

# **FIRST 5 VENTURA COUNTY SPECIAL COMMISSION MEETING**

## **MINUTES**

**March 19, 2015**

Commissioners Present: Bruce Stenslie, Ida Hatfield, Barbara Marquez-O'Neill, Michael Gollub, Bob Levin, Stan Mantooth

Excused Absence: Meloney Roy, Reyna Dominguez, Kathy Long

Staff Present: Claudia Harrison, Kathy Rangel, Jennifer Johnson, Robin Godfrey, Petra Puls

Public Present: Ashley Humes

### **I. Welcome and Introduction**

Chair Stenslie called the meeting to order at 11:15 p.m.

Claudia Harrison recapped highlights from the previous retreat and the All Committee meeting held in early March.

### **II. Approval of Minutes from Special Commission meeting on February 19, 2015**

**A motion was made by Commissioner Gollub, seconded by Commissioner Marquez-O'Neill, to approve the minutes from the February 19, 2015 Special Commission meeting. The motion passed with Commissioner Mantooth abstaining.**

### **III. Public Comments/Correspondence**

There were no comments from the public.

### **IV. Review of Survey Results**

Jennifer Johnson presented a summary of the parent survey and stated that 540 surveys were received. She provided an overview of the ranked topics for important information, noting the areas that ranked over 90%: healthy eating/active living; early literacy/language development; supporting child development; accessing services; and, parenting information. She discussed how the majority of respondents preferred to get information through a face-to-face meeting followed by receiving printed information or finding information on the web. She stated that there was little variation in general in the results by age group and income levels; however, those with higher incomes and English as the primary language spoken at home preferred more "technology-based" methods. Jennifer reviewed the important programs and services ranked by respondents such as preschool, developmental screenings, PACT classes and dental treatment. Commissioner Levin commented on the

disproportionate amount of low income families reflected in the survey and attributed it to families being reluctant or less able to respond to survey questions, which should be taken into consideration when interpreting results.

Jennifer reviewed the identified challenges or barriers in getting services with parents reporting their top 3 challenges as: knowing where to get services; child care; and, affordability. She noted that respondents generally wanted to increase their involvement by volunteering and participating in a parent advisory council or NfL board. She reviewed some of the key findings in relation to different socioeconomic groups. There was a discussion of distribution strategies with staff indicating that both traditional and non-traditional methods were used in order to reach a broad population.

Jennifer continued with highlights of the partner survey, indicating that 133 surveys were received. She commented on how the results from the partner survey were very consistent with those from the parent survey, though domestic violence and breastfeeding were rated of higher importance by partners than by parents. She reviewed the top themes for services that partners ranked as “very important” and “important” such as: preschool and preparing for kindergarten; parent education/workshops; parent counseling services; dental treatment/health care access; developmental screening/special needs; service coordination/NfLs; and, parent and child together classes/early literacy. She added that participants expressed interest in having First 5 take more of an advocacy role for children, promoting/building parent engagement, funding intervention services for the most vulnerable populations, prevention services, capacity building efforts, and systems change. She reported that there was good representation from both funded and non-funded partners and non-service providers, with good overall geographic representation. Commissioner Marquez-O’Neill mentioned that collaboration was a major takeaway from the All Committees meeting and that there was discussion about working with partnerships that will be viewed as most impactful.

## **V. Determining Overarching Direction for Next Strategic Plan**

Claudia Harrison referred to the documents on the Commission’s vision, goals and SWOT analysis and discussed revisions that incorporate Commissioner feedback from the previous meeting. She turned the meeting over to Robin Godfrey to give a presentation on the overall goals and First 5’s role for the next strategic plan.

Robin Godfrey presented an overview of the key goals, what is needed to achieve success in each of them, and suggestions for First 5 contributions. The presentation was well-received by the Commissioners and they provided additional feedback. Commissioner Gollub asked to increase parent’s access to nutrition education as it correlates with good oral health. Commissioner Mantooth asked if the early literacy component is part of the PACT program. Staff stated that it is part of the PACT program and there is also an early literacy outreach component through Community Education. There was a discussion about the importance of literacy and early attachment. Commissioner Levin suggested a new goal that utilizes more

local resources and/or talents at the neighborhood level, resulting in neighborhood children being recognized and made to feel safe. Claudia stated that staff will work with Commissioner Levin to build on this language. Commissioner Hatfield commented that child care and preschool should be viewed as one in the same in the context of school readiness and child care should not be viewed as babysitting.

Claudia Harrison reviewed staff's assumptions and consideration for different funding models. She said that staff is recommending a "hybrid" five year plan with years one through three generally maintaining current funding levels with a transition in year four, when a larger decline of resources is evident. She discussed shifts from funding for some direct services that are not sustainable, increases in capacity building efforts, collaborations and convenings. She discussed opportunities to convert a portion of First 5 funded spaces to state preschool as funding becomes available. Staff suggested the Commission consider community challenge grants to engage a larger community and to leverage other investments. She asked the Commissioners for feedback on staff's recommendations.

Commissioner Mantooth commented on using unspent funds from the first and second year to enhance some programs down the road. There was discussion about the conversion of preschool spaces and the need for investment in facilities in hopes of achieving more capacity and sustainability. The Commissioners were very positive about the hybrid plan and asked staff to move forward.

## **VI. Next Steps**

Claudia said that staff will draft a strategic plan based on today's discussion, to be reviewed at the next Commission meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 12:59 p.m.