



To: Commissioners, First 5 Ventura County

From: Petra Puls, Executive Director

Date: October 24, 2019

Re: Discussion of Strategic Planning

Background

Since its inception, the Commission and staff have worked diligently to develop and refine the organizational infrastructure and strategic investments necessary to achieve its stated mission and goals. The main tools that are relied upon to plan and manage First 5 Ventura County funding and operations are:

- Strategic Plan (typically 5 years)
- Long Range Financial Plan (10 years)
- Multi-Year Allocations (2 – 3 years)
- Annual Budgets

The Strategic Plan is the overall, high-level guiding document supported through the long term financial plan, and operationalized through funding decisions detailed in multi-year program allocations and annual operating budgets, and implementation strategies.

First 5 Ventura County's FY 2015-20 Strategic Plan was originally approved in June 2015 and implementation spans from July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2021. The current strategic plan provides an overview of challenges young children and families in Ventura County face, as well as a summary of parent and community stakeholder input on Commission priorities. In addition to Vision and Mission statements, the plan lays out a set of Guiding Principles, Strategic Priorities and associated goals.

For funding years one through three (FY 2016-19), investments largely remained the same as the Commission utilized its Sustainability Fund to maintain funding levels. With the depletion of the Sustainability Fund in June 2019, the strategic plan expands our role as advocates and conveners to build and support communities that prioritize the wellbeing of young children and families. To that end, the plan describes shifting strategic investments towards capacity building to support and build the overall system of services in Years 4 and 5.

In accordance with statutory requirements, the Commission reviews its Strategic Plan on an annual basis to determine if any revisions are necessary.

Discussion

According to our FY 2015-20 Strategic Plan, beginning with FY 2019-20 the Commission initiated a shift in strategic investments towards capacity building efforts and strengthening the overall early childhood system of services. The plan provided sample strategic investments with the intent to adopt specific implementation strategies during FY 2018-19.

Therefore, over the past 18 months, the Commission took action to re-vamp our Neighborhoods for Learning (NfL) place-based service delivery system inclusive of selecting one new implementation partner and standardizing service implementation. The Commission also approved a streamlined investment in preschool services and scholarships as a two-year transition strategy until public investments become effective, took on Help Me Grow coordination, and launched parent engagement efforts. Staff has also been more actively involved in advocacy and policy opportunities, and continue to promote early literacy as a social norm. The Commission also identified and approved high-level systems change efforts, with priorities and associated activities still to be finalized.

In September 2019, staff presented two options for strategic planning, including action steps that would lead to the adoption of a new plan by June 2020 or the extension of the current plan. Based upon Commissioner discussion and input, a series of proposed activities (Attachment 1) would review, assess, and evaluate FY 2019-21 investments, and enable us to align strategies and investments with local, state and federal opportunities and priorities. Modifying where needed and extending our current strategic plan would also give the Commission the opportunity to direct staff resources towards engaging in systems change activities, adequately support the implementation of the redesigned NfL initiative, and use the learnings from Year 4/5 to inform our new strategic plan with the goal to adopt a new plan by no later than June 2022 (Attachment 2).

Staff proposes to develop an annual Implementation Plan which is intended to compliment annual budgets by outlining how operational resources will be deployed to support approved Strategic Plan goals and objectives. The Implementation Plan is intended to provide details on how the Commission will carry out its mission and goals in the coming fiscal year, including targeting resources towards strengthening the larger early childhood systems and building organizational capacity.

The Implementation Plan is an operational document and may be amended and adjusted based on emerging priorities that may be identified throughout the year. Operational objectives would be developed to establish and track the successful implementation of organizational priorities.

Example:

Operational Objective: Develop Communications Plan
Develop a communication plan to elevate children's issues and promote healthy development
1. By August 2020, implement a communications assessment to identify target audiences and stakeholder needs.
2. By December 2020, develop a communications plan based on the recommendations from the communications assessment.
3. By June 2021, implement the communications task as defined in the Communications Plan

First 5 Ventura County Strategic Plan Extension - Proposed Activities

Phase	Key Activities
<p>Review FY 2015 – 20 Strategic Plan Elements</p>	<p>Review/update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission and Vision statements • Guiding Principles • Strategic Goal Areas • Evaluation Framework (inclusive of desired results and indicators)
<p>Assess</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Performance • Local, State, and Federal Priorities, Investments, and Opportunities
<p>Update</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Platform • Long Range Financial Plan
<p>Adopt Revised/Extended Strategic Plan FY 2020-23</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve revised strategic plan elements • Approve FY2021 – 23 spending levels
<p>Align Strategic Priorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Implementation Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Annual budgets ○ Organizational core functions and strategic priorities
<p>Execute</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align organizational resources • Modify programmatic priorities
<p>Accountability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing tracking and evaluation of success indicators • Periodic reporting to commission and stakeholders • Continuous Quality Improvement and alignment
<p>Develop and Adopt Strategic Plan FY 2023 and beyond</p>	<p>TBD</p>

First 5 Ventura County Strategic Plan Extension - Proposed Activities and Timelines

	FY 2015 – 2020 Strategic Plan								Strategic Plan Extension							
	FY 2019-20				FY 2020-21				FY 2021-22				FY 2022-23			
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
Review of Strategic Plan Elements Review/update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission and Vision • Guiding Principles • Strategic Goal Areas • Evaluation Framework 																
Assess <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Performance • Local, State, and Federal Priorities, Investments, and Opportunities 																
Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Platform • Long Range Financial Plan 																
Adopt Revised/Extended Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve revised strategic plan elements • Approve FY2021 – 23 spending levels 																
Align Strategic Priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Implementation Plan & Budget 																
Execute <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align resources and investments 																
Accountability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting & CQI 																
Develop and Adopt Strategic Plan FY 2023 – 20XX																

New Strategic Plan
FY 2023 - and beyond