**GOAL**

CalSWEC created the **Field Instruction Initiative (FII)** to strengthen field instruction as a learning tool by creating structures that support consistent high-quality field experiences to social work students in the Title IV-E Child Welfare Training Program that are sustainable over time. Collaboration with community partners and agencies is pivotal and beneficial to all parties involved.

**BACKGROUND**

In FY 2011-12, four sites were selected to pilot innovative field instruction models. They were: SJSU, Dominguez Hills, Chico State, and USC. In 2012-13, the sites will continue to refine their work to develop curricular and implementation products that will be disseminated to other schools. The following are brief descriptions of each pilot site’s activities.

**PILOT PROJECTS**

**California State University, Chico**

California State University, Chico (CSU Chico) administers a solution focused supervision model in collaboration with Butte County Department of Employment and Social Services, Children’s Services Division. This pilot is designed to:

* develop, implement, and evaluate a training and consultation model of solution-focused strategies for use with field instructors in Butte County Children’s Services;

The field instructor training begins with an 8 hour workshop and is followed up by monthly 90 minute consultations over an 8-month period. Evaluation focused on the impact of the on-going training on field instructor self-efficacy, behavior change in field instructors, consistency of supervision, student progress toward acquiring child welfare competences, and student report of the quality of supervision received.

**California State University, Dominguez Hills**

California State University, Dominguez Hills (CSUDH) is piloting a collaborative field instruction and training model. This pilot was designed to:

* provide consistent, quality learning in the field for foundation students working with foster youth in higher education;
* create a collaborative learning experience for MSW interns;
* increase knowledge and enhance relationships with community partners; and
* enhance services to foster youth.

In addition to their regularly scheduled weekly field seminar, CalSWEC MSW interns participate in a specialized, eight-session seminar. The model highlights joint meetings throughout the year with community and county partners to discuss partnership agreements and program development.

**San Jose State University**

San Jose State University (SJSU) is piloting a partnered research project model with collaborative research teams in Santa Clara County. This pilot was designed to:

* create teams of IV-E students to answer research questions defined as priorities by the Department of Children and Family Services;
* provide orientation for field instructors related to supporting/participating in collaborative practice-based research projects;
* provide roundtables showcasing research projects; and
* provide a special seminar for students about using CWS/CMS data for research and evaluation.

Examples of research projects from this pilot include:

* Child welfare and education - Examines educational issues among children affected by domestic violence;
* The role of fathers in reunification - Examines how father involvement affects reunification outcomes;
* Front-end child welfare processes/Differential Response - Examines use of differential response services and outcomes such as re-referral or child removal

**University of Southern California**

The University of Southern California (USC) is piloting a group seminar field instruction model. This pilot is designed to:

* deliver consistent competency based field instruction and augmented case supervision to both foundation year and concentration year CalSWEC students through a weekly field seminar format;
* provide consistent child welfare peer group experience; and
* strengthen collaboration between the university and public child welfare agency.

**FII YEAR TWO**

As we move into year two of our initiative, we invite our four schools to renew their work, focusing on the following five categories**: Partnership; Capacity; Sustainability; Products; and Evaluation**. The projects have addressed already addressed these categories to varying degrees, and as we move forward, we would like to hone on these components for sustainability and spread of these efforts.

Additionally, we have issued a request for proposals for a Unit/Group Model of field instruction, in which designated county staff provide supervision for a unit of 4-8 students, who form a cohort and may receive individual and group supervision. Proposals are due on June 15, 2012.