



To: Commissioners, First 5 Ventura County

From: Petra Puls, Executive Director

Date: June 21, 2018

Re: Recommendation to Adopt an Implementation Model for Place-based Services

Background

Currently, F5VC invests in place-based services through its Neighborhoods for Learning (NfL) initiative. In order to maintain NfLs and other funded services for as many years as possible, the Commission has augmented its declining Prop 10 revenues through a designated “sustainability fund”, which will be exhausted by June 30, 2019. Facing planned fund reductions, the Commission adopted a financial plan which allocates \$2.9 million annually for place-based services for FYs 2019/20 and 2020/21.

Through this funding for place-based services, Parent and Child Together (PACT) classes for 0-3 year olds and family support services would be provided through neighborhood Family Resource Centers (FRCs) throughout the county. PACT promotes positive parent-child interactions and early literacy. Family support services include community resource & referral (R&R), service coordination, and parenting education. Both PACT and parenting education would incorporate developmental screenings, information on healthy lifestyle and nutrition, oral health, etc.

Given the planned change in investments, a more streamlined implementation approach for the Commission’s Place-based Initiative is necessary in order to deliver services to children and families effectively and efficiently. At the May 2018 Commission meeting, several models were discussed:

- (1) One countywide contractor
- (2) Separate contractors for specific regions of the county (consolidation of current NfLs):
 - **Region 1** (Ojai Valley, Ventura, Santa Clara Valley)
 - **Region 2** (Hueneme/South Oxnard, Ocean View, Oxnard, Rio)
 - **Region 3** (Conejo, Moorpark, Simi Valley, Oak Park, Pleasant Valley)
- (3) First 5 Ventura County staff manages and implements place-based services

In May 2018, the Commission also released a Request for Letter of Interest to identify whether local service providers would be interested in contracting with First 5 Ventura County to provide

place-based services, including Parent and Child Together (PACT) classes and family support services, beginning July 1, 2019. A total of seven (7) letters of interest were received, with four (4) agencies expressing interest to serve as a county-wide contractor and the remaining three (3) agencies each expressing interest in one of the three regions. One (1) submission for countywide also indicated an interest in any one of the three regions as well.

Staff, in partnership with funded partners, continued the extensive process to assess each of the implementation models. In addition to considering strengths and challenges, the models were evaluated using the following criteria and factors:

- Cost
- Outcomes & Impact
- Flexibility & Adaptability
- Building a System
- Readiness to Implement
- Quality and Consistency
- Sustainability

Results of Analysis & Proposed Plan

The results of the analysis revealed the following potential benefits when contracting with one or more qualified entities:

- 1) Leverages existing capacity, organizational infrastructure, and potential service locations;
- 2) Greater organizational readiness to implement;
- 3) Potential for greater flexibility with non-traditional hours/ school calendars;
- 4) Potential for additional fundraising, implementing a sliding family fee for services, and other resource development strategies.

At the same time, concerns related with the contracting model include:

- 1) The contractor's capacity and vision to align the early childhood system of services and engage with other community leaders/assets, which is critical for long term sustainability and necessary with declining revenues and
- 2) Maintaining consistency and fidelity in the delivery of services to ensure optimum outcomes are achieved.

Conversely, the challenges of the contracting model would be benefits of the model in which First 5 is the administrator, yet some of the benefits identified above pose challenges. Maintaining First 5's vision for place-based services, focusing on fidelity and consistency, uniformly branding and messaging, and prioritizing alignment of early childhood services and supports is important for meeting our overall vision.

In an effort to capitalize on the identified strengths of the various models and position the Commission for success during this transition period, staff is proposing to pilot the following implementation model:

- Delivering place-based services would be contracted to one or more qualified entities, based on a competitive bid process. A Request for Qualifications/Applications with clear deliverables and desired outcomes would be released in July 2018, with selection to occur by Fall 2018.
- Recognizing the significant change brought about by the transition to a new place-based service delivery model, additional F5VC resources would assure maintaining our vision for place-based services, coordination and alignment of existing service capacity,

strengthen service and systems integration, and support quality programming through training/technical assistance. In order to not impact funds available for place-based services, this transitional pilot project would be funded with available unspent prior year funds from the Commission's internal cost centers. F5VC would hire staff responsible for leading the transition of the Place-based Initiative and to work closely with the selected contractor(s) on coordinating and integrating services at the community level. F5VC would also hire and deploy a technical assistance coach to work with PACT program staff to ensure quality, fidelity and consistency.

Recommendation

The recommended action would be to implement F5VC's place-based initiative through a contract with one or more existing entities beginning July 1, 2019. Additional F5VC staff resources would be deployed to, in close partnership with the selected contractor(s), manage the transition, coordinate and align existing services and resources, and provide training and technical assistance for implementing place-based services.