

Meeting of May 16, 2013

A Moment of Silence

Calling her a “passionate advocate for children,” Commission Chairman Mark Ridley-Thomas requested a moment of silence in memory of Commissioner Dr. Antronette Yancey, who passed away last month. She will be missed and celebrated as we continue to advance her work, the Chairman said.

Three Key Investments Authorized

The Commission authorized the investment of more than \$33 million that will positively influence the health, early literacy, safety, and early care and education of young children throughout Los Angeles County.

The investments include:

- A \$28.7 million allocation to Public Health Foundation Enterprises-WIC, referred to as PHFE-WIC, for a six-year, countywide expansion of a promising pilot program – called One Step Ahead – that has already contributed to improved early learning for young children in low-income communities throughout the county. The One Step Ahead program builds on the literacy program called Little by Little, which was implemented by PHFE-WIC and successfully served approximately 117,000 children from 2003-2008.

The investment would allow the One Step Ahead pilot project implemented in 2011 to increase beyond its initial three sites to 10 WIC agencies. First 5 LA funding would further expand the program over the next six years to reach an estimated 562,710 WIC participants at up to 20 WIC sites countywide. The final contract, with a complete scope of work and additional information regarding program site selection criteria and service cost trends, will return to the Commission for approval.

- A \$2.9 million strategic partnership with the Los Angeles Trust for Children’s Health (or L.A. Trust) over three years to create and administer the Early Childhood Linkage to Wellness

Highlights

- More Than \$33 Million Authorized for Three Key Investments
- \$214.1 Million Budget for First 5 LA Proposed for Fiscal Year 2013/14
- \$49.1 Million Reserve Fund Established
- Commission Honors Dr. Antronette Yancey With Moment of Silence

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demonstration project at six Los Angeles Unified School District Wellness Center sites. By adding resources to the existing Wellness Center infrastructure, families with young children will be able to access the preventive medical, behavioral and oral health services offered at the sites, as well as connect to other community-based resources. This project enables LAUSD's Wellness Centers to focus resources specifically on the 0-5 population and create a continuum of care for the community from the cradle to high school and beyond. It is an investment in prevention to help mitigate some of the barriers to health that negatively affect a child's readiness for school. An estimated 9,000 children are expected to be impacted by this partnership.

- A strategic partnership and investment of up to \$2 million with the Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles and the Los Angeles County Office of Child Care (OCC) for up to four years to establish and operate an L.A. County office of the California Early Care and Education (ECE) Workforce Registry. The ECE Registry will house key data that enables staff to measure the effectiveness of First 5 LA's \$70 million in program investments aimed at strengthening the early care and education workforce in L.A. County. The Registry's data on participants and non-participants in First 5 LA-funded workforce development efforts will allow a comparison to those who have not participated in First 5 LA's programs. With the Alliance and the OCC as partners, First 5 LA can move expeditiously and cost-effectively to implement the ECE Workforce Registry.

Proposed FY 2013/14 Budget Discussed

The Commission discussed the proposed \$214.1 million budget for FY 2013/14, a 7.5 percent decrease from the FY 2012/13 revised budget. The 7.5 percent decrease comes from the ending of several programs from FY 2012/13 and because a number of grantees and contractors were awarded full funding during FY 2012/13.

Among the highlights of the budget:

- The proposed 2013/14 Program Budget covers 54 different initiatives and programs for a total of \$196.3 million, or 92 percent of the overall budget. This is a decrease of \$18.4 million.
- The Proposed 2013/14 Operating Budget is approximately \$17.8 million, which is an increase of \$1.1 million or 6 percent from the current fiscal year's budget. The change is mostly due to combination of a 2 percent cost of living increase in staff salaries, an increase in the cost of employee medical health benefits, the funding of the new position of Chief Operating Officer for a complete year and the addition of two staff positions in the Program Development Department.

The budget will be considered for approval at the June 13, 2013, meeting.

First 5 LA Reserve Fund Established

The Commission supported staff's recommendation to amend the First 5 LA existing Fund Balance Policy to include a "Minimum Fund Balance Reserve" of \$49.1 million, capped at 25 percent of the Operating and Programmatic Budget. This fund is to be adjusted and approved annually by the board and to be utilized for the following purposes:

1. Cash Flow – to mitigate delays in receiving revenues
2. Extreme Events – to restore and continue operations should an unanticipated event and/or natural disaster occur
3. Budget Stabilization – to ensure a sufficient level of fund balance to meet Commission obligations in the event of a revenue shortage

The FY 2013-2017 Long Term Financial Projection indicates a steady decline in First 5 LA revenues and uncommitted fund balance over the next five years. The recommendation of 25 percent is based on a level of reserve that provides enough resources to allow the Commission to maintain and protect operations and programs for approximately 90 days, to allow adequate time for the Commission to develop new strategies and/or an orderly shutdown, in a worst-case scenario.

Investment Increased for Early Identification of Autism and Other Developmental Delays

The Commission supported a motion by Chairman Mark Ridley-Thomas to approve an additional \$1.6 million allocation (for a new total of \$2.5 million) over three years for up to six grants to augment First 5 LA's investment in the early identification of autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and other developmental delays (DD). The approximately \$425,000 grants would allow respondents to propose how they would meet the following four goals:

1. Raise the competencies of local community-based providers and increase capacity to screen and support underserved parents and children with ASD or DD
2. Increase parents' knowledge regarding healthy development and developmental delays
3. Improve young children and families' access to developmental screening and early intervention services
4. Strengthen support for parents with special needs children to ensure all young children will be screened for ability to meet critical developmental milestones

This new motion adds to a previous \$900,000 allocation in September 2011 to focus on early identification of ASD and other DD approved from a motion by Commissioner Dr. Antronette Yancey. The new motion also directed staff to report back at the June 13, 2013, Commission meeting on options for continued funding of the L.A. County 211 developmental screening and care coordination project.

Key Grants and Programs Renewed to Maintain Important Services

The Commission approved renewal of 50 agreements totaling \$23,020,762. Seventeen of these agreements totaling \$9,832,596 are from the Countywide Investments Area, which includes:

- Four Community Investments projects - \$3,404,156
- Six Tot Parks and Trails projects - \$5,051,283
- Five Matching Funds projects - \$410,693
- One Vision program - \$681,000
- One Black Infant Health program - \$172,964

Thirty-two renewals totaling \$13,188,166 are from the Prior Strategic Plan Investment Area, which includes:

- Six Oral Health and Nutrition Expansion and Enhancement projects (three from the original allocation and three from the Dental Health Innovation allocation) - \$1,413,232
- Five Family, Friends and Neighbors projects - \$1,000,000
- Seven Partnerships for Families projects - \$8,063,880
- Eight School Readiness projects - \$1,099,126
- Six Healthy Births projects - \$1,511,928

The remaining contract renewal continues the coordination and claims administration for First 5 LA's Medi-Cal Administrative Activities. In addition, the Commission approved two new agreements from the Public Affairs Department, both through the Public Education Countywide Initiative, for a total of \$69,010.

Motion to Support ACR 45 (Weber)

The Commission supported a motion by Chairman Mark Ridley-Thomas to support the passage of Assembly Concurrent Resolution 45 (Weber), which would urge the California Legislature, the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Governor to restore budget funding to early care and education programs. This bill also requests support for efforts to fund and implement the Quality Rating and Improvement System for early care and education.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Kim Belshé expanded on two principal inquiry processes underway related to Best Start implementation and the Listening, Learning and Leading effort (L3). Both reviews reflect First 5 LA's efforts to sharpen its strategic focus and identify approaches to its work to maximize the organization's contributions to improved outcomes for young children.

Best Start Inquiry Update

Over the course of the past month, staff has worked to develop a results-based framework for Best Start. The intent of this framework is to provide the Commission with a sufficient amount of information relative to the agency's long term goals for Best Start. To inform development of the framework, staff has created an interdepartmental team from within First 5 LA. In addition, staff



is considering what we have heard from Best Start Community partners during the past two years of planning activity. Beginning in about a week, the Executive Director, Chief Operating Officer and other staff will hold regional meetings with all 14 Best Start communities. These meetings will provide an opportunity for First 5 LA leadership and community partners to get to better know one and other and for First 5 LA to learn more about the work of community partnerships to date, and how partnerships identify success and develop strategies to engage residents. In addition, evidence from current research and social science evidence on the challenges of place based community change will also serve to guide this work.

Staff is collaborating with the Commission Chairman's office to schedule an offsite Commission gathering that will provide the Board with the opportunity to consider and work through the overarching questions associated with Best Start, using the framework under development. Informed by that conversation, staff would then develop the more detailed implementation, evaluation and work plans that would be presented to the Commission. These evaluation and work plans will provide important detail to inform issues central to Board consideration of continued support for Best Start, including how we will measure and report on progress toward identified results; the intermediate outcomes and performance indicators to measure progress; and community-specific activities that are in alignment with Commission-approved strategies within the fiscal year.

L3 Update

The L3 inquiry is now in its final phases. An important milestone was completed a week ago when the survey sent to contractors and grantees closed. Roughly 300 individuals and organizations received the confidential survey and nearly 40 percent responded. Staff will be adding this learning to two dozen interviews with key informants in the L.A. County community and to input from Board interviews, a staff survey, and focus groups for data analysis and distillation. Staff will return to the Commission with key program and operational findings and additional complementary information, including the annual Learning and Accountability report and a new document to providing a picture of how First 5 LA funds are being expended.

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 L.A. 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.

