Agenda Item: XX  
Date: October 12, 2006

FIRST 5 LA

SUBJECT:  
Oral Health and Nutrition Expansion and Enhancement Project

RECOMMENDATION:  
Approval of Oral Health and Nutrition Expansion and Enhancement Project Multi-Strategy Framework with an allocation not to exceed $10 million; with 60% from Open Grantmaking, 30% from Capacity Building and 10% from Policy; and authorize staff to negotiate contracts and grants necessary for project development and roll out.

BACKGROUND:  
At the April 2006 Board meeting Chair Antonovich requested that the Commission expand on its efforts and investments to promote good oral health and nutrition for young children and their families in Los Angeles County and directed staff to further develop plans for this action. At the May 2006 Board Meeting, the First 5 LA Board of Commissioners approved staff to move forward with the preparation of a framework and allocation to include recommendations for ways in which the Commission can further invest and make a commitment to children’s oral health and nutrition through the roll-out of strategies that enhance current efforts to promote good oral health and nutrition.

In the development of this framework, staff conducted an extensive literature review, convened expert panels on oral health and nutrition bringing local leading experts from the fields of childhood obesity prevention and pediatric oral health respectively. Experts on children's health, representing foundations, research institutions, universities, community-based organizations, and county departments were convened recently by First 5 LA to provide their views on pressing priorities around positive early childhood oral health and nutrition outcomes (see Appendix B). The purpose of the dialogues was to share information with First 5 LA about the most critical issues in LA County relating to children's oral health and nutrition. The meetings also provided insights on how to maximize benefits of existing First 5 LA investments and potential funding in these areas. Staff continued dialogue with many of the key stakeholders to learn in-depth about programs and activities that address early childhood nutrition and oral health.

In addition, staff reviewed and considered First 5 LA's previous commitments in both oral health and nutrition as outlined above to develop the framework and ensure that the proposed activities maximize our investments. The proposed framework design is based on the identification of best practices within Los Angeles County and a consideration of how First 5 LA could potentially make the most significant contribution to children’s oral health and nutrition.

DISCUSSION:  
The attached Oral Health and Nutrition Expansion and Enhancement Project Multi-Strategy Framework is based on an assessment of best practices and an identification of how First 5 LA could potentially leverage and maximize existing ongoing efforts to improve nutritional and oral health outcomes for children and their families.

The issues affecting children's nutrition and oral health outcomes are complex and varied, supporting the need for First 5 LA to focus on developing partnerships with other organizations, leveraging existing efforts and prioritizing strategies to address these issues. The proposed framework includes Access – Direct Services, Public Education, Policy and Advocacy to strategically address the areas that strongly emerged from the expert panels, stakeholder discussions and literature reviews. A multi-strategy framework will allow First 5 LA to focus on: Access-Direct Services for the community that address need and strengthen parent, provider and community capacity; Public Education will address the need to increase the messaging around communicating the importance of oral health and nutrition for optimal child development; and Policy and Advocacy related policy agenda development and convenings will
address the need to affect these issues more broadly in terms of addressing systems and related policies that underlie these issues.

The strategies to improve the nutritional status and oral health of children and their families presented as part of this framework intend to integrally focus on the emergent areas found to be both critical and feasible. The proposed framework is intended to provide the Board with a scope of potential activities to be rolled-out incrementally to achieve First 5 LA’s oral health and nutrition objectives. The development and roll-out of these strategies involve short term, intermediate and long term activities to build upon and coordinate both the work of First 5 LA and other agencies, which will require a phased-in approach to execute.

For Office Use

Board Action Taken:

Approved: ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Further Discussion

Referred to Committee/Work Group: ________________________________