

FIRST 5 LA

SUBJECT:

Prenatal through Three Focus Area

RECOMMENDATION:

Approval of the revised Prenatal through Three approach and implementation of all benchmarks dated December 1, 2006 through November 30, 2007 in the Action Plan and their associated costs in an amount not-to-exceed \$2,135,000 from the Prenatal through Three Focus Area allocation. Benchmarks included in this timeframe are in the following areas:

- A. Prenatal through Three Infrastructure Development**
- B. Data Infrastructure and Evaluation Design**
- C. Capacity Strengthening**
- D. Demonstration Zone Preparation**
- E. Communications Plan**
- F. Timeline and Cost Projection development for all additional benchmarks**

BACKGROUND:

The vision of the Prenatal through Three Focus Area is to optimize the early development of children in Los Angeles County from the prenatal stage through age three. The purpose of the Prenatal through Three Focus Area is to increase the number of children who achieve appropriate social, emotional, cognitive, language, physical and motor developmental milestones to the best of their potential.

In November 2003 the Commission approved \$105 million dollars for the development of the Prenatal through Three Focus Area Investment. In February 2005, the Commission approved the Implementation Plan outlining investments across four components: 1) Data, 2) Direct Services, 3) Capacity Strengthening, and 4) Policy. Per board direction, these four components have been integrated into a cross-cutting approach to optimize the development of pregnant women, babies and toddlers. In November 2005 the Commission approved an additional allocation of \$20 million dollars raising the total focus area funding to \$125 million. At the same time, the Commission approved its Revised Programmatic and Fiscal Policies of the *Next Five* Strategic Plan. These revised policies have increased the Commission's emphasis on the Prenatal through Three population, influencing the allocations for the Capacity Building, Systems Improvement, Data and Policy investments, as well as other initiatives (i.e. Healthy Births). Further, these new policies direct First 5 LA toward a Place-Based evaluation strategy, for which the Baby Zone concept is well designed. In May 2006 the Commission approved the two-pronged Baby Zone and Policy Agenda approach. This two-pronged approach integrates the four components, while outlining both countywide and place-based strategies for investment in the desired results and outcomes for this population. Ongoing design of the focus area has been informed by commissioner liaison meetings and feedback from attendees and commissioners at Joint Planning Committee meetings. Topics discussed have included (1) cross-initiative coordination, (2) geography of Baby Zones and (3) Infrastructure. The focus area will continue to be discussed, as appropriate, at Joint Planning Committee meetings, including a discussion of priorities for investment within this Focus Area. Further, the Focus Area will continue to be discussed in-depth with the Commission's liaisons to the project.

DISCUSSION:

The attached revised Prenatal through Three document expands on the previously approved “ABC’s of Baby Zones,” which detailed the Family Engagement Point strategies of the Focus Area. This document outlines an action plan, strategies and capacity building activities proposed to achieve implementation of the approach, as well as the refined desired outcomes and results for the Focus Area. The Prenatal through Three Focus Area team seeks approval to move forward with the implementation of the above mentioned early benchmarks in the Focus Area Action Plan.

Some of the actions and benchmarks outlined in this Action Plan can be performed by staff, including evaluation design, policy strategies, selection and procurement processes and some support to the Infrastructure. However, based on current staff resources it will be necessary to contract with consultants with expertise in strategic content areas that support a rigorous development for the Prenatal through Three Infrastructure, Baby Zone Demonstration preparation, completion of cost projections and data systems design and implementation. While the overall Focus Area will be managed internally, significant external resources will be required to carry out the attached Action Plan.

Attachment (1)

For Office Use

Board Action Taken:

Approved: Yes No Further Discussion

Referred to Committee/Work Group: _____