SUBJECT:
Best Start LA (formally known as the Prenatal through Three Focus Area Investment) Pilot Demonstration Community

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Approval of refinements to the Best Start LA Welcome, Baby! model (formally known as P-3 Family Engagement Strategy). This includes the addition of engagement points with families, an increase in the population served, and an increase to the estimated budget for implementation of this strategy in the pilot demonstration community.

2. Approval for the addition of L.A. County’s centralized case management approach as a criteria to be included in the pilot demonstration community selection process.

BACKGROUND:
The vision of Best Start LA (formally known as the Prenatal through Three Focus Area Investment) is to optimize the early development of children in Los Angeles County from the prenatal stage through age three with a purpose 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 a $105 million dollar allocation for the development of Best Start LA. Subsequently, 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 were developed into an integrated approach to optimize the development of very young children from the pregnancy stage through age three. 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 increased the Commission’s emphasis on the prenatal through three population, influencing allocations for the Capacity Building, Systems Improvement, Sustainability and Data investments.

In May 2006, the Commission approved the two-pronged Best Start LA Demonstration Community and Policy Agenda approach. This two-pronged approach integrated the four components, while outlining both countywide and place-based strategies for investment in the desired results and outcomes for this population.

In November of 2006, First 5 LA’s Board of Commissioners approved an action plan and benchmarks for Best Start LA that outlined the outcomes, strategies and capacity strengthening “Building Blocks” for continued implementation. Included in this action plan was a concept for Best Start LA’s Welcome, Baby! (formally known as P-3 Family Engagement) strategy. According to the approved plan, Welcome, Baby! was designed to include one prenatal visit in the third trimester of pregnancy, one birthing engagement at the hospital, and three post-discharge home visits. At the time of this Commission meeting, staff was directed to return for approvals of allocations to roll out these strategies and benchmarks. The action plan served as a foundation for the goals and deliverables outlined in this request and included objectives specific to implementation of five demonstration communities. It also included key capacity strengthening activities to support
implementation of the demonstration communities and countywide efforts towards achieving the Best Start LA outcomes.

As Directed by the Board, in September 2007, staff presented to the Commission and received approval for an initial roll-out of Best Start LA. The Commission approved funds not to exceed $19,454,146 for (1) the first of five demonstration communities, referred to as “the pilot”; (2) early implementation of Welcome, Baby!; (3) an accompanying data system and research and development activities for the pilot; (4) the implementation of the workforce development building block; and (5) the design and early implementation of a comprehensive sustainability roadmap.

Following this approval, staff moved forward with developing a two-year strategic partnership with the Los Angeles Best Babies Network (LABBN) to assist in the early implementation of Welcome, Baby! Staff also released an RFP to identify a contractor that could enhance the workforce development building block. ZERO TO THREE was subsequently selected to receive this workforce development contract. As part of this contract, ZERO TO THREE will assist First 5 LA in implementing a process of developing core competencies both common and unique to the sectors of Health, Mental Health/Social Services and Early Care and Education; creating and testing training strategies for enhancing the prenatal through three workforce; and making those enhancements sustainable and scalable. Additionally, staff developed an RFP to select a sustainability consultant to identify activities for leveraging social and fiscal resources in support of Best Start LA objectives. This consultant group will work with staff and all Best Start LA partners, including the demonstration communities, to implement strategies to build the capacity of grantee and non-grantee organizations, individuals and champions to participate in sustaining the Best Start LA investment. It is expected that this RFP will be released in conjunction with selecting the first pilot demonstration community.

Ongoing design of Best Start LA has been informed by feedback from Best Start LA and Sustainability Commissioner Liaisons, facilitated dialogues at the Joint Planning Committee meetings and ongoing communication with key stakeholders at every stage of development. This high level of engagement with stakeholders has and will continue to be key in garnering and maintaining support for Best Start LA implementation activities and sustainability strategies.

**DISCUSSION:**

**Welcome, Baby! Implementation**

To facilitate early implementation of the Welcome, Baby! strategy, staff developed a strategic partnership with the Los Angeles Best Babies Network (LABBN) following the September 2007 Board meeting. Staff was directed to develop this partnership by the Best Start LA Commissioner Liaisons to expedite the implementation of the pilot for Welcome, Baby! by building upon the Commission's investment in the Healthy Births Initiative. The LABBN is the coordinating body for this initiative and has built the organizational and administrative infrastructure necessary to support the growth and sustainability of the Health Births Initiative.

The LABBN contract to assist in implementation of Welcome, Baby! began in December 2007. A report was submitted to staff in April 2008 with recommendations on how to refine the approved Welcome, Baby! model to make the program feasible and scalable first in a pilot community and eventually countywide. Findings from this report were presented and discussed with the Best Start LA Commissioner Liaisons in April and May 2008. Following these meetings, final decisions were made by the Liaisons around the key elements for Welcome, Baby! that should be included in the pilot and what population should be served. The approved Welcome, Baby! model included one prenatal visit in the third trimester of pregnancy, one birthing engagement at the hospital, and three post-discharge home visits. Welcome, Baby! was also expected to target families living within the geographic boundaries of the Best Start LA demonstration community – a defined area with an estimated 1,200 births on average. Along with changes to the number of visits families would receive through Welcome, Baby!, the Liaisons also directed staff to offer this element of Best Start
LA to all families delivering at a hospital serving the demonstration community. In assessing the birthing populations of some of the largest hospitals in L.A. County, staff estimates that Welcome, Baby! could be offered to a hospital delivering up to 5,000 families on average annually. These changes to the model subsequently resulted in changes to the cost projections presented to the Commission in September 2007. The following table summarizes the final refinements to Welcome, Baby! discussed and approved upon by Commissioner Liaisons during the past several months, and compares these refinements to the model approved by the Board of Commissioners in November 2006.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Approve Welcome, Baby! Model (per November 2006 P-3 Concept Paper)</th>
<th>Proposed Welcome, Baby! Model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One Prenatal Visit (in clinic by 27 wks)</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; Prenatal Visit (in clinic 20 to 26 wks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital Visit (after birth)</td>
<td>Hospital Visit (after birth)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; Home Visit (nurse visit within 2 weeks of birth)</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; Home Visit (public health nurse visit, &lt; 72 hrs after hospital discharge)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; Home Visit (by 2 months)</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; Home Visit (by 1 to 2 months)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; Home Visit (by 4 months)</td>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; Home Visit (by 3-4 months)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; Home Visit (by 9 months)</td>
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The addition of a second prenatal visit will provide Welcome, Baby! staff with another opportunity to engage families at a time that research shows they are receptive to receiving messages from home visitation and early education programs. Experts believe that engaging families prenatally is ideal because the environment is calm and supportive and families are actively seeking information on how to best improve the health and well-being of their child. A telephone contact was also added to the model following the first post-discharge home visit. The telephone contact is expected to assess the general well-being of the new family and provide additional support to parents on breastfeeding, infant care, scheduling of well child visits, and community referrals. It will also be another opportunity to schedule additional home visits with families. The final change to the previously approved Welcome, Baby! model is reflected in the addition of a fourth home visit to be completed by the baby’s ninth month. This visit was added because research shows that parents could benefit from a home visitor teaching them how to use a comprehensive developmental screen for their child such as the Ages and Stages Questionnaire or PEDS. First 5 LA staff also expect that families who continue with Welcome, Baby! through this fourth home visit will have built good relationships with their home visitors. This will assist in the program’s goal of connecting families to their Best Start community and improve the data that can be collected from families. Staff expects that as families build relationships with their home visitors, they will be more inclined to share details about the types of support they would like to see developed in their community.

By increasing the number of visits families receive through Welcome, Baby!, and reassessing the size of the population that will be served during the pilot phase, a new five-year budget of $9,388,258 is proposed to cover the costs associated with offering this revised Welcome, Baby! model. These changes have affected the total costs expected to be incurred during this pilot phase as referenced in the September 2007 Board memo. In September 2007, staff proposed an initial five-year budget of $5,175,760 to cover the costs associated with staffing Welcome, Baby! These costs
were calculated assuming that one prenatal visit in the third trimester of pregnancy, one birthing engagement at the hospital, and three post-discharge home visits would be provided to a total population of 1,200 births in the geographic boundaries of a demonstration community.

**Best Start LA Pilot Demonstration Community Site Selection**

The pilot will play a unique role in completing initial testing and refinement of the three strategies associated with Best Start LA, including Welcome, Baby!, the placed-based community activities, and community mobilization. The lessons learned during this pilot phase will benefit the following four demonstration communities that will be selected.

In order to successfully implement the strategies and activities expected within a Best Start LA demonstration community, the lead facilitator or entity will need to assist the local stakeholders in:

- Building on current community-based coalitions that are reflective of the diversity of the local community to facilitate further development and maintenance of a coalition whose primary purpose is to create supportive environments that positively impact the lives of pregnant women and children 0-3
- Overseeing the utilization of participatory action research methods so that residents and community stakeholders can develop a clearer picture of the local community conditions and opportunities for prenatal women and families with children 0-3 within the target community, and to develop a community specific plan which details the implementation of the proposed strategies intended to achieve the Focus Area goals. These data collection efforts will guide the development and sustainability of the Best Start LA activities within each community
- Developing and implement a local governance structure for the demonstration community, including administrative, IT and evaluation resources and processes and identifying and/or securing facilities to support all efforts
- Establishing partnerships with entities that will contribute to Best Start LA's desired results of improving the well being of prenatal women, and children 0-3 and their families

In the September 2007 Board memo, the lead facilitator or entity responsible for coordinating activities associated with Best Start LA was to be identified through a targeted competitive process with attention given to launching Welcome, Baby! first. Furthermore, based on Commissioner interest in building on a current investment that demonstrates clear linkages with the outcomes and strategies of Best Start LA, and more specifically Welcome, Baby!, First 5 LA was to pilot the model in a community represented by one of three types of collaboratives currently being supported by the LA Best Babies Network (i.e. the Care Quality Collaboratives, the Best Babies Collaboratives or the Healthy Births Learning Collaboratives).

In recent weeks, as a process to identify the pilot demonstration community was discussed, staff revisited the L.A. County Service Integration Branch’s vision for its centralized case management effort. This effort is intended to provide a coordinated and collaborative approach to delivering services to children and their families by emphasizing relationship building between agencies that serve children and families. Commissioner Liaisons and staff see the County's efforts around centralized case management as an important leveraging opportunity that could assist in the identification and selection of the pilot demonstration community.

Service integration dictates that educational, health, and social services are delivered in a coordinated way to improve outcomes for individuals and families. Steps to successful seamless service delivery include:

- Encouraging multi-agency collaboration in the provision of services
- Co-locating programs from different agencies
• Developing common intake forms
• Partnering with communities
• Improving access to services
• Enhancing customer service and satisfaction
• Sharing data/information across agencies
• Identifying opportunities for leveraging and matching funds among departments, agencies, and their partners

These elements are paramount to the vision of Best Start LA and staff recommends that the efforts around centralized case management be explored as criteria for selecting a pilot demonstration community in addition to the requirement that a community be involved in the Healthy Births Initiative. By selecting a community that has a commitment to service integration and centralized case management, Best Start LA can provide an additional safety net to those families that choose to utilize it as they participate in Best Start LA, and the Commission can leverage the coordination, collaboration, and relationships already taking place in a community.

**CONCLUSION**

**To expedite the selection of a pilot demonstration community for Best Start LA, staff recommends approval of the following:**

- Approval of refinements to the Best Start LA Welcome, Baby! model. This includes the addition of engagement points with families, an increase in the population served, and an increase to the estimated budget for implementation of this strategy in the pilot demonstration community.
- Approval for the addition of L.A. County’s centralized case management approach as a criteria to be included in the pilot demonstration community selection process.

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**For Office Use**

Board Action Taken:

Approved: ☐ Yes  ☐ No  ☐ Further Discussion

Referred to Committee/Work Group: _____________________________