



California Children and Families Commission Meeting

January 23, 2020

MEETING MINUTES

Agenda Item 1 – Opening Remarks

George Halvorson called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Commissioners Present: George Halvorson
Molly Munger
Mayra Alvarez
Muntu Davis
Monica Fitzgerald
Shana Hazan
Jackie Majors

Ex Officio Member Present: Kris Perry

Announcements:

Chair Halvorson spoke on how closing the learning gap will close the health gap. He mentioned that where there were homes with books, studies found children were more learning ready, and above everything else, children having books is the most effective way to help close the learning gap.

Reports:

F5CA Executive Director – Camille Maben

Ms. Maben announced new personnel:

- Catherin Goins, part-time Senior Policy Advisor
- Marcia Thomas, Director, Fiscal Services Office
- Simone Afghari, Office Technician, Administrative Services Office
- Erin Gabel, Chief Deputy Director, Policy, Program, and Research

Ms. Maben stated that during the Financial Update, staff will discuss its work with the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration (CDTFA) relating to revenues and disbursement. The Director of CDTFA and his staff will be present to discuss its process, and outline actions taken to correct identified issues.

Ms. Maben gave an overview of the following:

- First 5 California's (F5CA) IMPACT 2020 is making progress on the release of the Request for Applications (RFA). F5CA staff are working jointly with CDE staff, which is a good example of aligning the work of each agency. The RFA will soon be released with aligned purposes, goals, and priorities.
- AIR's first report for the Dual Language Learner (DLL) Pilot Study in California will be released in February, following a legislative briefing based on data collected in the first phase of the study.
- The Home Visiting Workforce Evaluation Study RFP was released in December. Four responses were received. The review is in process with the winning contractor to be announced January 27, with the contract to be in place March 1, 2020.
- F5CA facilitated the Home Visiting Coordination Round Table. A survey was conducted throughout the counties, and the level of home visiting coordination was low. An RFA will be available in the spring, and county commissions will have first right of refusal to be a lead.
- F5CA has contracted with the California Child Care Resource Center to conduct a two-year evaluation of the Emergency Foster Care Bridge program.
- The Smokers' Helpline item is being pushed to April in order to accommodate conversations with the California Department of Public Health and explore additional partnerships.

DISCUSSION:

Commissioner Hazan asked about the DLL Pilot Study criteria, and requested the RFP be sent to the Commissioners.

Ms. Maben responded that the criteria is based on a large population of DLLs, a mixture of the six largest counties, balanced by ten counties at random, in order to be representative of the State. She mentioned a copy of the RFP would be sent to the Commissioners, and that it will be posted to F5CA's website as well.

Chair Halvorson asked for details on what is being studied.

David Dodds, Deputy Director of Research and Evaluation, explained the three phases of the study, which include current county strategies to address DLLs, reviewing class- and site- level practices, and scaling best practices.

First 5 Association of California

John Sims, Interim Director

Mr. Sims shared that the interviews for the Executive Director position are anticipated to be held in April, with potentially hiring someone in June.

Mr. Sims stated that issues related to CDTFA's revenues and disbursement are the highest priority of the counties. In particular, the counties take issue with CDTFA's revenue estimates and forecasting, unreasonable delays in distribution, and actual tax revenue figures. For example, CDTFA shows a projected 22 to 25 percent decrease in revenue without an explanation. Mr. Sims stated that seventy-seven percent of the counties are resorting to drastic measures, such as tapping into reserves, to remain fiscally solvent. As a result of these issues, he stated that the counties are losing confidence in CDTFA's work.

Mr. Sims shared he was appreciative of the opportunity to work together with F5CA on the IMPACT and home visiting programs, and asked staff to keep in mind when establishing due dates for upcoming items, that the next several months are the Association's and county commission's busy time.

Advisory Committee Reports – Commissioners

- Strategic Plan – Commissioner Munger shared the committee reviewed and discussed the Strategic Plan handout with the summary of programs, and F5CA funding projections.
- Public Education and Outreach – Member Perry shared that she was appreciative of the work that has been done and was pleased at how well attended the meeting was, especially by the county commissions.
- Research and Evaluation – Commissioner Fitzgerald shared she was excited to learn about home-based settings and how to support the counties, and the DLL pilot study.

DISCUSSION:

Commissioners requested the following:

- A timeline of Strategic Plan review
- The opportunity to provide input on the implementation of the Plan

- A more comprehensive overview of the work that may result from the Plan
- The amount of funding and staff time dedicated to projects listed in the Plan

Ms. Gabel responded that the intention was to coincide the Strategic Plan review with the Master Plan release.

Ms. Maben stated that part of the executive committee's responsibility could be to agendize the items to discuss.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

Agenda Item 2 – Public Comment

Chair Halvorson opened the floor for public comment.

Benito Delgado Olson, Executive Director of SupplyBank.Org, shared they conducted a needs assessment for a statewide diaper program integrated with WIC and other agencies. He stated there is a proposal of which 32 counties have supported. He mentioned he needs to raise \$350,000 through philanthropic agencies, and asked the Commission to consider funding this.

Marianne Hansen, Executive Director, First 5 Humboldt, stated that distributing the diaper kit means that money is freed up from a families' income for basic and essential needs, and that it is very significant poverty reduction measure.

Action Item 3 – Consent Calendar

The Commission considered approval of the consent calendar as detailed on the agenda.

DISCUSSION: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

MOTION/ACTION: Commissioner Munger moved to approve the consent calendar.

Commissioner Majors seconded the motion.

VOTE: The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

Information Item 4 – Financial Update

Frank Furtek, Chief Deputy Director and Counsel, and Marcia Thomas, Director of the Fiscal Services Office, provided an update on the Commission's financial status. Mr. Furtek shared there was a significant increase in backfill from last year compared to the current year due to a large reduction of cigarette use as a result of the new tax. He stated F5CA is currently waiting for September through December revenues.

Nick Maduros, Director of the CDTFA, and his staff, appeared before the Commission to discuss his department's process, as well as to address concerns expressed by First 5s. He explained delays in revenue distributions occurred because of a new internal accounting process, as well as the implementation of the new statewide accounting system. Further, he discussed that as a result of the large tax increase imposed by Proposition 56, the current fiscal forecasting model used by CDTFA may have caused an underestimation of revenue. He mentioned sales declined far more than originally thought and that the revenue numbers will likely be lower in the future.

DISCUSSION:

Member Perry asked if F5CA could do anything to help money get to the counties. Mr. Furtek responded that conversations with CDTFA occur on a daily basis to discuss concerns and remedy discrepancies. Member Perry encouraged F5CA to take any appropriate action to address the issues, and to keep the Commission apprised of developments.

Commissioner Alvarez asked for clarification on why some accounts showed a decrease. Mr. Furtek explained that as a result of adding items from the Strategic Plan to the Fiscal Plan, fund balances have decreased.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Carla Ritz, First 5 Lake County's ED, stated that they see their revenues decrease each month. She explained that they have not received income in the past six months, and that their available cash is dropping to a low balance. Ms. Ritz shared that her county now has a quarter of the funds she had at the beginning of the year.

Mary Ann Hansen, First 5 Humboldt's ED, shared that she appreciates the agencies working diligently to resolve the issues. She related that First 5 Humboldt lost \$5,000 in interest which funds a play group, and has heard that First 5 Yuba County lost \$7,000 in interest which could fund an imagination library. She stated that while these amounts may be seem small, they are significant to counties.

Action Item 5 – Kit for New Parents Contract Extension

Vernettia Syphax, Information Officer I, provided a brief overview of the *Kit for New Parents* and shared that 5.3 million kits have been distributed to hospitals, clinics, foster care homes, preschools, and community colleges since the *Kit's* inception. She stated the Parent Guide website recently launched and is customized for mobile devices, and that F5CA will be conducting focus groups in February on the current *Kit* to inform the redesign. Ms. Syphax added that the plan to release the new *Kit* version in 2021 may include a diaper component. Ms. Syphax requested the Commission approve \$5 million to extend the current *Kit for New Parents* fulfillment contract through June 30, 2021.

DISCUSSION:

Commissioner Hazan asked if the outcomes of the *Kit* are being tracked.

Ms. Syphax responded that at this time, the outcomes aren't measured, but that in the next iteration this will be addressed. She added that comments from hospitals and clinics speak about how helpful the *Kit* is and that parents have commented they feel confident raising their children since they have resources.

Commissioner Majors stated that a lot of the information may have to be in hard copy, and some digital, and that it should be tailored to the needs of families.

Commissioner Alvarez asked that the Commissioners be included in focus groups.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Francine Rodd, Executive Director, First 5 Monterey, shared that First 5 Monterey appreciates the *Kit for New Parents*. She said the *Kit* has helped connect families with services and support, and it is the closest parents can get to an instruction book for raising children. She suggested F5CA look for additional ways to use the *Kit*, and to make sure a book is always included.

Carla Ritz, Executive Director, First 5 Lake County, shared that the impact of the *Kit* is the first impression of First 5. She said the *Kit* is the first point of contact and builds relationships and positive association with First 5.

Karen Pautz, Executive Director, First 5 Siskiyou, stated the *Kit* is a phenomenal gateway for a partnership with hospitals and other resources, and that First 5 Siskiyou, as rural county, fully supports it.

MOTION/ACTION: Commissioner Hazan moved to authorize up to 5 million dollars to extend the current *Kit for New Parents* fulfillment contract through June 30, 2021.

Commissioner Munger seconded the motion.

VOTE: The Commission unanimously approved the motion

Action Item 6 – Fiscal year 2018–19 Annual Report

David Dodds, Deputy Director of Research and Evaluation, shared background on the Annual Report. He stated it is required by statute, and distributed to the Governor, Legislature, and county commissions, adding the fiscal data is submitted by the county commissions. Mr. Dodds also stated a key revision for Fiscal Year 2018–19 is that in child health, pediatric supports and home visiting are being reported separately.

DISCUSSION: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

MOTION/ACTION: Commissioner Majors moved to approve the Fiscal Year 2018–19 Annual Report.

Commissioner Davis seconded the motion.

VOTE: The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

Information Item 7 – State and Federal Budget and Legislative Update

Erin Gabel, Chief Deputy Director, gave an overview to the Commission on state and federal budget and legislative activity, which included, but not limited to the following items:

- Promoting breastfeeding and Family Resource Center expansion - exploring with our partners how to do more around these issues
- F5CA is hoping for recommendations on rate reform out of the Master Plan to inform this legislation
- F5CA is pleased to see policies on paid family leave in the Governor’s January budget
- With 10,000 preschool slots, there is a commitment to get to universal preschool facilities expansion
- The Paid Family Leave Task Force released their recommendations earlier this month
- A vaping tax - new opportunity for us to explore with the Administration how to prioritize children’s investments in any new tax

- Significant increases in both Child Care Development Block Grant and Head Start. The hope is to see that reflected as increases in the May Revise

DISCUSSION: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

Information Item 8 – Statewide Systems to Support Home Visiting Scale and Quality

Dr. Debra Silverman, Education Administrator, introduced Dr. Deborah Daro, Senior Research Fellow, Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

Dr. Daro touched on what would it look like to have a statewide system to support home visiting, and the historical pitfalls in trying to build effective social support programs where we get it wrong, and where we have opportunities for change. Some opportunities are:

- A supportive governor
- Motivated state leaders
- New funding streams
- First 5 serving as a coordinated entity for early childhood services and as an independent funding source at the state and county level
- A model for system building is operating in Los Angeles County

Dr. Daro spoke about conditions fostering change today. Those include, but are not limited to, dissatisfaction with our progress; policy opportunities for shared responsibility; structural and attitudinal barriers; organizational silos sustaining limited vision and priorities; belief that parents, not the collective, raise children; improved standard practice along with evidence-based programs; and extend funding streams in ways that reallocate core investments.

DISCUSSION:

Commissioner Alvarez asked how we could figure out a way to implement home visiting to scale with many resources and long-term investments, and asked what some of the challenges of implementation would be.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

Information Item 9 – Early Literacy and Family Book Distribution in California

Christina Altmeyer, First 5 Los Angeles, introduced Shannon Whaley and the Little by Little (LBL) program.

Ms. Whaley shared the LBL program gets books and literacy materials into the hands of low-income families by partnering with WIC centers. She stated the WIC centers serve more than half of all the infants born in Los Angeles County, and serving 60,000 families per year. She explained the LBL program builds a home library, offering developmental handouts that start with pregnancy and go through kindergarten, and that it is a low-cost effective way to reach children.

First 5 Santa Clara shared Family Resource Centers are a platform for school readiness.

Karen Pautz, Executive Director, First 5 Siskiyou spoke of the success they are having with the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. She said the five-year program is \$25 per year per child, with one book sent each month of every year until children turns five years old.

DISCUSSION:

Commissioner Alvarez mentioned the broader opportunity F5CA has, and with the Newsom administration in alignment, asked how staff can figure out a way to implement this with many resources and long-term investments. She also asked what some of the challenges of implementation would be. She continued by stating that working more with philanthropy would help fund projects.

Commissioner Munger suggested reaching out to the Bezos Family Foundation and continuing the conversation in the next months.

Ms. Gabel shared that F5CA is in talks with the Bezos Family Foundation and looking at philanthropy to help with distribution.

Commissioners stated they want to know the outcome piece and understand the different partnerships that can be leveraged.

Commissioner Alvarez suggested programs that focus on parent engagement could potentially add a book distribution component, and stated the more diversity that can be emphasized, the better.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Cathy Lynch, Siskiyou Dolly Parton Imagination Library and Delta Cappa Gamma, shared that Dolly Parton wants community involvement in her program. She stated the community pays for a portion of the program, and the Imagination Library wants it to be a community effort with multiple funders.

California Children and Families Commission

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Karen Farley, WIC Association, stated social services and economic support is what will help move this forward. She said it is about leveraging partnerships and that WIC staff are highly trained to share information.

Renee Fraser, CEO of Fraser Communications, shared they are passionate about books and literacy, and that the private sector is willing to help. She stated Lexus has agreed to do a national book drive across the United States to distribute books to children 7 years old and under.

Sarah Crow, First 5 Association, shared that she was supportive and grateful for the conversations.

Action Item 10 – Adjournment

DISCUSSION: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

MOTION/ACTION: Commissioner Hazan moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Majors.

VOTE: The motion was unanimously approved by the Commission.

Chair Halvorson adjourned the meeting at 4:04 p.m.

The next scheduled Commission meeting is April 23, 2020