



# **PDE Virtual Town Hall**

## **School Social Worker Certification**

August 12, 2021

# Agenda

Welcoming Remarks (5 minutes)

Introducing PDE's Newest Certification (5 minutes)

Voices from the Field: Providing Input on the School Social Worker Certification (10 minutes)

101: School Social Worker Certification and Staffing Program Guidance (10 minutes)

The Importance of Educators with Social Emotional Learning Competencies (10 minutes)

Q&A (20 minutes)

# Welcoming Remarks

**Dr. Sherri Smith**

Office of Elementary and Secondary Education

**Dr. Tanya I. Garcia**

Office of Postsecondary and Higher Education

# ▶ Introducing PDE's Newest Certification

**Dr. Debra Heath-Thornton**

Bureau of School Leadership and Teacher Quality

# School Social Worker Workgroup

**Workgroup members included representatives from the following institutions and organizations:**

- Public and Private Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs)
- Local Education Agencies (LEAs)
- Intermediate Units (IUs)
- Professional Social Work Organizations
- Community Partners

## Input on the School Social Worker (SSW) Certification

**Dr. Leonora Foels and Dr. Jessica Weiss-Ford**

Millersville University

**Dr. Dee Stalnecker**

Derry Township School District

### Origins of SSW Certification

- Governor Wolf's January 20, 2020, press conference, [Reach Out PA: Your Mental Health Matters](#)
- Governor Wolf charged PDE with creating pathways to increase the number of highly qualified, trained social workers in schools
- A working group was formed to create a framework for school social worker certification

### Why SSW Certification is Necessary

- High quality professionals – create standards as to who can provide social work services in PA schools
- Aligns SSW with their educationally-certified colleagues
- More accurate reporting of SSWs in districts



# ▶ 101: School Social Worker CSPG

**Dr. Kerry Helm**

Division of Certification Services

# ➤ 101: School Social Worker CSPG

## Definition

The School Social Worker provides schools with the knowledge and competence required to provide school social work services for all students in grades PK-12 with a focus on preventative and/or problem-solving tools

# 101: School Social Worker CSPG

## Grade Level Scope of Certificate

- A person employed in the position of School Social Worker holding a PK-12 School Social Worker Educational Specialist certificate is qualified to serve grades PK-12
- A School Social Worker Educational Specialist certificate is issued to individuals who:
  - Hold a master's degree in social work from an accredited Council of Social Work Education (CSWE) program or an equivalent foreign qualification recognized by the CSWE Office of Social Work Accreditation (OSWA)  
*AND*
  - Are licensed through the Pennsylvania Department of State, Bureau of Occupational Affairs, as a licensed social worker (LSW) or licensed clinical social worker (LCSW)

# ➤ 101: School Social Worker CSPG

## Staffing Assignment

A person employed in a position as a School Social Worker is qualified to perform about 15 duties and functions that include, but are not limited to, assessment, develop interventions, provide crisis and emergency assistance, parent/caregiver counseling, and consult with and collaborate across agencies and organizations

# 101: School Social Worker CSPG

## Special Considerations

- Individuals who are licensed as a LSW or LCSW in accordance with [CSPG #201](#) or hold a PA Home and School Visitor certificate may apply for and receive a School Social Worker certificate if they satisfy the following requirements:
  - Are currently licensed through the Pennsylvania Department of State as a LSW or LCSW;
  - Are currently employed by a local educational agency (LEA) in the Commonwealth; and
  - Have completed at least one year of satisfactory service as a School Social Worker or other titled position providing social work-related services in a Commonwealth LEA within the prior two years

# 101: School Social Worker CSPG

## Special Considerations

- After August 1, 2023, all persons employed as a School Social Worker must either:
  - (1) hold a valid, active Pennsylvania School Social Worker Educational Specialist certificate or
  - (2) have an emergency permit, be a LSW or LCSW, and be enrolled in a PDE-approved school social worker program

# 101: School Social Worker CSPG

## Restrictions

- Except as provided elsewhere in this CSPG, a School Social Worker may not provide services that are specifically reserved for a certified school counselor ([CSPG #76](#)) or for a certified school psychologist ([CSPG #81](#)).

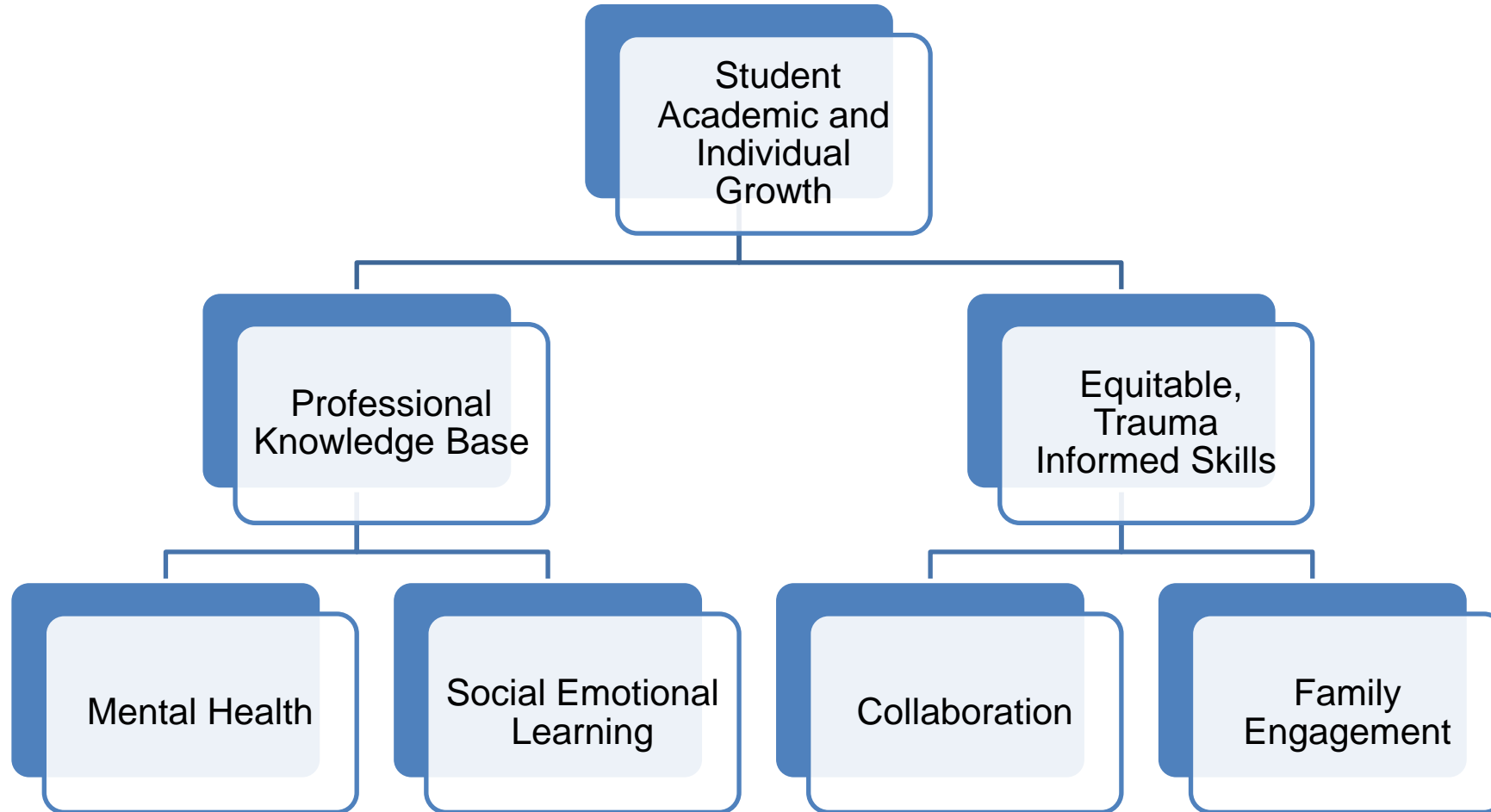
# The Importance of Educators with Social Emotional Learning Competencies

**Dr. Dana Milakovic**

Office for Safe Schools



# The Importance of Educators with Social Emotional Learning Competencies



## The Importance of Educators with Social Emotional Learning Competencies

In the past 12 months...	2015	2017	2019
Enjoyed being in school	43.4%	41.3%	38.6%
Feel safe at my school	84.1%	83.4%	80.0%
Threatened at school	20.3%	20.5%	18.9%
Attacked at school	8.4%	8.3%	7.6%
Brought weapon to school	1.6%	1.2%	0.9%
Experienced bullying	16.9%	28.2%	25.1%
Felt depressed or sad most days	38.3%	38.1%	38.0%
Self-harm in past year	15.1%	16.5%	14.4%
Death of a friend or family member	40.3%	40.7%	39.1%
Worried about running out of food	13.7%	13.4%	11.7%
Felt tired every day/several times	N/A		64.7%

# The Importance of Educators with Social Emotional Learning Competencies

## School Social Work National Standards

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Management
- Social Awareness
- Relationship Skills
- Decision Making

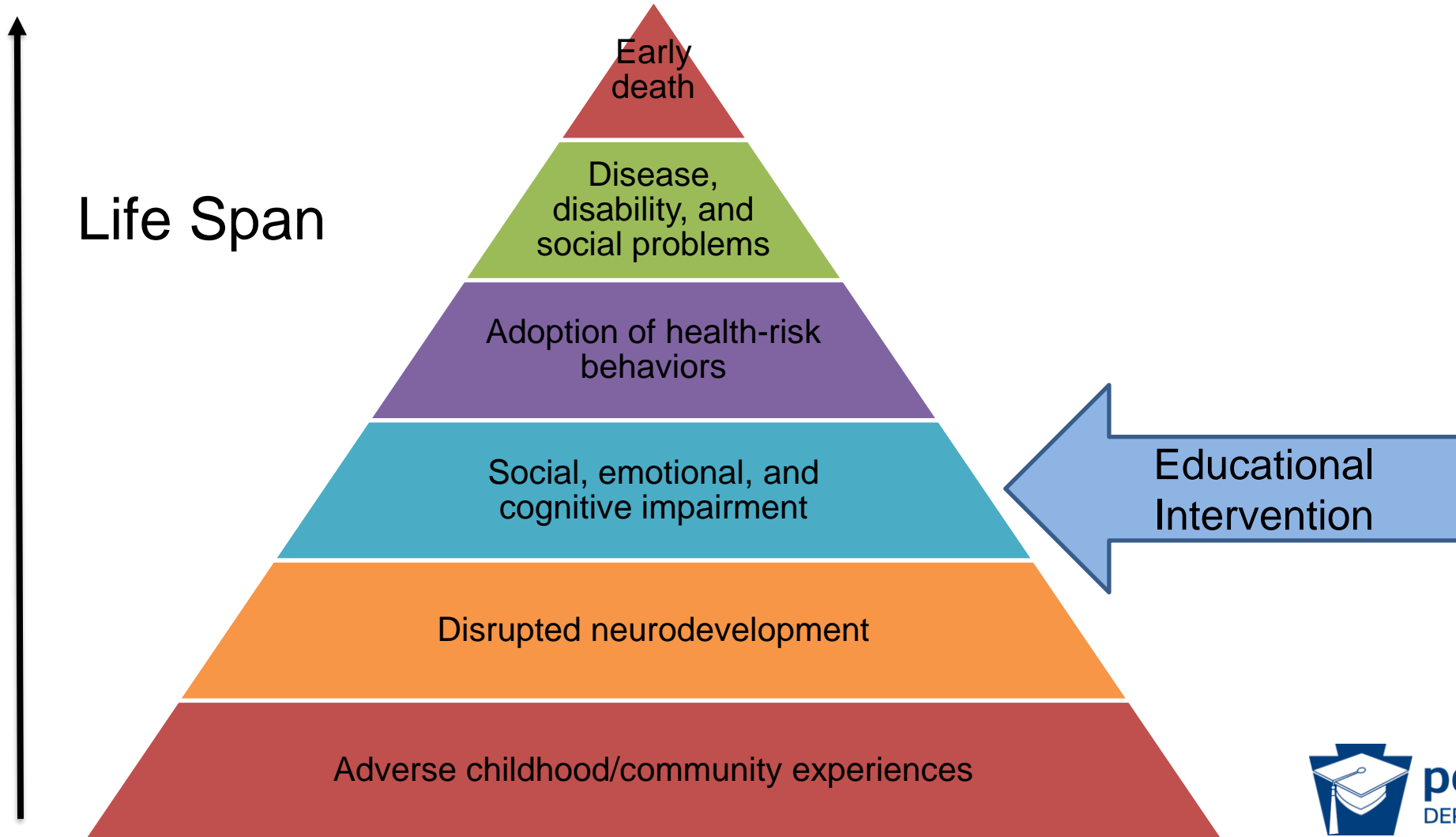
[School Social Work Association of America: School Social Work National Standards for Social Emotional Learning](#)

## PA Career Ready Skills

- Self-Awareness and Self-Management
- Establishing and Maintaining Relationships
- Social Problem Solving

[PDE: Career Ready Skills](#)

# The Importance of Educators with Social Emotional Learning Competencies



## Equitable, Trauma-Informed Practices

- Focus on core trauma-informed care practices
- Assist schools with engaging in trauma-focused family engagement practices
- Engage in individual support for students
- Consultation for staff and families

**Please use the “raise hand” feature  
or use the chat box to ask a question.**

Thank you!

## More information:

CSPG 87-School Social Worker, Educational Specialist Certificate PK-12

<https://www.education.pa.gov/Educators/Certification/Staffing%20Guidelines/Pages/CSPG87.aspx>

Certification Services website

<https://www.education.pa.gov/Educators/Certification/Pages/default.aspx>

Email

[ra-edcertquestions@pa.gov](mailto:ra-edcertquestions@pa.gov)