

Summary of Commission Actions



Champions For Our Children
www.First5LA.org

Meeting of June 14, 2012

Note: The Commission's next scheduled meeting is Wednesday, June 27, 2012 at 9:00 am. Please check first5la.org for meeting location information.

Commission approves \$198.8 million budget

The First 5 LA Commission unanimously approved a nearly \$200 million budget for fiscal year 2012-13 consisting of a Program Budget of \$182.1 million and an Operating Budget of \$16.7 million. The Program Budget includes the cost of services and programs to implement the Commission's Strategic Plan over the next year. The Operating Budget covers the costs of First 5 LA's internal operations and management.

This year, First 5 LA staff undertook an extensive effort to develop detailed work plans for the 58 major program efforts that comprise the budget for the next fiscal year. These work plans will serve as valuable tools which will allow management to closely track program implementations and hold staff and grantees accountable for their work. The Commission also authorized staff to proceed with the necessary contracting actions to implement the work for the upcoming year.

Revised and new financial management policies to be implemented

First 5 LA staff also proposed changes to an existing policy related to how the Commission calculates administrative costs and proposed a new policy for the adoption of the program and operating budgets. The revised policy clarifies how administrative costs are determined and explicitly states that the Commission will adopt a maximum percentage rate of the total annual budget to be spent on the administrative function.

The new policy sets a framework for the annual adoption of a program and operating budget and includes the development and review of a long-term financial plan, completion and adoption of a budget by April 30 and budgeting on a two-year cycle. The changes will better accommodate the needs of the Commission's grantees, promote longer term planning, align contracting and budgeting processes and provide greater visibility on future obligations. The Commission unanimously approved both policies.

Highlights

- FY 2012-13 Program and Operating Budgets Approved
- New and revised financial management policies approved
- Approval of findings to enter into Strategic Partnerships with up to 24 hospitals approved

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Strategic Partnerships with up to 24 hospitals in LA County approved for Best Start Welcome Baby/Universal Assessment for Newborns strategies

The Commission approved findings to establish strategic partnerships with up to 24 hospitals throughout Los Angeles County to provide a key component of the Family Strengthening strategy that is part of the Best Start place-based effort. This strategy, known as the Welcome Baby program, is designed to serve as an outreach to families at strategic points in time during pregnancy, birth and the post-natal period. Along with the Welcome Baby program, the Commission's Universal Assessment of Newborns program is being incorporated into the Family Strengthening strategy in order to pursue the most effective and efficient implementation approach. Hospitals play a key role, as this setting offers the only venue at which a universal screening program can be conducted with parents upon the birth of their child.

The 24 targeted hospitals serve 80% of all families within Best Start communities, 48% of all births outside of Best Start communities and 54% of all births countywide (based on 2010 data). It is expected that up to 4 hospitals are ready to enter the program by late 2012. Conversations are ongoing with the other 20 hospitals with several already expressing strong interest in participation in the program.

Family Survey Data Collection Project Authorized

The Commission approved a proposal to conduct a Family Survey which will act as the primary tool for identifying trends in the Best Start communities. The survey, approved as part of the Commission's 2009-2015 Accountability and Learning Framework, will be a population-based instrument that will provide precise, point-in-time, community level estimates of the following 5 important child and family outcomes:

- Parents/caregivers are resilient
- Children bond with parents/caregivers
- Parents/caregivers support their child's learning
- Children have adequate physical activity
- Infants and children have good nutrition

In each community, the same sample design, instrument, data collection plan and analytic approach will be used. Data from the Family Survey will help increase First 5 LA's understanding of the Best Start communities' functioning before services and supports are provided to families on a large scale. Survey findings will also provide Best Start community governance groups and funded agencies with invaluable information to guide their prioritization, planning and implementation of programs and services and insight into how they compare with LA County as a whole. The initial administration of the survey will occur across FY 2012-13 and FY 2013-14.

Comprehensive Workforce Development Evaluation Plan Approved

The Commission also approved a plan to conduct an extensive evaluation of nearly 90% of the complex mix of First 5 LA's \$70.4 million in programmatic investments to strengthen the early care and education workforce in LA County. The planned evaluations will allow staff to determine which strategies are the most effective for which participants and in which areas the most significant outcomes are being demonstrated.

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The plan has four major components which will all launch in FY 2012-13;

- Cross-Program Workforce Evaluation – Analysis of how participants change over time as well as differences in outcomes between different programs and groups of participants.
- Workforce Systems Change Evaluation – Will study how institutions and systems that train the ECE workforce have changed.
- Development of a measure based on the California Department of Education’s Early Childhood Educator Competencies that will allow examination of program participants’ command of these competencies.
- Establishment of an office in LA County to manage and oversee the implementation of the California ECE Workforce Registry.

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

The following items were authorized by the Commission (all amounts are for FY 2011-12 and all are new agreements unless indicated otherwise):

- *Best Start* Communities – Community Capacity Building - Partnership Development Process
 - Center for the Study of Social Policy - No change in contract amount, only one month extension of contract period of performance
- Research and Evaluation – Social Support Management Study
 - Harder & Company - \$86,750 (reduced from original contract amount of \$131,726 due to change in required deliverables)

Other Actions

The Commission also took the following action:

- Approved a new three-year lease with La Petite Academy for use of the child-care center space on the first floor of the First 5 LA office building. The lease is for three years at \$99,000 per year.

The First 5 LA Board of Commissioners is comprised of 15 members (nine voting, four ex-officio, two 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 15-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.