funding of APS, county stipends training tracks
Hispanic Track HACU	Title 5 (Federal \$) Universities that have 25% Hispanic students or more, are designated as a Hispanic-serving institution.
School of Social Work (Superintendents org.)	Federal Teacher Preparation \$, Prop 98 \$, Lottery \$, Governor's special allocation for school services, State Prop 10 school readiness

Step 3

Clearing House/Idea House on Funding
For ideas on leveraging \$ on county by county basis

- Criminal Justice? May be too problematic
- Training: Federal, state and local funding sources tied to criminal justice training, could be linked to part of CalSWEC program

Step 4

Research Focus

Federal, state, local, and find funding available

AUSPICE: (presented by Janlee Wong)

Principles A few changes (*See blue draft*)

#3 (the need for continued State gov't support but avoidance of hierarchical connection) *should include: State, Federal, county, university, (funding)*

#5 (the need for mixed funding) *last "C" in CalSWEC should be "Continuum", not Center (broader funding)*

Possibilities

#1 Group started to filter that it should be a 501c3/university consortium (IUC is a 501c3 anyway).

Questions:

-Could the university be on the board of a 501c3 consortium?

-Could a 501c3 receive a IV-E contract?

#3, (need for continued State gov't support)

#4, (advantage of connecting with the Universities at a higher level) Subject to the political process because the appointment process is political, the governor, the legislature, etc. Pluses (+) and minuses (-) to a state council and commission. Might be a little more stable funding, but subject to the cutting exercises and there could be strings attached.

#4 (advantage of connecting with the Universities at a higher level) Takes 10 years to create commission

5 (need for mixed funding) organized research could just be a project entity, rather than the broader entity that they were looking at.

-Pursue found money to explore options/models (#1 priority?)

-Zellerbach, Casey/JM

-Existing model: (CIMH) California Institute of Mental Health, they do professional development training, packages, curriculum packages but they have no stipends for students.

Summary: *First priority, some kind of 501c3/IUC

Lower priority: council, commission, and research.