

## CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL COUNSELORS 2020 VIRTUAL CONFERENCE - OCTOBER 8-10, 2020



On October 8-10, 2020, the California Association of School Counselors (CASC) will be hosting a virtual 2.5-day conference and expo for K-12 educators, education leaders and school-based mental health service providers. Just like CASC's in-person events, this **Virtual Conference & Expo** offers nearly **50 educational sessions**, access to **industry-leading experts** and unique **virtual networking opportunities**. In addition to participating in the live virtual conference, you will also have access to recordings of every session and the exhibitors through February 1, 2021. Workshop and keynote presenters will provide participants with research-based strategies to address school mental health issues and race-based trauma in a COVID -19 world. The all-inclusive conference program has something for every K-12 professional. Whether addressing overall school climate, research-based solution-focused classroom techniques, or strategies for supporting school staff who are experiencing compassion fatigue due to COVID -19 factors, there will be relevant learning opportunities for everyone. [Early bird rate ends August 15th](#). Register to attend today: **REVOLUTION: Equity, Disparities, and Student Mental Health Virtual Conference**.

**Needs and Policy Considerations:** The mental health issues facing students, families and staff are critical and are at an all-time high. Unfortunately, the number of cases of COVID-19 continue to soar causing additional turmoil. With the future of the pandemic and the instability of education continuing, researchers are predicting that this coming year schools will see increases in student anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation. Adding to the COVID -19 trauma is the emerging attention to the longtime issues of systemic racism that Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) endure every day, that must be addressed systematically, as well as a factors related to trauma. California policy makers recognize addressing the mental health effects from COVID-19 on K-12 students are as important as the physical health effects. LEAs are planning actions to meet California's new accountability measures (Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan). This new measure requires LEAs to monitor and support the mental health and social and emotional well-being of pupils. It also expects LEAs to provide professional development to pupils and staff to address trauma and other impacts of COVID-19 on the school community.

**Event Details:** This virtual conference is designed to provide a wide array of topics within two themed areas: 1) educational inequality, and race-based trauma, and 2) mental health and traumatic stress reduction. Workshops are designed to meet the beginning learner to the more advanced-level training within each theme. K-12 teachers, administrators, and school-based

mental health service providers will find workshops that will fit their particular interests and needs. Themes will be threaded through from the opening to the closing sessions. The conference will focus on high-frequency issues for which existing research and effective practices can provide evidence-based support.

Confirmed Conference Keynote Speakers are:

**Dr. Da'Mond T. Holt** is a trauma expert that specializes in early childhood trauma, trauma crisis, and PTSD. He is a Certified Mental Health and Traumatologist. His work and research is focused on how chronic stress, complex trauma, PTSD, and long-term grief can have neurological effects and can impair brain development on children.

**Derek Francis** is a passionate school counselor with years of experience focused on an equity-based approach in schools. He currently serves as the Manager of Counseling Services for Minneapolis Public Schools, specializing in helping students and staff build trusting, cross-cultural relationships. His professional development focuses on proactive school counseling and how schools can respond to racial incidents. His publications include contributions to: *Contemporary Case Studies in School Counseling*, and a published blog, *This Is Not A Fire Drill – Supporting students after George Floyd*.

The array of workshops topics include:

- Mental health awareness in schools
- Educational justice/racial justice
- Counselors not Cops – Covid-19 & LEAs critical funding decisions
- Identifying and addressing signs of stress
- Compassion fatigue and selfcare
- Teaching stress management techniques
- Building a climate of care
- Suicide first aid
- Removing school barriers to school mental health services
- Reducing stigma
- Unpacking Covert Racism in K-12 Schools

“Effectively addressing the myriad of increased mental health concerns is daunting and extensive training is a must at this critical time in education,” says CASC President, high school counselor and 2019’s California School Counselor of the Year Josh Godinez. “Prior to COVID-19, one in four students were depressed or experiencing anxiety and it has definitely increased to unknown proportions now! Extensive training for all educators is of foremost priority.”

“High levels of emotional suffering are rampant, with many students at crisis level. Trauma, whether it is race-based or centered on COVID -19 factors, must be addressed in K-12 schools now, if students are going to be able to thrive and learn” said Dr. Loretta Whitson, executive director of the California Association of School Counselors. “Whether schools return to an in-

person format, remain virtual, or both, meeting students' and staff's mental health needs must be considered."