

First 5 Solano Children and Families Commission

Minutes of Meeting – Saturday, October 22, 2011, 9:00 AM 601 Texas Street, Room A, Fairfield, CA

Attendees

Commissioners: Dan Ayala, Chair; Linda Seifert, Vice-Chair; Stephan Betz, Dana Dean, Sheryl Fairchild, Jay Speck, Debbie Gossell, Norma Thigpen.

Staff/Public: Commission staff and approximately twenty-five members of the public were present.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:10 AM by Chair Dan Ayala.

Regarding speaker cards, the Chair advised those wishing to comment that specific programs and initiatives could not be discussed during this meeting due to Commissioner conflict of interest. Therefore, those wishing to speak about a specific program or initiative should speak in the initial Public Comment portion of the meeting, since that is the time reserved for items not on the agenda.

The Chair further advised that there would be ample time for the public to comment during the remainder of the meeting, but that those comments must be confined to addressing the Strategic Plan Framework Priorities, Goals, Results and funded strategies and the amounts and length of the 2012 funding cycle.

I. Public Comment

Executive Director Christina Arrostuto noted two written comments: Debbie Peralez, Child Start regarding the value of Head Start “wraparound” child care services, and June Regis regarding the value of the Home Preschool Network. The written comments were distributed to Commissioners and the public.

Anguenita Hall, member of the public, addressed the Commission on how BabyFirst Solano has helped her avoid continued substance use and re-united her with one of her five children.

(Commissioner Seifert arrived at the meeting.)

Nancy Calvo, BabyFirst Solano, discussed a quote by Dr. Ron Chapman, former Solano County Medical Director and now California Department of Public Health Director where he is attributed a quote that the state’s infant mortality has reached 4.9 per 1,000 births in 2009, the most recent year for which data is available. The previous low was in 2008, when the rate was five deaths per 1,000 births. Ms. Calvo asked the Commission to continue the work in prenatal care.

Shelli Cannon-DeKreek, BabyFirst Solano discussed BabyFirst Solano efforts to meet sustainability and provided the Commission with a fact sheet.

Maria Birch Brown, School Readiness/Fairfield-Suisun, commented on their efforts to ready children for school and to address the child’s emotional, cognitive and language development.

Doug Hayward, Solano Coalition for Better Health, provided information on Solano Kids Insurance Program which educates parents/caregivers on importance of health and dental insurance, and their efforts to go where the families live – home, health fairs and schools. Mr.

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Hayward stated that kids who have health insurance are more likely to have fewer emergency room visits and more likely to have immunizations and dental care. He thanked the Commission for its support of Solano children.

Jane Johnson, Child Haven spoke on behalf of EPSDT contractors, Children's Nurturing Project EMQ FamiliesFirst and Child Haven of their successful outcomes in helping families with mental health issues.

Kim Thomas, Children's Network, talked about the collaborative efforts of all the partners.

Debbi Davis, PEAK Collaborative discussed the efforts of the collaborative, noting that they are serving children at high risk with high needs.

Nan Thibodeaux, EMQ FamiliesFirst discussed the increased referrals from Child Welfare Services, doctors and community agencies regarding behavioral intervention.

Chair Ayala thanked all of the speakers for their comments.

II. Approve the Commission Meeting Agenda for October 22, 2011

Commissioner Gossell moved to approve the Commission Meeting agenda for October 22, 2011. Commissioner Thigpen seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

III. Strategic Planning

Map of the Day Item I: Welcome and Review "Map of the Day"

The Commission's strategic planning consultant, Lori Allio, Ph.D., outlined the "map" for the day's Strategic Framework and funding discussion

1. Look at the "The Big Picture," then drill down to provide the required detail.
2. Make decisions about funding:
 - a. Overall funding cycle amounts
 - b. Length of the funding cycle
 - c. Contingency planning for reserve funding currently restricted, should it become available.
3. Discuss next steps.

Ms. Allio noted that the Commission will do this by further discussing their Priorities, Goals and Results and by looking at funded strategies. She also proposed the Commissioners review the "Revised Framework" and make sure Commissioners are comfortable with the Result areas as written.

Map of the Day Item II: Public Comment

The Chair noted that there would be ample opportunity for public comment during the Commission's deliberations.

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Map of the Day Item III: Executive Director's Remarks

Christina Arrostuto, Executive Director commented that this is a little like “D-Day” in that it is “Decision Day” for priorities and funding.

She summarized that the information the Commission has reviewed over the past year to support their strategic plan update process:

- Annual submission to First 5 California, including Leveraged Funds Report
- Family Survey Report
- Community Input Report
- Community Indicators Report
- Public comments
- Four-year Trends Report for selected program/initiative indicators

She noted that, while it is clear that community needs have and will continue to exceed the Commission's limited resources, the Commission has been able to touch the lives of over 70,000 children since First 5 Solano came into existence. The Commission made thoughtful and strategic decisions over the past decade to deploy its limited funding, and maximized that funding by seeking high-leverage services. The Commission had developed a sound Long Term Financial Plan for the allocation of their resources. Now they face the prospect of significantly reducing funding, which was not anticipated in that plan.

It is AB 99 that has left the Commission with this “cash flow” problem by mandating the taking of \$8.8 million from the Commission's reserves. Those funds would have carried the Commission through the First 5 Futures implementation period with minimal reductions in funding. Instead, there is only approximately \$2.2 million to spread over the next funding cycle.

She cautioned that there is urgency to having a spending plan in place by December for two reasons: 1) the Governor's proposed budget will be released in January 2012, and First 5 Solano should already have directed the allocation of its remaining reserves to help stave off any future attempt to usurp local First 5 funds; and 2) in order to avoid a lapse of services, staff must follow a tight solicitation and contract development schedule as follows:

- December 2011 – Adopt 2012 Strategic Plan Update and Program Investment Plan
- January 2012 – Issue solicitations for services
- April 2012 – Award funds for the next funding cycle
- June 2012 – Board of Supervisors approval of Contracts
- July 2012 – Services begin/continue

Ms. Arrostuto noted that the Commission is prohibited from discussing “initiatives” or “programs” because these are in fact Contract discussions and they carry a conflict of interest for certain Commissioners. She cautioned the Commissioners to confine the strategic plan discussion to Priorities, Goals, Results and strategies and to discuss funding only in that context. Staff prepared documents for the Commission's ease of use in having this discussion that array funding by Goals, Result areas and strategies.

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Map of the Day Item IV: Strategic Planning

Dr. Allio began by reviewing the 2012 Strategic Framework draft document with the Commission. Commissioners agreed with the draft Strategic Plan Framework document as written.

Motion: Consider approval of ranking of Result areas to be funded in the 2012 Strategic Plan Update, amounts to be funded by Result area, and length of 2012 funding cycle

Commissioners discussed ways to identify funding priorities. They spent some time looking at materials provided by staff that showed the options of using all reserves in year one of three, spreading reserves across two years or spreading them across three years.

Commissioners decided they wanted a three-year spread, with “slope” of decline, but for there to be somewhat more funding devoted to the first year, so that services that are reduced would have a transition that was not so steep a decline. Ms. Harris, Deputy Director, worked on a table for this during a break, and Commissioners agreed with the rate of decline she produced.

Commissioners then discussed how to deploy funding across the Result areas and strategies in the new Strategic Framework. They turned to the “cross-cutting issues” in the Framework and decided to first look at the amounts leveraged per Result area. Commissioner Dean noted that the Result areas could be sorted into three “Tiers:”

Tier I ¹	R3, R4, R5	Amount leveraged is larger than the Commission’s investment
Tier II ²	R1/R2, R6, P3 (R9, R10, R11)	Significant leveraging
Tier III ³	R7/R8	Little-to-no leveraging

In discussing R5 they noted that the high-leverage strategy they wished to continue to fund was “wraparound child care slots” because of the high leveraging. In discussing R7/R8, they noted that a strategy they wished to continue to fund was “Pre-Kindergarten academies.” Ms. Harris noted that the Pre-K Academies could be continued at the current levels for \$80,000 annually.

Commissioners also discussed the Result areas and strategies from the perspective of “high-risk and high-need.” They noted after discussion that, with the exception of R5, all of the current strategies could be characterized as applicable to serving high-risk, high-need children, because need consistently exceeds funding, and that condition is more likely than ever to be true as there is reduced funding available in the coming years.

Commissioners discussed two strategies that are currently spread across the Strategic

¹ R3: Children access comprehensive health insurance and health care services; R4: Children and parents /primary caregivers access appropriate mental health services; R5: Reliable child care is consistently available to families.

² R1: Mothers have healthy pregnancies; R2: Newborns are healthy; R6: Child care providers know and practice high-quality child care programming; R9: Families know about and access necessary support systems and community services; R10: Children are raised in safe homes and communities; R11: Using community resources and supports, parents and primary caregivers are educated on and practice effective parenting strategies.

³ R7: Parents and primary caregivers are educated on, prepared to, and engage in helping their children enter school ready to learn; R8: Children have access to quality, affordable early learning experiences in their community (Birth-5).

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Framework: parent education and collaboration/coordination. Ms. Harris noted that parent education was a component of several current funded Results areas, and that in the past year, there was a consistent lack of participation in these classes. She suggested that these amounts be consolidated set at a level of \$100,000 annually in the next cycle, and solicited for separately, to serve parents across the spectrum of the framework.

Regarding collaboration/coordination, Ms. Arrostuto noted that the Commission had done a fine job of supporting the development of initiatives over the years, and those collaborative services were now well-connected within Result Areas, reducing the need for such intensive funding. She suggested that this funding also be consolidated, set at a level of \$100,000 annually, and solicited for separately, to support structures more like “meta-collaboratives” that would further integrate Commission-funded services across Goal and Priority areas and beyond initiative boundaries.

Commissioners discussed the staff recommendation to maintain a Discretionary Fund of \$250,000. Commissioner Speck commented that he was in favor of this idea as it would be good for the Commission to have some funding to provide some level of flexibility during these uncertain times.

Public Comment:

- Shelli Cannon-DeKreek, BabyFirst Solano - maintain more funding in the first year.
- Kim Thomas, Children’s Network - Maintain more funding in the first year; this will allow bridging until health care reform is implemented; some child care funding can be eliminated; allow more funding for collaboration/coordination in year one to address IT needs.
- Debbi Davis, Children’s Nurturing Project - allocate more funding in the first year.
- Doug Hayward, Solano Coalition for Better Health - allocate more funding in the first year, then a gradual step down.

After more discussion, and taking into account the community input offered during the meeting, Commissioners agreed to fully fund Tier 1 Result areas (R3, R4 and R5) at FY2011/12 levels (minus amounts identified in the funded strategies table for parent education and collaboration/coordination). They agreed to fund Tier III Result areas (R7/R8) at \$80,000 for Pre-Kindergarten academies. They agreed to spread whatever remaining Program Investment funding was available to provide reduced funding for Tier II Result areas (R1/R2, R6 and P3 (R9/R10/R11)), with funding weighted in favor of R1/R2.

The original motion was amended to accommodate the agreements and suggestions that had emerged during the Retreat discussions.

For FY2012/13, fund R3, R4, R5 at same level, reduce R7/R8 to 80,000 for pre-kindergarten academies, fund parent education at \$100,000, collaboration at 175,000, discretionary fund at \$250,000, First 5 Futures at 352,000. Spread other reductions across R1/2, R6, & P3. For FY2013/14, same proportionate reductions for R1/2, R6, & P3, with collaboration funded at \$100,000.

Commissioner Betz moved to approve the amended motion. Commissioner Dean

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seconded. The motion was approved unanimously 6-0 (Commissioners Seifert and Speck had left during the discussion).

Direction to staff:

- Available reserves spread over three years, with a graduated slope of decline that favors year one of funding, to accommodate transition;
- “Tier I” Result areas R3, R4 and R5 funded for three years at the FY2011/12 levels (minus parent education and collaboration/coordination amounts as listed on the documents reviewed by Commissioners at the retreat).
- Tier III Result areas R7/R8: funded for three years at \$80,000 annually for Pre-Kindergarten academies.
- “Tier II” Result areas R1/R2, R6 and P3 (R9/R10/R11): Remainder of available program investment funds spread across R1/R2, R6 and P3 (R9/R10/R11), with funding percentage weighted more toward R1/R2. *Specific amounts to be reviewed at the December Commission meeting.*
- Parent Education consolidated to serve parents across the strategic plan and funded at \$100,000 annually.
- Collaboration/coordination consolidated to serve grantees across the strategic plan and funded at \$175,000 for year one and \$100,000 annually for years two and three.
- Discretionary Fund funded at \$250,000 annually (not to exceed 10% of annual program investment funding).
- First 5 Futures funded at \$352,000 annually (about 10% of annual Proposition 10 tobacco tax revenues).
- First 5 staffing and operations funded at \$833,000 annually for years one and two and \$595,000 for year three.
- First 5 evaluation funded at \$170,000 annually for years one and two and \$140,000 for year three.

The Commissioners agreed that they could take up the issue of deploying reserve funding currently restricted by AB99 at a future meeting, since it will likely be some time before the litigation is resolved.

IV. Commissioner Remarks:

Commissioners and the Chair thanked the grantees and the public for their comments.

Commissioner Ayala adjourned the meeting at 1:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted:



Christina Arrostituto, Executive Director