

## Is your playground appropriate for TK students?

Do your plans to meet the requirements for transitional kindergarten include appropriate playgrounds? If you're planning to use your current kindergarten playground, the equipment may not be safe for children under 5 years old.

Playground manufacturers design equipment to meet the needs of children as they grow and develop. Equipment found at most schools are designated either for ages 2 to 5 or 5 to 12. A structure designed for a 2- to 5-year-old is correct for transitional kindergarten students as

they may not have the physical ability to utilize equipment for children ages 5 to 12. Many kindergarten playgrounds have equipment for the 5 to 12 age group.

Equipment that is not appropriate for children ages 2 to 5 include:

- Free-standing arch climbers
- Log rolls
- Sliding poles
- Track rides
- Seesaws (unless equipped with a spring centering device)
- Rung ladders, climbing nets, arch climbers or tire climbers used as the sole access to equipment

- Flexible access components must allow a 2- to 5-year-old the ability to bring both feet to the same level before ascending to the next level.



Specific measurements also differ on equipment for 2- to 5-year-olds vs. 5- to 12-year-olds. Here are just a few examples:

- Maximum difference in height between stepped platforms:
  - 2 to 5 years is 12 inches
  - 5 to 12 years is 18 inches
- Maximum height of horizontal ladders and overhead rings, measuring from the grasping device to the protective surfacing:
  - 2 to 5 years is 60 inches
  - 5 to 12 years is 84 inches

- Barriers needed on elevated surfaces above protective surfacing:

- 2 to 5 years - if platform is more than 30 inches
- 5 to 12 years - if platform is more than 48 inches

There are more measurement requirements, so it's important to know what age group your playground manufacturer has determined. You cannot put an inaccurate sign on the equipment with the age group you want to accommodate as this can create a safety issue for the children and a liability issue for the district. If you're uncertain about the designated user age for your equipment,

contact your facilities staff and ask them to review equipment records.

### Playground equipment not appropriate for any school playground:

- Unsecured, stand-alone play equipment designed for residential use such as:
  - plastic playhouses
  - slides
  - dome climbers
  - basketball hoops
- Trampolines
- Climbing ropes not secured on both ends

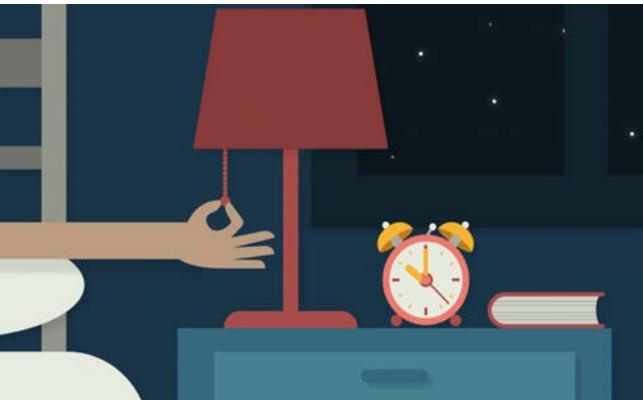




**Certified  
Playground  
Safety Inspector**

## SIA hosts playground inspector course

To help our member districts meet California requirements for playground inspections, SIA is hosting the Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI) course and exam November 7-9. The course includes 15 hours of training from nationally recognized playground safety experts. Advanced reading is also required prior to beginning the course. The 120-minute exam is held on the final day and candidates who successfully pass the exam will obtain their CPSI certification. For more information, email [PreventionServices@sia-jpa.org](mailto:PreventionServices@sia-jpa.org).



## How to support employee sleep health

According to the CDC, 35 percent of workers report that they routinely do not get the recommended seven to nine hours of sleep per night. In addition to negative financial impact, there's an increased risk for anxiety and depression among people who don't get the required amount of sleep, plus a higher risk of accidents and injuries.

Employers can look for programs and resources to help educate and support their staffs in good sleep habits. Ideas include:

## SIA initiates a new \$5,000 deductible

Each new school year brings changes and challenges, as we all know. Schools and the California insurance marketplace have been impacted by explosive verdicts, an evolving legal and regulatory landscape, catastrophic insurance losses, and retroactive laws reviving unexpected claims and liabilities. As a result, insurance costs across the state and nation have been increasing significantly the last few years. To help address the increasing costs, we're implementing a new member deductible in the SIA Liability Program.

Effective July 1 of this year, a member deductible of up to \$5,000 will be applied to each automobile liability and general liability claim. This deductible program was approved by the SIA Executive Committee and Board of Directors.

**What does this mean?** The liability deductible will apply to the settlement of a liability claim or could represent legal costs, investigative costs or related expenses incurred defending a claim.

**Does claims handling change?** No. You'll continue to report your liability claims as you do now. SIA will continue to administer your claims, ensure consistent outcomes and provide a vigorous defense when needed. Don't delay submitting claims as delays can increase costs.

**How will the deductible be applied or collected?** SIA will invoice the member for reimbursement of expenses and/or settlement up to the deductible amount. If the claim is resolved for less than the deductible, SIA will invoice the member only for those expenses incurred. If expenses and/or settlement exceed the deductible, SIA will invoice for the deductible amount.

**How does this affect auto claims?** Auto liability claims (liability for damage to the claimant's property) will be subject to this new member deductible. The Collision and Comprehensive deductible for damages to member-owned vehicles remains as currently applied (\$500 Comprehensive and \$1,000 Collision).

**How can I help reduce our costs?** As an SIA member, your district is part of a pool of other school entities that have come together for the purpose of self-insuring, group purchase and loss control. Each school district employee has the power to reduce potential loss by following district policies and procedures, participating in loss-prevention trainings, staying current on property maintenance, and being vigilant about the activities occurring on campuses and worksites. These efforts can help keep district funds in the classrooms.

- Coaching – Health coaches can be valuable resources for employees to help create habits to improve sleep.
- Educational programs – Programs can be implemented onsite and through online learning to address stress management, nutrition, sleep habits and biofeedback.
- Personal empowerment – Many wellness portals can support individual health challenges through health coaching and by integrating wearable devices to track sleep.

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*Designed with school district leaders in mind.*



## We can all help prevent suicide

### September is Suicide Prevention Month

Understanding the issues concerning suicide and mental health is an important way to take part in suicide prevention, help others in crisis and change the conversation around suicide. Following are some things to consider:

**1) Suicide is not inevitable for anyone.** By starting the conversation, providing support and directing help to those who need it, we can help prevent suicides and save lives.

**2) We can all take action.** Evidence shows that providing support services, talking about suicide, reducing access to means of self-harm and following up with loved ones are just some of the actions we can all take to help others.

**3) Crisis centers are critical.** By offering immediate counseling to everyone who may need it, local crisis centers provide invaluable support at critical times and connect individuals to local services.

The 988 Lifeline is now active across the United States. For more information visit [www.988lifeline.org](http://www.988lifeline.org).

SIA is assisting member districts with anonymous reporting tools. These resources help students and staff report

concerns about bullying, potential self-harm or harm to others and vandalism. To learn more about the tools for your district, contact SIA Risk Manager Jennifer Serran at [jserran@sia-jpa.org](mailto:jserran@sia-jpa.org).



## Sleep health

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- Holistic health – There are non-drug and natural approaches that are safe and can improve sleep health, including CBD, melatonin, chamomile tea and aromatherapy lavender.



Innovative technology offers potential solutions:

- Biofeedback tools
  - o Oura Ring, Garmin, Polar, FitBit, Withings and more track sleep quality, heart rate, oxygen levels and other biometrics.
- Apps
  - o Drowzle, SleepCycle, Sleep Easy and DAYZZ help screen for sleep apnea and sleep hygiene, monitor unhealthy habits and track overall sleep health.
  - o Calm and Headspace feature meditations, mindfulness and breathing exercises to help reduce stress.

Source: Healthwell Solutions, [www.healthwellcorp.com](http://www.healthwellcorp.com)







## SIA Leadership Academy

SIA's Leadership Academy begins another year of offering trainings to our district members to help with their numerous demands and challenges. Because SIA knows the importance of supporting our school district leaders, these courses are provided at no cost. For more information or to register for a course, email [afranco@sia-jpa.org](mailto:afranco@sia-jpa.org).

Our Autumn sessions are:

### **Bud to Boss: How to Survive and Thrive as a New Supervisor**

*Course will be conducted over three Thursdays with a mid-morning break.*

#### **October 6, 13 and 20 – 8 to 10 a.m. and 1 to 3 p.m., virtual course**

This course helps new and frontline leaders become more effective and confident in their leadership roles. The most challenging leadership experience anyone will face isn't the one at the top but the first promotion to a leadership position. It can be overwhelming to deal with the change and uncertainty that come with the transition from peer to leader. Participants will gain new skills and insights in discussions that include:

- Understanding your role
- The biggest mistakes new leaders make
- Improved retention of your team
- Setting clear expectations
- Building new routines



### **Personality and Managing People**

#### **Wednesday, October 19 – 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., in person at SIA office**

What is it that makes the difference in why and how we relate to other people? Learn how personality is that "automatic pilot" in each of us that creates a bridge to understanding. This work will help you understand why people consistently and predictably do the things they do and will also make you aware of the challenges and limitations of your own traits. You'll learn how to utilize the knowledge and understanding of personality differences to supervise, influence and motivate your direct reports, peers and associates. Based on the work of Carol Ritberger, Ph.D., you'll also learn what color you are – red, orange, yellow or green.

Program Objectives:

- Less stress in the workplace
- Greater understanding of the neurological qualities that drive how we gather information and make decisions
- Increased communication skills with those who gather and make decisions differently
- Understanding of the strengths of yourself and of those you supervise and manage



## **CDE Office of School Transportation Blended Entry Level Passenger Transportation Administrator Course**

This program is designed to provide a core body of knowledge and required skills to those individuals currently holding a position as a transportation administrator who may not have received any formalized training and who desire advancement into a career as a passenger transportation administrator. This program has seven components:

- Introduction to Passenger Transportation Administration
- Transportation Personnel Issues and Driver Handbook
- Special Education Transportation
- Working with Unions and Personnel Contracts
- State Regulations Compliance Enforced by the California Highway Patrol
- Pupil Loading / Unloading Requirements
- Passenger Transportation: Vehicle Purchasing and Procurement

*Applications are currently being accepted. To apply, print the application from the link listed below and mail it with the course fee and a check or money order for \$1,200 to the OST at 825 Riverside Parkway, Suite 110, West Sacramento, CA 95605. You'll receive a confirmation email as soon as your application is processed. Enrollment Form: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/tn/im/documents/administrator-form-blendedopt.pdf>. If you have any questions regarding this email, call 916-375-7100.*



**Leader Tip:** Approach projects knowing that your team is the most important resource you have. Staffers' enthusiasm will make or break your project. Invest time in building trust and ensuring that everyone knows how to contribute to the big picture.

## Write concisely and clearly

When you have something complicated to say, take the space you need to say it. But unnecessarily wordy or repetitive writing is more likely to confuse your point rather than elucidate it. Here are three ways to edit yourself so you can get your message across more clearly:

- **Delete words that don't add anything.** Consider these: generally, basically, actually, kind of, really, virtually, totally, essentially, completely, literally and just. If one of these words is essential to the meaning of your sentence keep it. If not, let it go.
- **Cut the overlap.** When you're thinking through your idea as you're writing, there's a good chance that you'll repeat yourself. To find redundant sentences, read your writing out loud and listen for any repetition that you can remove.
- **Don't tell the reader what you're going to do. Just do it.** Take this sentence: "I want to point out a few problems with our onboarding." You won't lose anything by cutting those first few words and being more direct: "Our current staffing problems are X, Y and Z."

Source: Harvard Business Review



## Secure your parking lot gates

Unsecured parking lot gates can result in serious damage to vehicles and injury to vehicle passengers. Loose gates can easily be swung open by the wind or passing students. The solution to this potentially dangerous problem is simple: Secure the gates with chains, clamps and/or latches to lock them in place. All parking gates should be secured after being both opened and closed.



### QUOTE TO NOTE

*"When we stop to count our blessings rather than focusing on our predicament, our attitude will be able to help us cope with our situation more productively."*

**Kevin Eikenberry**

**The material in this newsletter should be part of your Injury and Illness Prevention Plan (IIPP).**

**Keep a copy of this newsletter in your IIPP binder.**

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