

JULY 2025



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S M C S I G

NEWSLETTER



Welcome to the July Newsletter!

We hope you're having a great summer!

This month's newsletter includes important updates about your benefits, playground inspection checklists samples to help keep your facilities safe and ready for the new school year, and a featured article on EPL to help you stay informed.



Alliant Update – Dental & Vision

Big News for Dental & Vision Only Districts!

We're excited to share some important updates about your dental and vision benefits – and there's a lot to look forward to!

On June 30, you should have received two important emails from Sharon Vishwa. These messages outline some exciting changes and enhancements coming your way, including a new benefit administrator, improved services, and even richer dental and vision plans starting January 1, 2026.

Whether you've already read through the meeting details or are just catching up, here's a quick overview of what's happening and how it benefits YOU!

✓ New Administrator, Same Great Plans — With Upgrades!

We're partnering with **Alameda County Schools Insurance Group (ACSIG)**, a nationally recognized JPA (Joint Powers Authority) that provides trusted, service-first insurance to more than 250 school districts. ACSIG brings a deep commitment to service, education, and cost-efficiency — and they're the perfect partner to help take your benefits to the next level.

What's changing:

- ACSIG will manage our **dental and vision** benefits effective January 1, 2026.
- They've teamed up with **Preferred Benefit Insurance Administrators (PBIA)** to handle **eligibility and billing**.
- Your **Open Enrollment** in September/October will take place through the **BenefitBridge** system — for ease of transition.
 - PBIA will gather all necessary open enrollment details direct from Delta Dental and VSP to facilitate a seamless transition.

📌 Important Note:

Your Delta Dental group number will stay the same, but VSP vision plans will receive a new group number. More details to come!

Save the Date: August Info Sessions

To help make this transition seamless, we'll be hosting **multiple live sessions** in August where you can learn more about PBIA, the new process, and what (if anything) is needed from your district.

Can't attend live? Don't worry — a **recorded version will be shared** with everyone after the meetings!



Alliant Update – Dental & Vision

Benefit Enhancements Coming January 1, 2026!

As part of this transition, we're adding even **more value** to your dental and vision plans. Here's what's new:



DELTA DENTAL

- **New: Diagnostic & Preventive Maximum Waiver**
 - **Cleanings, exams, and x-rays will no longer count toward your yearly maximum** — so you can stretch your benefits further.
 - Want more info? Check out the flyer from the June 30 email.



vsp.
Vision care for life

- **New: Frame Allowance Increase**
 - We're bumping the frame allowance from **\$150 to \$180** — giving you more choice when it's time for a new look.

Optional Services to Help Your District Run Smoother

- Did you catch the second June 30 email? It included a **short video and presentation** about optional services available through our new vendor — designed to save your district time and reduce administrative work.
- Many districts currently manage things like **COBRA and retiree billing** internally. These add-on services can streamline those processes — either now or later, whenever the time is right.

📺 **Watch the overview video link** [HERE](#) (enter the passcode: K99*Pi3^)

View the presentation to learn more about what's available.

Want a one-on-one conversation with the vendor team? Just let us know, and we'll help set it up.



Alliant Update – HCC

HCC Districts: You're Already Making Progress!

A special shout-out to all the HCC Member Districts — your teams are doing a great job preparing for the switch to the new system!

What you can anticipate in the process:

- A follow-up email with your **next steps and a transition timeline** from Heather McCarthy at Alliant – **provided the week of 6/23**
- Monthly email reminders from Alliant, keeping everyone on track with key dates and deliverables

📌 Don't forget: We'll be meeting **in person on July 14** to review medical renewals and explore options for the 2026 plan year. We can't wait to see you there!



Did You Know? Your EAP is COBRA-Eligible!

Here's a quick tip: **The Employee Assistance Program (EAP)** included with your dental plan is **COBRA-eligible**!

- If your district manages COBRA internally, be sure to include the EAP cost in your COBRA offering.
- If you use a third-party COBRA administrator, send them the EAP rate so it's added correctly.

📌 **Reminder:** This EAP benefit is only for employees enrolled in **SMCSIG-sponsored dental plans**. Those in DHMO plans directly with Delta or another carrier aren't eligible.

Need the EAP rate? Contact Sharon Vishwa and we'll get it to you!



Stay Tuned

We're working hard behind the scenes to ensure a smooth transition and a better benefits experience for everyone. Keep an eye on your inbox for more updates, important dates, and meeting invitations!

Have questions? Need help? Reach out anytime — we're here for you.



Summer To-Do List for Schools

✓ Deep Cleaning & Maintenance

- Classrooms, carpets, windows, and common areas
- HVAC systems, filters, and ventilation checks
- Restrooms, locker rooms, and kitchen deep cleans

✓ Safety Checks

- Inspect playgrounds, sports fields, and equipment
- Fire alarms, extinguishers, and emergency exits
- Update first aid kits and emergency supplies

✓ Repairs & Upgrades

- Paint touch-ups, broken furniture, and flooring repairs
- Tech updates--computers, projectors, and classroom devices
- Organize storage areas and inventory supplies

✓ Staff Training & Planning

- Schedule safety and any required trainings
- Review emergency procedures
- Plan staff development days

✓ Prep for the New School Year

- Update bulletin boards and welcome signs
- Print class lists, schedules, and student materials

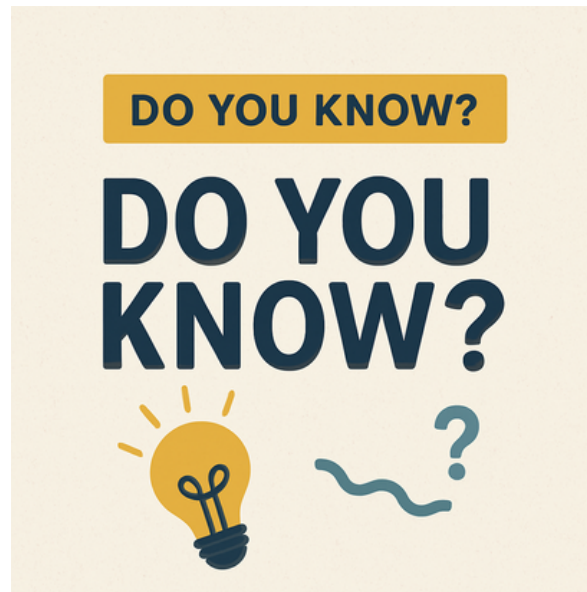
Additional Resources

[Identifying Playground Hazards](#)

[Playground Inspection Form](#)

[Playground Inspection Checklist Sample](#)

[Playground Inspection Checklist](#)



At the beginning of the year, Assembly bill **AB 2534** went into effect. The amended statute signed by Governor Newsom introduced important changes to the hiring process for certificated staff within California's public educational institutions.

A copy of the article produced by Lozano & Smith is below for review.

Lozano Smith Article

Upcoming Trainings / Training Info

Warehouse Safety Training

SMCSIG is coordinating an onsite Warehouse Safety Training this summer. The training will be hosted at a local member district to avoid interfering with school schedules and minimize travel.

The session will be conducted by Safety Compliance Management, a professional safety training company.

If you or a member of your team is interested in participating,
please email dfreeman@smcsig.org

Safety Training

Slips, trips, and falls, Lifting, Ladder Safety, Blood Borne Pathogens, and AHERA training in person with M&O.

Please reach out to restares@smcsig.org to schedule

Reminder: New SAM requirement course title

**Child Abuse: Mandated Reporter Training
for California (EDU)**

[PRISM 2025 Training Matrix](#)

[SMCSIG Trainings List](#)

New Administrators?

SMCSIG wants to ensure that your district's new staff feel welcomed and have the opportunity to get to know our team and the services we provide. To make this happen, we need your help!

If your district has recently welcomed new staff members, please share their details with us so we can coordinate a meet and greet to introduce ourselves and explore how we can best support them.



OPTUM July Newsletter

Welcoming your uniqueness

To access this month's EAP newsletter, please go to the Optum Website ([Linked Here](#)) and use access code **SMCSIG**.

Fitness Rewards

SMCSIG is pleased to announce their Wellness Get Fit Rewards Program for the Medical Consortium Member participants. If you are a member of one of the following Districts and currently enrolled in your district's medical plan and want to learn more on how you can get rewarded while getting fit, please read the attached.

Belmont-Redwood Shores SD
Cabrillo Unified School District
Jefferson Elementary School District
Jefferson Union High School District
Portola Valley School District
SMCSIG JPA
Bayshore Elementary School District
La Honda-Pescadero School District

Log your workouts!

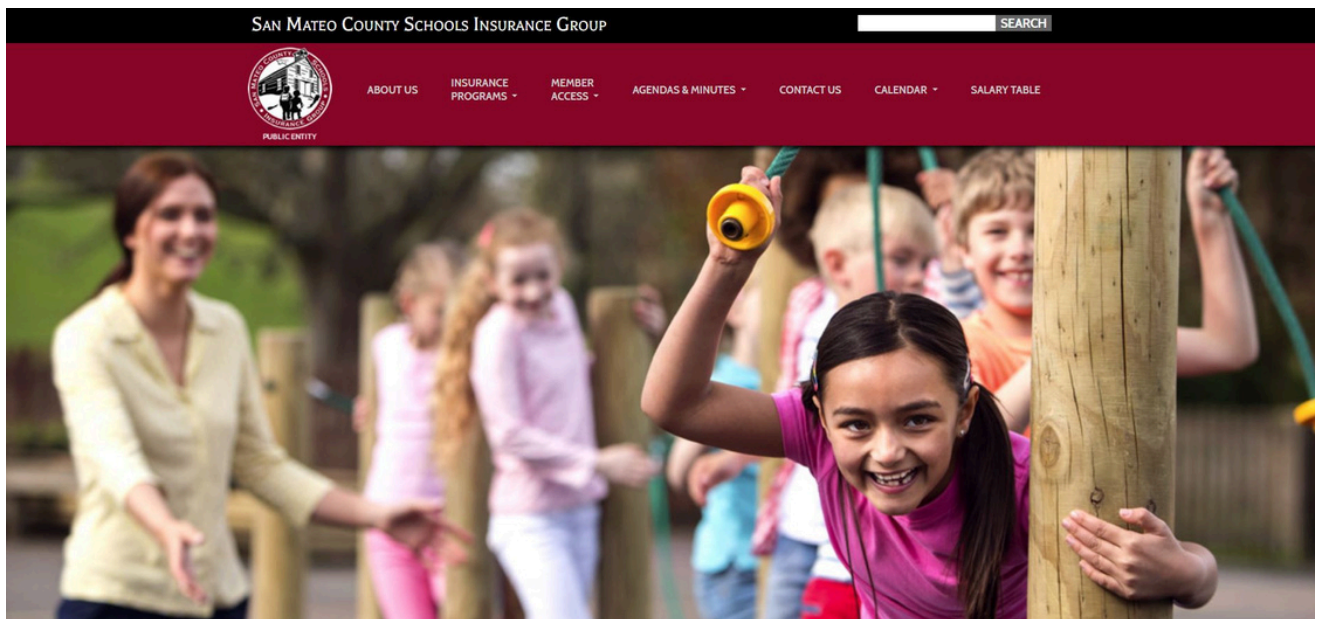
Optum is your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provider.

Each benefit eligible employee and their family members have access to the program. EAP is available to help you help your employees and their families deal with life issues that may affect their ability to be productive in their jobs

Call toll-free: 1(866) 248-4094

Or log on to
liveandworkwell.com
Access code: SMCSIG

SMCSIG Website



Username:
SMCSIGmember

Password:
caughtyousafe

What to find on our website

- Past meeting agendas, minutes, and summaries
- Insurance Binder Resources
- Property / Liability Resources
 - Major Property Loss Contacts
 - Major Property Loss Procedures
 - Cyber Incident Procedures
- IRIC Manual

Training

- **June 1:** Removal of old SAM Praesidium courses from Vector Solutions
- **July 1:** New SAM training requirement
- **July 21:** Warehouse Safety Training
- **July 30:** Forklift Training

M&O

- **September 18, 2025**
- **January 22, 2026**
- **April 23, 2026**

10:00-11:30

Location: SMCOE

101 Twin Dolphin Dr. Redwood City 94065

Important Dates

Executive Committee / JPA Board Meetings

- **September 11, 2025**
- **November 6, 2025**
- **January 15, 2026**
- **March 5, 2026**
- **May 21, 2026**
- **June 11, 2026**

9:00 AM -12:00 PM

Location: ZOOM / SMCSIG
OFFICE

1791 Broadway, Redwood City
94063