



Report from Executive Director
February 20, 2014

I. Update on Administrative Operations

- Form 700 – Web-based Filing System
 - Clerk of the Board has sent an email notice to all Commissioners with instructions on filing electronically by the April 1, 2014 deadline.
 - Please contact Kathy Rangel at 648-9990 for any questions or assistance.
- Request for Proposals (RfP) for Auditing Services
 - RfP released to conduct the Commission’s annual financial and compliance audit for a 5-year period, beginning with fiscal year 2013-14.
 - Seven proposals received by February 7, 2014 due date; review committee will be convened with contract scheduled to be awarded in March 2014.
- FY 2014-15 Contract Renewal Initiated
 - Funded Partners will receive instructions in early March.
 - Timeline contemplates all contracts to be released by the end of May, and executed by June 30, 2014.
- Recruitment for Program Manager Position
 - Recruitment underway for program manager; close to 60 applications received.
 - Interviews will begin shortly with plans to complete hiring by end of March.

II. Update on Commission Initiatives

- Neighborhoods for Learning
 - Santa Clara Valley NfL - New Preschool Spaces in Fillmore
 - Through recently increased NfL allocation, afternoon preschool session added to existing morning session.
 - 20 children currently enrolled, many of whom had been on a waiting list.
 - Moorpark/Simi Valley NfL
 - NfL partnered with Safe Kids and Los Robles to co-sponsor a Child Health and Safety Expo promoting family and summer safety including swim/pool, car seat, and bike helmet safety.
 - Event at Ruben Castro Center attended by over 100 families; participating organizations included the Moorpark Family Clinic, Interface Children & Family Services, and American Medical Response ambulance company.

- Ventura NfL – Service Site Expansion
 - Loss of classroom space at the Midtown Family Resource center resulted in new services sites throughout Ventura.
 - NfL established new part-time FRC site at Elmhurst Elementary and has begun to build relationships with families in surrounding neighborhood.
 - Series of Play and Learn classes will be piloted at City of Ventura Housing Authority’s West View campus in early 2014.
 - Plans underway with Salvation Army to hold a Triple P Seminar series at their site in early 2014.
 - Avenue Library will host series of 4 story times with child and family activities.
- Car Seat Installations at NfLs
 - Several NfLs offer car seat inspection and installation through a collaboration with Safe Kids Ventura County, with three out of four current inspection and installation sites located at First 5 Neighborhoods for Learning. (see attached)
 - In the first half of the year, over 235 car seats were installed at sites hosted by Moorpark/Simi Valley, Conejo and Santa Clara Valley NfLs.
- Countywide Strategies
 - Oral Health Preventive Care: Fluoride Varnish – Ventura County Public Health (VCPH)
 - With electronic medical record (EMR) systems in county clinics, an automatic MD reminder has been implemented to conduct an oral health risk assessment, apply fluoride varnish and provide education during preventive exams.
 - VCPH staff have also been working with Clinicas and CMH medical clinics.
 - IT departments are working together to generate a report with clients needing follow up that would directly interface with the system.
 - Triple P Implementation at NfLs - Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH)
 - NfL staff have been trained in the Triple P evidence-based parenting model to provide parent support and education on a variety of parenting topics through group seminars or individual brief sessions using Triple P tip sheets (Triple P Levels 2 and 3).
 - Families with higher level needs are referred to VCBH subcontractors, City Impact and Interface, for intensive group and one-on-one parenting interventions provided by trained clinicians (Triple P Levels 4 and 5).
 - Interface and City Impact have also been providing Triple P implementation support to NfLs through regular ‘brown bags’, one-on-one coaching, and co-facilitation of services.
 - NfL staff trained in Triple P have been able to greatly increase service levels and integrate Triple P into NfL services.

- 2-1-1 celebrated Ninth Anniversary on February 11, 2014
 - 2013 Annual Report released (see attached)
 - Over 19,000 Ventura County residents served in 2013.
 - 99% of callers indicated that they would recommend 2-1-1 to a friend or family member.
 - 2-1-1 Ventura County received Accreditation through the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (AIRS).
- QRIS Implementation (Quality Rating and Improvement System)
 - QRIS preschool sites implementing ASQ Developmental Screening tool.
 - Series of trainings held to build preschool staff capacity around appropriate follow-up and referrals for developmental concerns.
 - In partnership with Ventura County Public Health - Help Me Grow, SELPA, and local school districts, materials and processes developed to assure children receive appropriate follow-up.
 - First 5 Ventura County's Action Plan for utilizing supplemental Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant funds has been approved by CA Department of Education.
 - Additional program sites are being recruited to meet the increased target, including family child care providers.
 - A Family Child Care Professional Learning Community has been formed with providers actively engaged and sharing best practices.
- Obesity Prevention
 - Good for Kids Restaurant Week in Ojai
 - Ojai Restaurant Week is February 24 - March 3, 2014, with 5 participating restaurants.
 - Many restaurants will continue to offer their Good for Kids meal even after Good for Kids Restaurant Week is over.
 - Good for Kids Campaign is focused on increasing the healthy food options for kids in local restaurants, encouraging children to eat more fruits and vegetables, decrease fat and sugar consumption, and assist restaurants in making healthy choices appealing, available and affordable.
 - Lactation Education
 - F5VC has partnered with Healthy Children's Center for Breastfeeding to bring the Certified Lactation Counselor (CLC) training to Ventura County.
 - Upon completion of the course and test, participants will receive a national certification as a CLC as designated by the Academy of Lactation Policy and Practice (ALPP).
 - F5VC and the Breastfeeding Coalition of Ventura County have partnered to provide a limited number of scholarships to hospital and clinic staff who work directly with infants and families, and are immediately ready to use the certification.
 - Additional information on the course and scholarships are on the F5VC website.

III. County, Regional and National Updates

- First 5 Ventura County selected as winner of Partnership for Healthy Ventura's (PVHC) 2014 "Health Champion Award". (see attached)
 - F5VC recognized as one of the more active partners in the Partnership, providing "outstanding involvement in the leadership, development, maintenance and expansion of the website and in the area of media and communications assistance for all PHVC committees".
 - F5VC will be recognized at the March 11, 2014 Board of Supervisor's Meeting, along with other 2014 awardees.
 - F5VC was honored with a Health Champion Award in 2011 for health communication work.
- Parent Engagement Training ("Together We Will")
 - In partnership with the Oxnard Alliance, Strategies, Partnership for Safe Families, Casa Pacifica, and guided by local parent leaders, F5VC is developing and piloting a parent engagement training in the Oxnard area.
 - Up to 20 parents will gather for seven consecutive Saturdays to examine topics ranging from media and communications and advocacy, board participation, connecting with community resources and fathers as leaders in the community.
 - All sessions will be led by a parent/subject matter expert dyad and are anchored by the Five Protective Factors framework.
- EDC-VC Annual Meeting
 - Economic Development Collaborative of Ventura County's (EDC-VC) 17th Annual Meeting was titled "Preschool to Professional", with the program featuring several pages related to the benefits of early education and First 5 Ventura County's investment. (see attachment)
 - Kinko's founder and philanthropist Paul Orfalea spoke about early childhood education and economic development strategy.
 - Business leaders from Patagonia, Corwin Press, and Amgen shared their company's strategies for supporting early education.
- Federal Updates
 - President Obama signed bipartisan spending bill, which restores deep sequestration cuts made to Head Start and child care, and invests more than \$1 billion toward early learning and care.
 - \$1.025 billion increase for Head Start, of which \$100 million will be used for a cost-of-living adjustment for Head Start grantees and \$500 million will support Early Head Start – Child Care Partnerships, including increased services to vulnerable infants and toddlers.
 - \$154 million increase for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) to expand access and improve quality.
 - \$250 million for a new round of Race to the Top, with funding for grants to allow states to develop, enhance or expand high-quality preschool programs with comprehensive services for low-income families.

- State Updates
 - The California Department of Education (CDE), Child Development Division (CDD) has been renamed the Early Education and Support Division (EESD).
 - SB 837 Kindergarten Readiness Act, authored by Senate President pro Tempore Darrell Steinberg and co-sponsored by Early Edge California and State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson, would provide all 4 year olds with high-quality transitional kindergarten.
 - Over a 5-year phase-in, beginning in the 2015-16 school year, each elementary or unified school district and charter school that offers kindergarten would be required to offer voluntary transitional kindergarten for all 4 year olds.
 - Companion bill, “Strong Start”, for birth through 3 years old expected to be introduced shortly.
 - Assembly Democrats’ 2014-15 Blueprint for a Responsible Budget also prioritizes transitional kindergarten and strengthening early care programs for 0-3 year olds with wraparound care for children.
- Persimmony Data Software System
 - Six out of the eight Southern CA First 5 Commissions will be on the same software platform beginning in FY 2014-15.
 - In addition to Ventura, Orange and LA, Riverside County has now also chosen Persimmony as their new software vendor.
 - Two additional counties who currently use Persimmony, San Diego and San Bernardino, are interested in working together towards a common platform.

IV. Upcoming Events

- **Ventura County Together Monthly Meeting**, March 3, 2014, 10:00 – 11:30 a.m., VCCF Non-Profit Center, 4001 Mission Oaks Blvd., Camarillo
- **Strengthening Families Leadership Summit**, April 24, 2014, 8:00 a.m. to noon, Oxnard Performing Arts Center, 800 Hobson Way, Oxnard, CA (see attached)
- First 5 Standing Committees
 - **Administration/Finance Committee**, March 7, 2014, 9:30 – 11:30 a.m., F5VC offices
 - **Health Best Practices Committee**, March 27, 2014, 1:00 – 2:30 (location TBD)

PROVIDER ANECDOTES

SB/VC Dental Care Foundation

A teacher at a First 5 funded preschool was working with a family who had been trying without success to find a dental provider for their children. They were starting to lose hope, particularly after a neighbor told them how expensive her child's first dental visit was. The parents told the teacher that they didn't have access to dental care as children and they also had dental pain. The father had tried to get dental coverage before, but the monthly premiums and copayments were too expensive for the family.

Then they heard about a mobile dental clinic that was going to their community, providing services to families like them, so they wanted to know if the teacher could help them get an appointment. The teacher has scheduled many Dental Mobile Clinic appointments and was quick to contact our staff to tell us about the family and their active involvement at the preschool site.

When staff contacted the family to schedule an appointment, they learned the parents had never before seen a dentist. The family qualified for their Family Smiles program and they were given appointments for the following week. When they came for the appointment, these parents did something that the staff had never before seen: they brought floss with them and asked if staff could teach them how to use it! These parents didn't come just for the free treatment services, but they were also there to learn how to take care of their family's teeth at home. This was a tremendous boost for the staff, knowing that the oral health education that they provide can lead to good preventive care habits.

Moorpark/Simi Valley NfL – Program Anecdote – Kindergarten Transition

Every August at Moorpark Family Resource Center, we offer a Kindergarten Transition Program, for children entering Kindergarten the following month. Summer Pre-K is a drop-off program for 10 days, Monday-Friday 8:30-11:30 a.m., with enrollment priority given to children without prior preschool experience. It is taught by credentialed Kindergarten teachers with the help of classroom aides. There are 2-classes with 26-30 children in each room. The program goals are: to take the mystery out of starting Kindergarten while experiencing the routine of Kindergarten, learning to separate from family, making friends and realizing that starting Kindergarten might be fun. This program is a true jump start to Kindergarten and in many cases involves a jump in a child's maturity.

One week before our 2013 Summer Pre-K Program started, the Rotary Club of Moorpark approached us with the possibility of using technology/IPADs in our program. There is one Rotarian, who is on the Moorpark School Board, and is very committed to helping prepare children for school, and in turn, very committed to our program mission. Right before the start of Summer Pre-K, the Rotarian found a contact, through California Lutheran University, to borrow 20 IPADs.

While it was a huge undertaking in a short time, we agreed to pilot the use of IPADs in the Summer Pre-K program. We quickly met with our two Kindergarten teachers and they also agreed to use the

IPADs. They were very curious to see how the IPADs would assist children's learning. One teacher was more skilled with technology and helped the other teacher with pointers and planning their 2-weeks of IPAD use in the classroom. We all searched for apps and downloaded them to the IPADs. The teachers found volunteers to assist with IPADs in the classroom. The Rotary Club also donated extra money to pay for the apps. It was decided that the IPADs would be used as a center and, of course, the teachers and aides would have an IPAD.

On day one of the Summer Pre-K Program, the IPADs were introduced by the teachers. Within a few days, everyone was amazed at how quickly the children learned and followed the rules of using the IPAD. Soon, it was apparent this method of learning could bring endless opportunities that would support children's learning, along with the developing the responsibility of taking care of the IPAD. There are many successes to our story. We had unbelievable community collaboration with the Rotary Club of Moorpark, California Lutheran University, community volunteers, and MUSD. We had Kindergarten teachers who are now very motivated to bring IPADs into their actual Kindergarten room; and, most of all, it was observed and documented how IPADs supported and enriched children's learning experiences. Not only did they find children were able to problem solve, they were able to learn more vocabulary, have better retention, share their experiences at rug times and more. The teachers also found this sense of achievement and increase in self worth in the children; especially the children who appeared not to be quite academically ready for Kindergarten.