



California Children and Families Commission Meeting

May 9, 2022

MEETING MINUTES

Agenda Item 1 – Opening Remarks

Dr. Nadine Burke Harris called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

Commissioners Present: Nadine Burke Harris
Mayra Alvarez
Shana Hazan
Elsa Jimenez
Jackie Majors
Lori Risso

Ex Officio Member Present: Kris Perry

Commissioners Absent: Molly Munger

Announcements

Chair Burke Harris opened the meeting by noting the transition from virtual-only meetings to a new hybrid model, mentioning that she was excited to be able to see most of the Commission in person. She followed up by informing the public about former Executive Director Camille Maben's retirement, and the selection of the new Executive Director, Jackie Thu-Huong Wong. Chair Burke Harris also announced that Member Perry is stepping down from her position at California Department of Health and Human Services to transition into her new role at the Children and Screens Institute of Digital Media and Child Development as the organization's first Executive Director, so she will no longer be a member of the First 5 California Commission. She thanked Member Perry for her many years of dedication to First 5 California and wished her well in her future endeavors. Chair Burke Harris ended her remarks by announcing that this was also her last meeting as the Chair for First 5 California, and stated she was grateful for her time on the Commission, and excited that Giannina Pérez has been appointed to take her place as Chair.

Jackie Wong, Executive Director, First 5 California

Executive Director's Report

Ms. Wong opened her remarks by reading a land acknowledgment to recognize the history and rich culture of the tribes that are native to the Sacramento region.

Ms. Wong thanked the Commission for allowing her the opportunity to serve the young children and families of California in her role as Executive Director.

Ms. Wong highlighted personnel updates:

- Sara Bachez, the new Deputy Director of External Governmental Affairs Office, briefly introduced herself to the Commission.
- Ms. Wong announced that David Dodds, Deputy Director of the Program Innovation and Evaluation Division, officially left his position at First 5 California for a promotion at the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) to continue work on their Home Visiting program. Mr. Dodds spoke about how grateful he was to have worked at First 5 California and wished the Commission success going forward.

Vice Chair Hazan asked about the refugee item update, and if asylum seekers were going to be a part of the request for proposals. Debra Silverman, Education Administrator of the Prevention, Equity, and Opportunity Office, stated asylum seekers are not a part of the current request, but the plan is to expand to asylum seekers in the next iteration. Vice Chair Hazan highlighted the importance of including asylum seekers as they are a vulnerable population.

Deborah Kelch, Interim Executive Director, First 5 Association

Ms. Kelch thanked the Commission and staff for their partnership in the work of supporting California children and families. She spoke about some different opportunities for advanced planning on the next phase of Commission initiatives, as well as an opportunity to collaborate on strategic systems change efforts. She concluded with highlighting policy priorities for the First 5 Association for 2022.

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Alvarez thanked Chair Burke Harris for her leadership on the Commission, and noted she is also grateful to Member Perry for her guidance on the Commission. She remarked how difficult it is to be a working mother, but that the work being done by this Administration is extremely important.

Member Perry reminisced about her time working with First 5 California and emphasized the importance of First 5's position in the early childhood education space.

Commissioner Munger wished the outgoing Commissioners well and remarked that it was a privilege to be able to serve on the Commission with Dr. Burke Harris because of the paradigm-altering work she has done.

Vice Chair Hazan thanked Chair Burke Harris and Member Perry for all their work for California children and families.

Agenda Item 2 – Public Comment

Dr. Doug Major: Dr. Major thanked the Commission for their work, specifically thanking Chair Burke Harris for her work on Adverse Childhood Experiences. He also noted the importance of vision health for children and how proper care in the early years can set children up for success in school in the future.

Action Item 3 – Consent Calendar

MOTION/ACTION: Commissioner Alvarez moved to approve the Consent Calendar. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jimenez.

VOTE: The motion was approved by the Commission.

Information Item 4 – Financial Update

Marcia Thomas, Director of Fiscal Services, provided an update on F5CA's financial status. Ms. Wong discussed the details of the upcoming Budget Retreat.

Discussion

Commissioners Alvarez and Majors asked staff to prepare a chart of how funds have been spent in the past, including all the programs the Commission has committed to and the length of those programs.

Public comment

None.

Action Item 5 – First 5 California Early Literacy Program

Erin Dubey, Education Administrator of the Early Learning Programs and Partnerships Office, presented the 3-year request for \$15 million for the First 5 California Early Literacy program

Discussion

Commissioner Jimenez asked about the \$10 million investment in the Governor's Budget and where it was being funneled through. Ms. Wong stated the program will be implemented by CDPH and that First 5 California plans to align their work with CDPH so there's no duplication of efforts. Commissioner Majors asked about the inclusion of Women, Infants,

and Children (WIC) programs, and Ms. Dubey responded that WIC was not included. Commissioner Majors also asked if there is a strategy of alignment among different programs at the state and local level, and Ms. Dubey responded that First 5 California is looking at a larger alignment strategy.

Vice Chair Hazan asked about the timing of the funding, and Ms. Dubey responded that the plan is for a 3-year program in order to allow for time to ramp up and for thoughtful development. Member Perry asked about the funds that CDPH and counties already spent as a match, and if there is a sense of how much is really going to be invested in children. Ms. Dubey responded that CDPH currently has a \$5 million investment, with a planned \$10 million investment next year, but the last time the counties were surveyed on this topic was prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, so the numbers could be out of date.

Vice Chair Hazan asked how \$25 per child was determined, and Ms. Dubey responded that it is based on other programs. Vice Chair Hazan followed up by asking why the “Little by Little” program, which is \$40 per child, isn’t being proposed and mentioned that the proposal doesn’t seem to include adult literacy. She also asked if \$15 million is enough. Ms. Dubey said that if the Commission is looking to add any money, it should be added at the local level.

Commissioner Alvarez asked about the target populations for this program, and Ms. Dubey responded by explaining the application process for this type of funding opportunity, and how staff can weigh applications based on levels of poverty in the counties. She added that they can look into targeting counties that have higher percentages of multilingual learners when developing the application.

Chair Burke Harris asked if there has been any conversation around working with pediatricians to be a part of this effort. Ms. Dubey responded that they have reached out in the past, but as strategies are being developed, they want to be cautious about not duplicating work.

Vice Chair Hazan asked to increase the funding to \$5 million for the local grants (adding \$3 million to the original proposal) and asked if it is better to expand it to 20 counties rather than 10. Commissioner Munger suggested that maybe staff could use more time to develop a plan to roll out this effort. She suggested the Commission should vote to approve the funds and have staff come back at another Commission meeting with a more specific plan. Commissioner Risso emphasized it is imperative to understand the population First 5 California is serving, so the extra funding added to evaluation is vital.

Public Comment

Shannon Whaley, WIC/Little by Little: Ms. Whaley noted the initial investment in WIC programs from the Governor’s Office may not be representative of the model because the use of funds was limited to a very short amount of time.

Scott Waite, First 5 Merced: Mr. Waite emphasized the importance of the ramp-up time for these types of programs.

MOTION/ACTION: Commissioner Risso moved to approve \$18 million from the Education, and Research and Development accounts over 3 years for an early literacy program to support access to books and family engagement. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hazan.

VOTE: The motion was unanimously approved by the Commission.

Information Item 6 – Dual Language Learner Pilot Study Update

Mr. Dodds provided the background of the Dual Language Learner Pilot Study. Heather Quick from the American Institutes for Research provided a presentation on the results of the study.

Discussion

Commissioner Jimenez opened the discussion by saying that the study is enlightening, and that she wants to make sure this level of support for dual language learners continues. Commissioner Alvarez noted the work presented in the study can be linked to other work the Commission is involved in, such as conversations around early literacy, mental health, and more. Vice Chair Hazan agreed that this work needs to be viewed in conjunction with other endeavors, including early literacy work.

Public Comment

None.

Information Item 7 – Emergency Child Care Bridge Program

Mr. Dodds provided a brief overview of the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program. Dr. Susan Savage and Vanessa Guerrero from the Child Care Resource Center presented the California Emergency Child Care Bridge Evaluation.

Discussion

Chair Burke Harris noted she is grateful for the work of the study. Commissioner Alvarez related the content of the presentation to other mental health initiatives she has worked on and emphasized the importance of giving families the right tools and resources to care for children with mental health concerns.

Action Item 8 – Adjournment

Discussion

None.

Public comment

None.

MOTION/ACTION: Commissioner Alvarez moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Chair Burke Harris.

VOTE: The motion was unanimously approved by the Commission.

Chair Burke Harris adjourned the meeting at 12:45 p.m.

The next scheduled Commission meeting is at 1:30 p.m.