

Summary of Commission Actions

Meeting of February 14, 2013

Staff Presentations

Strategic Plan Implementation Profile: Best Start

- Received and filed staff's report on the implementation of the Best Start place-based initiative. Highlights of the presentation included:
 - The goals of the presentation were as follows:
 - Provide an overview of the historical context of Best Start
 - Provide an update on Best Start implementation: Community Capacity Building
 - Highlight initial learning and key issues for Board consideration
 - Identify next steps for moving forward
 - Staff articulated the main reasons why First 5 LA shifted from an initiative-based approach to grant making to a place-based approach in its 2009-15 Strategic Plan:
 - Direct services alone are not sufficient to improve child-level outcomes
 - Historically diffused investments
 - Limited programmatic integration and coordination
 - Difficulty measuring First 5 LA's impact
 - Challenged to tell the First 5 LA "story"

Highlights

- Strategic Plan Strategic Research Partnership with USC Authorized
- Staff presentation on Family Strengthening Sustainability
- L3 Exploration Update

COMMISSIONERS

Los Angeles County Supervisor
Mark Ridley-Thomas
Chair

Neal Kaufman, M.D., M.P.H.
Vice Chair

Nancy Au

Jane Boeckmann

Philip L. Browning

Jonathan E. Fielding, M.D.,
M.P.H.

Marvin J. Southard, D.S.W.

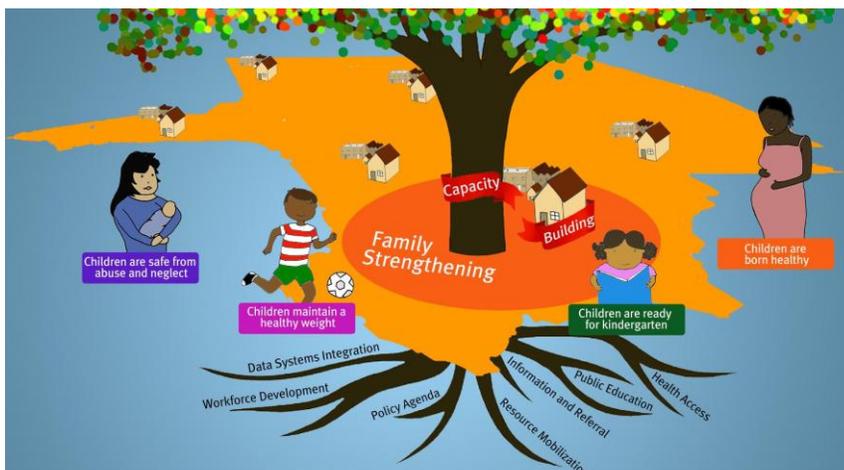
Antronette K. Yancey, M.D.,
M.P.H.

Sandra Figueroa-Villa

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS

Patricia Curry
Arturo Delgado, Ed.D.
Duane Dennis
Deanne Tilton

What is Best Start?



- The above graphic was used to illustrate the following:
 - Best Start is characterized by implementation of two fundamental strategies
 - Community capacity-building
 - Family strengthening
 - These strategies are anchored in the Commission's four priority strategic goals and supported by seven different countywide strategies including activities to:
 - Improve the quality of the workforce serving children
 - Inform and change public policy
 - Ensure that all children in LA County have health care coverage
- Staff identified a number of important learnings from the place-based work to date in the following areas:
 - Implementation challenges of translating the programmatic concepts to the involved communities and achieving a common understanding of them
 - Community capacity building is time intensive and has occurred unevenly
 - Integration with countywide strategies has been limited
 - Internal capacity not structured optimally for place-based work
 - Scale and scope of place-based effort is much larger than any other in the country
 - Size of the Best Start communities introduced more complexity
 - Inconsistent engagement of Commissioners through reports on progress, successes/challenges and lessons learned
- Overarching questions were posed to the Commission:
 - Impact: What kind of impact do we seek to have for children and families in the context of our place-based strategy?
 - Theory of change: Can the outcomes we aspire to achieve be reasonably expected from our place-based and countywide strategies, implementation plans, timeline, allocations?
 - Progress: What intermediate indicators can be measured and reported on to assess progress toward goals?
 - Resources: What is the financing and time required to achieve our goals?
 - Internal capacity: What is First 5 LA's role and capacity to execute?
- Next steps in the ongoing discussion of Best Start were noted as follows:
 - February 2013 – March 2013
 - Board Committee engagement: draft Logic Model
 - Best Start community communication
 - Outreach related to "Listening, Learning, Leading (L3) exploration
 - Development of options for interim Best Start community support

- March 2013 Board Meeting
 - Update of Logic Model discussions
 - Update of L3 learning
 - Recommendations for interim Best Start support
- April 2013 – June 2013
 - Implementation recommendations

Commission discussion followed. In response to the staff presentation, Chairman Ridley-Thomas asked that the Commission hold a special meeting of the Commission to focus solely on Best Start. That meeting has been scheduled for March 4, 2013.

Policy and Advocacy Update – Sustainability Plan for Universal Assessment/Home Visitation

- Commissioners received and filed staff's report on development of a sustainability plan for the Commission's Family Strengthening strategies. The presentation provided an update on current sustainability strategies (organizational capacity building, community capacity building, policy change and resource mobilization) as well as a summary of activities that have taken place in each area.
 - Lessons learned:
 - Long time-horizon for seeing a return for many of these sustainability activities
 - Medicaid's current rules for reimbursement are complicated, healthcare focused and unlikely to yield a high level of financial return
 - Changing policy environment at federal and state level creates uncertainty
 - Sustainable public funding requires "return on investment" evidence
 - Philanthropic partners' investment in home visitation is not at the same scale as First 5 LA
 - Next steps:
 - Further develop a comprehensive sustainability strategy for Family Strengthening which addresses gaps and opportunities in:
 - Resource Mobilization
 - Policy and Advocacy
 - Analyze implications for Family Strengthening implementation

Harvey Rose Audit Implementation Profile: Human Resources

- Commissioners also received and filed staff's report on the status of outstanding action items in the area of Human Resources. Specific information was provided on the status of the solicitation for consultant support for conduct of a staff compensation & benefits study.

- Recommendation of Rose Audit was suggestion to conduct a study of this type every 5 years
 - Last Commission approved compensation study was in 2001
- Solicitation
 - Review wages and benefits internally to ensure areas of responsibility and functions appropriate to classification
 - Review current staff classification to assess appropriateness of current system
 - Review internal wages and benefits compared to external wages and benefits for comparable functions and classifications
 - Present options on above and make recommendations

Strategic Partnership with USC Approved

The Commission concurred with staff's recommendation that the Commission enter into a strategic partnership and execute a contract with The University of Southern California (USC) to study the cumulative prevalence of children 0-5 in Los Angeles County who are involved in the child welfare system.

At its October 2010 meeting, the Board of Commissioners approved an allocation of \$5 million over five years to establish The Data Partnership for Funders as a countywide effort designed to establish an interagency partnership among experts in the field of data and technology related to children and families. The Data Partnership for Funders is now known as the LA Children's Data Network (LACDN). Participating members of the LACDN have selected and approved this project.

It is currently known how many children ages 0-5 enter the child welfare system annually, but it is not known how many children cumulatively will have been involved in child protective services by the age of five. USC researchers will expand on prior state-level analyses to examine the cumulative prevalence of children ages 0-5 in the child welfare system in LA County by SPA. This analysis will provide the Commission and LA County policymakers a more accurate understanding of the risk posed by maltreatment.

Authorized Items – New Contracts, Contract Renewals and/or Amendments to Existing Contracts

The following items totaling \$39,999 were authorized by the Commission (all amounts are for FY 2012-13 and all are new agreements unless indicated otherwise.) Items are listed according to Strategic Plan Goal Area:

- **Other Investments – \$39,999**
 - Accountability and Learning Report
 - Gary Resnick - \$15,000*
 - Early Development Instrument
 - Regents of the University of California - \$24,999*

*Indicates contract amendment or renewal. Amount indicated is only amended amount, not new total contract amount. (Contract amendments that are less than \$25,000 but cause the total contract amount to increase beyond \$25,000 will be listed for Board consideration.)

Program Budget Adjustments Approved

- Mid-Year Line Item Adjustments
 - The First 5 LA Commission approved several adjustments to the FY 2012-13 Operating Budget with a net zero impact on the total budget. Adjustments consisted of a combination of increases in certain line items and equivalent decreases in other line items due to identified savings
- Program Budget Adjustments Approved
 - The Commission also approved a resolution authorizing a change to increase the Research Partnerships Research and Evaluation Project line item in the FY 2012-13 Program Budget by \$404,837. Funds will be used for The Family Survey Data Collection Project which will generate representative data on key indicators of well-being for children zero to five and their families in each of the Best Start Communities.

Executive Director's Report

L3 Initiative

The Executive Director presented an update on the “Listening, Learning and Leading” (L3) exploratory process. L3 is a focused, collaborative, and time-bound exploration centered on how First 5 LA can most effectively advance its mission and achieve better outcomes for young children. More specifically, the assessment and review is intended to:

- Build a common understanding among staff and Commissioners of the status of implementation of First 5 LA's strategic plan for 2009-15.
- Identify critical implementation issues that require Board of Commissioner understanding, consideration, and decision-making.
- Highlight opportunities to strengthen First 5 LA's internal capacity and external partnerships to advance organizational goals.

- Provide a roadmap for clarifying First 5 LA's strategic direction, making any needed mid-course adjustments, and achieving greater impact in the context of the long-term financial projections.

This exploration is encompassing three prongs of inquiry:

- To clarify and sharpen the agency's strategic direction and explore potential new partnerships, one prong is focusing on reviewing our work to date and assessing First 5 LA's progress toward its program goals. This strand of activity includes both stakeholder listening sessions that will employ a variety of settings and approaches (i.e., focus groups, interviews, survey) and a review and analysis of internal material and evaluation data
- A second prong is examining internal processes and procedures to determine First 5 LA's capacity to achieve its strategic goals and maximize impact. This review is exploring organizational structure, financial management and administrative systems, contracting processes, and grantee technical assistance/support needs.
- To understand the critical forces that affect the environment in which we work, a third prong is considering the external context within which First 5 LA does its work and its implication for First 5 LA's goals and our County's young children and families. This inquiry is examining the 0-5 LA County landscape of programs, collaboratives, and/or networks that focus on young children and their families, as well as economic, social, demographic, and political trends that influence First 5 LA's programs and populations.
- L3 Project Design Activities Update
 - Identified key stakeholders, opinion leaders and informants to include in the L3 process
 - Determined methodologies for soliciting input and analyzing internal data and material
 - Finalizing internal protocols and electronic surveys to solicit input; developing external protocols
- Sequencing of L3 Activities
 - Listen/Learn – Engaging internal stakeholders (February/March)
 - Commissioners, staff, Board of Supervisors children's deputies
 - Listen/Learn – Examining external environment (February/March)
 - Listen/Learn – Engaging external stakeholders (April)
 - First 5 LA contractors, grantees, key informants
 - Learn/Lead – Translating insights into action (April-June)



Other Actions

The Commission also took the following actions:

- The Commission approved the minutes of the January 10, 2013 meeting and the agency's financial statements for the month of December 2012.
-

The First 5 LA Board of Commissioners is comprised of 17 members (nine voting, four ex-officio, four alternates). The board includes voting members appointed by each of the Los Angeles County supervisors and the L.A. County departments of Children and Family Services, Public Health and Mental Health. The Chairman of the L.A. County Board of Supervisors also serves as Chairman of the First 5 LA Commission.

The 17-member Board also includes representatives from other educational, children and families organizations throughout the county. The Board of Commissioners meets on the second Thursday of each month at 1:30 p.m. unless otherwise indicated at the First 5 LA offices. All meetings are open to the public and agendas are posted [here](#) at least 72 hours in advance.

