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To find UCLA SMHP materials that reference the Comprehensive Student Support System and the role of the Resource Coordinating Team (referred to in Hawaii as the CSSS cadre) go to <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>

To request a copy of the Center on Disability Studies Research Review on Collaborative Teaming please call Landry at (808) 956-3164 or go to [www.sig.hawaii.edu](http://www.sig.hawaii.edu) to download your copy.

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# Effective Practices Brief



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## Supporting All Students to Achieve High Standards

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## The CSSS Cadre: A Vital Mechanism for Coordinating Resources to Implement a School's Comprehensive Student Support System (CSSS)

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### Purpose

This Brief focuses on the potential for synergistic functioning of a school's CSSS Cadre and its vital role in implementing a comprehensive, multifaceted, and integrated Comprehensive Student Support System.

*Synergy: total effect greater than the sum of the individual effects*

*Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 1997*

### Overview

As part of its continuing commitment to help schools develop an effective Comprehensive Student Support System (CSSS), the Hawai'i Department of Education (DOE) is encouraging establishment of a CSSS cadre at each school. A key step in helping schools do so involved providing targeted training to eight model schools across the state. These sites provided others an opportunity to observe, discuss, and learn from their successes and challenges as they each strove to establish CSSS Cadres. The model schools were: Baldwin High, Ewa Elementary, Hilo Union Elementary, Ho'okena, Jarrett Middle, Kalaheo High, Kailua Intermediate, and Leilehua High.

Hawai'i's commitment to developing a CSSS makes it a pioneer in implementing comprehensive, multifaceted, and systemic approaches to addressing barriers to learning to enable all students to perform up to standards so they can grow into confident, caring, and contributing citizens in their communities.

### A closer look at a school's CSSS resources

As part of its CSSS infrastructure, every school uses a team approach to focus on the needs of individual students/families (e.g., a student support team, an IEP team). These student-centered teams focus on such functions as referral, intervention, and care monitoring or management.

In contrast to this case-by-case focus, a school's CSSS cadre takes responsibility for coordinating resources on a school-wide level to address barriers to student learning and promoting healthy development. This includes analyzing how existing resources are used and clarifying how they can be used even more synergistically and effectively.

## Who participates in the CSSS Cadre?

Theoretically, when there are two people, you have a group. The CSSS cadre can begin with only two people and expand into an inclusive group of informed stakeholders who are able and willing. An effective CSSS Cadre draws from various stakeholders. These school-wide resource coordinating cadres may have a small core group with various others included as needed. As schools continue to build their CSSS cadre, they should consider the following players:

- Principal/VP
- Counselor
- Student Service Coordinator (SSC)
- Parent Facilitator/Kupuna from the Parent Community Networking Center (PCNC)
- School Health Nurse
- Complex Psychologist
- Social Worker
- School Renewal Specialist (SRS)
- CSSS Resource Teacher (CSSS-RT)
- School Based Behavioral Health Therapist (SBBH)
- Literacy RT/Teacher
- Special education teacher and/or Educational Assistant
- Regular education teacher
- Representatives of community agencies involved regularly with the school
- Student representation (when appropriate and feasible)
- Others who have a particular interest and ability to help with the functions

It is important to integrate the CSSS cadre with the existing infrastructure at the school which focuses on instruction and management/governance. For example, the school administrator on the team must represent the team at administrative meetings; there should be a representative of the CSSS cadre at parent/teacher conferences and governance meetings; another should represent the team at Quality Assurance meetings and other appropriate complex level meetings.

## What are the functions of the CSSS Cadre?

The CSSS Cadre performs essential functions related to the implementation and ongoing development of a school's Comprehensive Student Support System. Examples of key functions are:

- Mapping, identifying, and analyzing resources at the school and in the community
- Coordinating and integrating school resources & connecting with community resources
- Recommending how resources should be deployed and redeployed
- Developing strategies for enhancing resources
- Identifying the most pressing program development needs at the school
- Establishing priorities, planning, and facilitating ways to strengthen programs and developing new ones
- "Social marketing" (i.e. a brochure or fact sheet about parent involvement offerings)

These functions are pursued within the frameworks that outline the six curriculum content areas of CSSS (classroom-focused enabling, home involvement, student and family assistance, crisis assistance and prevention, community outreach, and support for transitions) and the five level continuum of care (basic, informal, individualized, specialized, and intensive supports). Both components are needed to develop a comprehensive continuum of multifaceted programs and services that are integrated fully into the fabric of the school.

## Putting CSSS into Practice:

What we are learning from the eight model sites:

*A Principal who is involved in developing and implementing CSSS as a vital component in the Standards Implementation Design, is the key to a school's effectiveness in enabling all students to have an equal opportunity to succeed at school.*

"When we say we need more parent involvement everyone looks at PCNC, in truth this is everyone's work...what we are doing in the classroom, with transitions, for safe schools and so on relate to parent involvement and community involvement...it is important for all, a multi-dimensional team, to focus on a central issue," PCNC at model site.

"Our principal is really getting the word out about CSSS. He ties CSSS to bigger systems change and promotes CSSS as a school wide practice. For example, after 9/11 he didn't just talk about the fire escape plan, he spoke about supports that are available for students and staff, that there is a specific plan with different components and that this is part of CSSS," SSC at model site.

"With the Resource Coordinating Team you get a feeling you're not alone. If I get a problem (as a PCNC facilitator) from a parent, I go to my SSC and he knows the family too, so we can talk and work together," PCNC at model site.

"We have to share the *VISION* of CSSS, we have to believe in that vision and work to help others in the school to understand the vision of CSSS so we can all work together," Special education teacher at model site.

The following are some initial accomplishments of CSSS cadres as shared by model sites/schools:

- Agreement to hold monthly CSSS cadre meetings
- Drafts of CSSS cadre roles and responsibilities
- Identification of barriers to learning, and assessment of resources and supports at school
- Systems approach used to help all students
- Development of a school's understanding that "seamless" means a total school approach, not just the responsibility of the SSC/counselors/administrators
- Assets mapping, including the analysis of strengths and gaps, of resources for our school and complex
- Review of evidence from service testing

## Summary

Hawai'i's schools have long recognized that leaving no student behind requires giving high priority to (1) strengthening instruction, (2) building a comprehensive student support system, and (3) redesigning management and governance practices to maximize efforts related to each of these components as they further develop in the classroom, school, neighborhood, and larger community.

In implementing CSSS system wide, Hawai'i is leading the country in restructuring student support into a comprehensive, multifaceted, and integrated approach to addressing barriers to learning. The CSSS cadre serves a central and vital role in successfully embedding CSSS into each school.

Remember, successful implementation of CSSS is a process. It builds on what is already available and happening at a school. The CSSS cadre provides a synergistic mechanism, consisting of caring and committed individuals who work together to provide supports that improve the school experience for all students.