

In the Matter of:

FIRST 5

COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

March 04, 2013

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FIRST FIVE COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

MONDAY, MARCH 4, 2013

REPORTED BY:

Heatherlynn Gonzalez,

CSR No. 13646

1 (At 2:35 p.m. the meeting was called to
2 order.)

3 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Thank you very much.

4 We appreciate your presence at this special
5 meeting of First 5 LA.

6 Madam Secretary, if you will call the roll.

7 (Roll called.)

8 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Thank you very much.

9 This meeting today is to follow up on a
10 suggestion that was made in the last meeting to focus in a
11 concentrated way on Best Start.

12 And I think it's important that we turn our
13 attention to what kind of impact that we seek with this
14 program. The outcomes, not only the measure of our
15 progress, the timelines, and the work associated with
16 meeting our goals.

17 The funding requirements say there's a range of
18 things for us to understand and know. I think it should
19 be appreciated that there are varying degrees of knowledge
20 about the great -- the work that's being done or intended
21 through Best Starts.

22 And our attempt is -- in the full light of day --
23 to do two thing, minimally.

24 One, clarify whatever outstanding questions there
25 might be as a Board; and, two, arrive at some level of

1 consensus.

2 With that, I'm going to ask our executive
3 director if she would take it from there. And see if we
4 can't proceed to her remarks.

5 And before you know it, it will be 4:30, at which
6 time you will be giving -- give a release to leave the
7 premises.

8 Thank you very much.

9 MS. BELSHE: Thank you. Mr. Chair.

10 With that giant clock ticking over our heads, I
11 wanted to open up today's board meeting and set the stage
12 for a couple of presentations and issues we're going to be
13 grappling with.

14 And as the chairman said, today's meeting follows
15 on last month's discussion when the Board received an
16 overview and history of the Best Start initiative. And
17 the organization shift to replace a strategy, status of
18 our implementation of Best Start with a particular focus
19 on community capacity building strategy, some initial
20 lessons learned, and then some identification of
21 overarching questions.

22 You all provided direction to the staff that we
23 convene a special committee regarding Best Start to work
24 through the critical questions that are essential to
25 moving the Best Start initiative forward. Such as the

1 questions that Chairman Ridley-Thomas began last month's
2 meeting, and the questions he returned to just now.
3 Which is in terms of the impact we seek, the outcomes that
4 we endeavor to achieve through our identified strategies,
5 how we will measure progress, the time line associated
6 with meeting our goals, and the financial requirements to
7 make progress.

8 Today's meeting has two principle agenda items.
9 First is the next step of what the chair characterized at
10 our last meeting as a deliberative and iterative process
11 to work through these critical questions that are
12 necessary to move Best Start forward effectively and
13 successfully.

14 And so towards that end today we're going to
15 begin with a presentation by our Director of Research and
16 Evaluation, Armando Jimenez, and he's going to walk
17 through what we characterize as a logic model which we
18 believe as I noted -- I just want to say -- provides a
19 framework for lifting up critical issues and working
20 through them to resolution.

21 We begin with the logic model in part because the
22 Board directed staff -- and this precedes my joining the
23 organization last summer -- the Board did direct the staff
24 to do some development of a logic model to advance the
25 need that the Board articulated, which was to further

1 define the priorities and outcomes for Best Start, to
2 further refine the strategies and priorities, and to
3 identify the measures for measuring and reporting back on
4 progress.

5 So what we're going to hear from Armando is
6 following up on the process that he and others have
7 undertaken including members of the board to help inform
8 the development of that logic model.

9 I want to underscore an important point that our
10 discussion here is not about whether or not Best Start is
11 moving forward. It's a discussion about how to move
12 forward with Best Start as effectively and successfully as
13 possible.

14 So in that regard, I think this time-bound
15 inquiry that the Board has begun has embarked us upon is
16 an opportunity to affirm or adjust the desire-specific
17 outcomes associated with Best Start. It's an opportunity
18 to affirm or adjust First 5 LA's adopted strategies. And
19 it's an opportunity to affirm or adjust the role we as an
20 organization play towards achieving those goals as well as
21 strategic partnerships required for us to execute the
22 strategies and achieve long term results for young
23 children and their families.

24 So that's the first and the major part of our
25 conversation today. The second piece is we'll be

1 presenting options for providing interim support to the 14
2 Best Start communities.

3 The review and assessment of the key questions
4 about Best Start will be as the chair said last month
5 deliberate and iterative. But I know we also share a
6 sense of urgency in terms of moving to resolution as
7 quickly as possible.

8 But even with that sense of urgency, it will take
9 a little bit of time. And so given that Best -- First 5
10 LA support of our Best Start community partners expires at
11 the end of this month, we wanted to tee up for the Board's
12 consideration of options to providing interim -- or what
13 we characterize as interim support for the next three to
14 six months pending the Board's review and consideration of
15 the future direction of Best Start.

16 So those are the two agenda items. And with
17 that, I will ask Armando Jimenez to walk us through the
18 Power Point. We'll go over some slides rather quickly.
19 And linger more purposefully and deliberately on others.

20 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Purposeful lingering. I like that
21 formulation. Thank you, Ms. Belshe, for that
22 alliteration.

23 MS. BELSHE: What alliteration?

24 MR. JIMENEZ: Thank you, Mr. Chair,
25 Commissioners, and members of the public.

1 It's nice to see so many members of the community
2 and members of our partners in terms of doing the work
3 here.

4 And today the presentation -- although at some
5 points may get somewhat conceptual and a little academic,
6 I ask for your patience, because I believe it's an
7 important step for us on the pathway towards a shared
8 vision, common understanding, and more specifically, an
9 agreement on our goals and outcomes. And to find a place
10 that we can all seek clarity, both as staff and the
11 community.

12 Our goals today are to develop a common
13 understanding of what a logic model is and is not, and how
14 it can be used as a decision making tool. I will be
15 moving through that one somewhat quickly because of most
16 of are you aware of what a logic model is.

17 Primarily this topic -- our goal today is to
18 identify critical questions around Best Start. And then I
19 will hand off to Marsha Ellis to talk about a providing
20 and understanding of next steps internally within First 5
21 LA, and externally within the Best Start communities.

22 Again, I have provided a definition -- there are
23 many definitions of logic models. I found one that I
24 particularly find very useful and is a clear and concise
25 definition of what a logic model is, and I encourage you

1 at some point if you ever need to refer back to it, it's
2 here for you. I won't spend much time going through it.

3 Basically, a logic model has various elements.
4 Again, these are descriptions of some of the common
5 elements of a logic model, although they are not always
6 required, every single one of these elements.

7 Primarily you will see logic models that include
8 activities, outcomes, and impact.

9 The logic model is characterized by several
10 elements, and you'll see here listed are some of the
11 element of a logic model.

12 I'd like to emphasize what I feel are one of the
13 most important elements, and that's the last bullet here
14 is best used backwards starting from outcomes.

15 A while ago as a graduate student, I had a course
16 in evaluation theory, and one of the assignments was to
17 actually develop a program and a corresponding evaluation.

18 And so I immediately struggled trying to figure
19 out what I need to do. So the first thing I did was go
20 see the office -- professor at office hours.

21 And when I met with him, I said, "Well, I'm
22 having a difficult time starting."

23 And very quickly he looked at me and he said,
24 "Begin at the end."

25 And I looked -- obviously I looked somewhat, you

1 know, confused and he said, "Begin at the end with the
2 outcomes." He said, "You don't want to find yourself in a
3 situation where you have programs in search of outcomes.
4 You want to find yourself in a situation where you have
5 clear outcomes that are in search of strong strategies."

6 And at the time, I was more concerned about
7 writing it down because I was sure it was going to be on
8 the exam. But I remember that interaction very clearly
9 and that has stuck with me and it actually has played out
10 in my career, not only at First 5 LA but before that.

11 In terms of what a logic model is not, as again
12 it's not the recipe for how we move forward with any
13 particular program. It doesn't tell you the cost needed,
14 the time, or the resources required to move forward.

15 But also something very important to note is
16 generally a logic model does not do a good job of
17 describing the complexity of what exists in reality. We
18 have communities that are a mix of very complex systems
19 and structures and individuals and families and all these
20 -- these things working together. A logic model does not
21 demonstrate the interactions between those.

22 The other thing I'd like to note is, like
23 anything else, a logic model is something that should be
24 revisited. Conditions change. The environment changes.
25 The context changes. And, therefore, we should reassess a

1 logic model when it's developed.

2 In terms of background, in the summer of 2012, we
3 actually were directed to further define and refine the
4 outcomes and the priorities and measure -- identify
5 measures of success and to track progress towards that
6 success for Best Start.

7 Staff conducted a comprehensive literature review
8 of evaluation studies conducted on Place Base
9 interventions. And we wanted to let you know that we
10 included studies both nationally and internationally.
11 Although we did our best to stay grounded within the peer
12 review literature, we did include studies that were
13 produced and provided by foundations and other programs
14 that were on their websites that were not necessarily
15 published in the peer reviewed literature. But we found
16 them useful as well.

17 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Citations might be useful for
18 the Board's consideration in that regard

19 MR. JIMENEZ: Fine.

20 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Thank you.

21 MR. JIMENEZ: We also built upon the literature
22 used to develop a 2009-2015 strategic plan. We did not
23 start exactly from zero. We'd also like to add that we
24 met with several of the commissioners here. And I'd to
25 thank all of the commissioners who took the time and

1 effort to meet with us and provide us with some valuable
2 input and feedback as how we went forward with this
3 process. Thank you very much.

4 One of the things I'd like to highlight in this
5 review are some themes that emerged from the literature.

6 One important thing that we want to note very,
7 very quickly is that we found no literature that shows a
8 Place Based intervention that led to child and family
9 outcomes at the population level, specific to all four of
10 First 5 LA's goals. So the magic recipe for First 5 LA
11 with regard to our four goal areas does not exist in the
12 literature.

13 Another important theme is place is commonly
14 defined as a neighborhood, much smaller in size than many
15 of the efforts that we are engaging in today.

16 Another theme is most Place Based efforts have a
17 comprehensive vision and approach to make improvements for
18 the entire age spectrum as opposed to a specific segment
19 of the population.

20 The last thing that was highlighted in the
21 literature review was about intentionality. And let me --
22 I'd like to read something from one of the articles that I
23 think expresses this very clearly.

24 It says where community interventions have
25 invested in intentional program effort, they were able to

1 count program successes and improved outcomes.

2 Community change efforts that did not make
3 deliberate investments or assume that investments in one
4 domain would have spill over effects in others did not
5 improve outcomes.

6 Even when an intervention aims to increase a less
7 tangible outcome, such as social capital or organizational
8 learning, investments must be intentional and not simply
9 the hoped for byproduct of other strategies.

10 Again, as -- as -- in addition to what was
11 highlighted in the article that was submitted with your
12 packet, we found many of the articles we reviewed provided
13 some commentary on community-based change strategies that
14 required much more -- longer time frames for them to see
15 changes, and that the efforts couldn't be -- and shouldn't
16 be rushed to meet a predetermined time frame. And also
17 that the evaluation efforts should really be explicit
18 about the longitudinal perspective of what happens in an
19 intervention.

20 The last major theme that I think is -- is -- is
21 very important to me as a person working in evaluation is
22 specificity of outcomes, and I'll get to more about that
23 later on in the presentation.

24 For our review, we wanted to make sure we were
25 grounded in clear definitions. We use definitions that we

1 actually found at the promising practices network Web site
2 which is operated by the Rand corporation and is an
3 extremely useful Web site which describes programs that
4 work for children and families and use these criteria
5 To be able to distinguish between proven, promising, and
6 theory related programs. I've listed them here. We use
7 that to guide our process in the literature review and the
8 logic model development.

9 So, before I begin, it's critical to state that
10 the logic model I'm about to describe here is a reflection
11 of what we saw coming out of a literature review and our
12 best attempt to visualize it or to characterize it in a
13 visual way.

14 I wanted to make clear that this is not staff's
15 recommendation for what the Best Start logic model should
16 be. That logic model will emerge from key decisions made
17 by the commission and series of meetings with staff and
18 the communities.

19 We started with -- there are three primary
20 strands of literature that we reviewed. One being the
21 intensive home visitations family strengthening.

22 I wanted to remind the commission that at the
23 January board meeting you received a comprehensive update
24 on our family strengthening work by Barbara and the
25 program development department. The presentation

1 highlighted our work on welcome baby but also mentioned
2 our future efforts to implement the intensive home
3 visiting programs specifically healthy families, America,
4 parents as teachers, Safe Enough, or Triple P.

5 Our literature was based on those intensive home
6 visiting models. And here's what we found. The
7 intermediate outcomes were the types that we've been often
8 highlight and desire for programs. Primarily being
9 parental practice improvements and changes of behavior in
10 families with children zero to five.

11 And again we've characterized these as proven
12 because of the rigor of the evaluations done was extremely
13 high.

14 It's also important to note that these studies
15 also found long-term improvements and changes in two of
16 our specific outcomes or goals. That is safe from other
17 abuse and neglect, and ready for school.

18 When we reviewed the literature we did not find
19 relationships between interventions on home -- home
20 intensive home visiting and outcomes related to being born
21 healthy or low birth weight and maintaining a healthy
22 weight.

23 I wanted to note also that proven does not
24 necessarily mean guaranteed. We found several studies
25 which showed there was no effect when an intervention was

1 implemented for these specific programs. We found that
2 significant number that were, but I just wanted to also
3 note that we found several that did not have an effect.

4 It's also important to note that the two outcomes
5 you see related to intensive home visitation were
6 primarily found among groups of program participants. To
7 assume that these changes would happen at a
8 population-based level would require that a significant of
9 number of new moms received the services in these
10 communities. And that's an important assumption to keep
11 in our minds.

12 The next strand of literature relates to capacity
13 building. And these are the types of strategies that
14 relate to the resident based organizing community capacity
15 building and organizational capacity building.

16 I'd like to remind the commission that at the
17 February meeting you received an update on the community
18 capacity building efforts of Best Start. These are
19 non-service related strategies that focus on building
20 community capacity and tapping into and harnessing the
21 existing human social, and organizational capital of
22 communities and it's extremely powerful resource that
23 given operating and other demands has demonstrated
24 significant impact in changing the way governments work.

25 Among other efforts antipoverty and housing

1 improvement efforts, we did find the limited number of
2 studies that did show changes in some of the neighborhood
3 outcomes listed in the model in which you'll see here in a
4 second. But what I wanted to note is that all of the
5 intermediate outcomes are those that most of us refer to
6 as protected factors.

7 Improving a family's ability to connect in the
8 community to build the social relationships needed to be
9 able to thrive with their child. These are the types of
10 outcomes that many of our programs desire.

11 And again, I wanted to make the distinction
12 between promising and theoretical. The evidence we found
13 was primarily descriptive based on case studies and
14 qualitative research. We found no major quantitative or
15 efforts to randomly place people in communities to
16 demonstrate the outcomes.

17 And again, we did find in several cases the -- an
18 observed neighborhood level outcomes which you see at the
19 far right. The strategies described here are very broad
20 and we did not see a particular program model when used to
21 improve the outcomes described here.

22 The last strand is actually what we call efforts
23 to improve the built environment. And we did find
24 significant literature on the built environment and
25 there's a growing body of research in this area beginning

1 to show relationships between efforts to improve the built
2 environment and health promotion behaviors and health
3 outcomes. In addition there's exciting work in the area
4 of health impact assessments which offers a means of
5 identifying potential health effects associated with the
6 built environment.

7 The strategies can be indirect when community
8 members influence building of infrastructure to promote
9 positive outcomes and as you see here one of the
10 connections is between those families that are engaged in
11 work as -- in an effort improve the infrastructure that
12 would help promote healthy behaviors another strategy is
13 more direct when funders explicitly fund the building of
14 structures that promote positive outcomes.

15 As a commission we've engaged in some of these
16 efforts with the top parks and trails and other county
17 wide efforts. Probably one of the most significant areas
18 of this literature review was, as I mentioned at the
19 beginning, the lack of a relationship between
20 interventions that relate to capacity building, and
21 evidence that there are improvements at the population
22 based level with child and family outcomes.

23 And as a result, if you see that the arrows from the
24 neighborhood outcomes and also the intermediate outcomes
25 to the blue or upper level strategies, what we call

1 theory. And in this case, these are only theoretical
2 relationships -- and this is important to understand, is
3 that in that several situations this commission invests in
4 these types of strategies may not see child and family
5 level outcomes manifested in the time frame that we're
6 interested in looking in, but will only see changes at the
7 intermediate level and neighborhood level.

8 Ultimately this brings us to the overarching
9 questions that in order to move forward we need to grapple
10 with and ultimately answer. And the first one is what is
11 First 5 LA's definition of success for Best Start and what
12 is the impact we seek. And I'd like to be specific in
13 providing an example.

14 Imagine characterizing success in this way, as an
15 example, Best Start will be successful when we show a 50
16 percent reduction in the number of children ages three to
17 four that are considered obese. This can be compared to
18 how we normally characterize change or how we would
19 describe our outcomes for example in the past we've stated
20 we will reduce childhood obesity or even more vague
21 statements like we will improve the health and well being
22 of children zero to five.

23 With regard to success, specificity matters.
24 Outcomes. Well, First 5 LA's engage only in work to
25 advance all four of our goals or activity that advances a

1 subset of these goals.

2 Based on the research and based on the effort to
3 look at the relationship between the strategies and the
4 outcomes, it is clear that only two outcomes based on our
5 efforts to move forward with home intensive home
6 visitation there is evidence to suggest those can be
7 changed. The other two outcomes the relationships are
8 only theoretical.

9 Evidence and this is important for all of us to
10 consider but what level of evidence is needed today guide
11 and inform First 5 LAs work to achieve these goals.

12 I think it's important to note that many
13 foundations, government, and other programs have invested
14 in Place Based efforts with the same knowledge of this
15 data and this research and knowing that many of the
16 relationships are theoretical and they are moving forward
17 with their investments we ourselves as a commission in our
18 portfolio have invested in both a mixture of evidence
19 promising and theoretical based inventions.

20 I'd also note intermediate outcomes and
21 evaluating progress. This is important to provide the
22 commission with ongoing reports as to our progress and
23 also ongoing reports to the community. For their progress
24 in moving forward with Best Start and achieving our
25 outcomes.

1 Again, I bring up the whole issue of
2 intentionality. How will we balance the need for Best
3 Start efforts to be organic and community driven with the
4 need for First 5 LA to be explicit about strategies that
5 we have a reasonable expectation that will lead to
6 outcomes. This was a question also introduced to us in
7 the early part of the development of our Place Based work
8 when Dr. Ross spoke to the commission and talked about the
9 need to make sure that we find an equilibrium between
10 organic community driven efforts and also evidence and
11 what we know works.

12 We have to answer the resource question of time
13 and money. And this is something that everyone is
14 interested in. And ultimately our discussions with the
15 other programs also need to reflect our need to be
16 realistic about sustainability for Best Start.

17 Finally what is First 5 LAs -- what role do we
18 play to achieve our intended goals? Looking in the
19 literature, they did not explicitly define the role of the
20 funder or the role of the change agent. But I would
21 imagine that they vary from simply being a funder all the
22 way to completely engaged in the community work itself.
23 I'm going to pass it on to...

24 MS. ELLIS: Good afternoon. Our suggested
25 approach for board engagement includes having a number of

1 special commission meetings such as the one today
2 dedicated to addressing specific Best Start questions.

3 For the second meeting we would suggest questions
4 related to success outcomes, and evidence.

5 Meeting 3 would entail a discussion of
6 intermediate outcomes and evaluating progress.

7 And then for the fourth meeting that we're
8 proposing we hope to join resources we require to support
9 Best Start and sustainability. We also have a suggested
10 approach for community engagement.

11 The objectives here are to keep the community
12 partnerships informed and engaged and to gather their
13 thoughts and perspectives on overall questions regarding
14 Best Start, On some of the current communication methods
15 that we use to keep our communities informed that we hope
16 to continue with are using the Best Start communities
17 websites, e-mail communication, announcement at
18 partnership meetings, and we regularly update a list of
19 frequently asked questions.

20 We also hope to create opportunity for our
21 leadership to engage with the community partnership
22 leadership groups on a regional basis. And staff will
23 continue to have ongoing conversations with the Best Start
24 community partnerships as well leadership groups.

25 For next steps we would like to come to an

1 agreement on a schedule for special commission meetings.
2 This is important because as we engage the community
3 partnerships we need to be mindful that it takes time to
4 pull communities together.

5 We also will move forward with the engagement
6 activities that I have listed previously for the community
7 partnerships and we hope to secure some support to
8 facilitate the Best Start review process to help us
9 accomplish all that we need to do over the next few
10 months. That's it.

11 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: All right. Thank you very
12 much.

13 Persons wishing to be heard by way of public
14 comment? Then I think we should have an opportunity for
15 the board to propose questions that would be appropriate
16 to members of the staff and the executive director so that
17 we can move our efforts forward.

18 First we'll hear from Alejandra Castillo,
19 secondly David Gutierrez.

20 In that order, please come forward.

21 MS. CASTILLO: (Through interpreter) I'll be
22 translating for Alejandra.

23 Good afternoon. My name is Alejandra Castillo.
24 I live in the Best Start metro LA community. I am a
25 mother of three boys, two with special needs. I am a

1 member of the Best Start metro LA community guidance body.
2 I am also a parent coach at the metro regional center and
3 I am on the parent policy counsel at the Hope Street
4 family center.

5 As of today we have not had the opportunity to
6 know or be part of the funding recommendations regarding
7 school readiness and family literacy in the metro LA
8 community.

9 We are the pilot community for Best Start and
10 have been working to achieve the four goals, and parent
11 priorities for the past four years.

12 Recently we had the privilege to present a few of
13 our achievements to Kim Belshe and the First 5 LA staff.

14 As a mother and community member we thank you for
15 the opportunity to share. We hope that this direct
16 communication will continue including -- continue and
17 include being a part of the decisions on how Best Start
18 metro LA will proceed being part of the transparent
19 process will give us time to organize and contribute to
20 assure that the decisions are better and more effective
21 for our community.

22 Thank you for the opportunity for allowing
23 us, the parents to continue to be part of decisions that
24 impact our community.

25 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Thank you for your testimony.

1 Next speaker, please.

2 MS. GUTIERREZ: Good afternoon, everyone. My
3 name is Daisy Gutierrez and I'm a mother of three kids.

4 I'm representative of Best Start LA and I
5 represent my community ambassador. I'm also
6 representative of the patient person of community guidance
7 body in metro LA. And I'm the -- presently I'm the vice
8 chair from the CGB from the Best Start metro LA too.

9 I'm going to speak in Spanish. Because my
10 English, not so much.

11 (Through interpreter) First I would like to say
12 thank you for the opportunity to be in front of you and to
13 share my comments.

14 As Armando Jimenez mentioned earlier all the
15 communities are different.

16 And in reference to all the communities being
17 different there is not one way to do the work in Best
18 Start metro LA and Best Start metro LA has always been
19 intentional in the way that we reach our goals.

20 As residents and parents we have -- that we are,
21 we have the experience and values to guide our process.

22 The opinions and suggestions of paired fathers
23 and mothers have always been valued and have guided Best
24 Start metro LA over the past four years.

25 The capacity of parents has improved. This is

1 what has enabled me to stand before you. The CGB would
2 like to share it's recommendations of how to continue Best
3 Start metro LA, based on our experiences and knowledge as
4 mothers, fathers, and representatives of agencies and
5 members of the community.

6 We ask that -- please, that you support us as
7 allies in this process.

8 I'm going to share about my -- I bring my two
9 years old kid. I left my other boy in my house. That
10 eight years old told me last night, "mom, you help
11 everyone in the community helping the schools, friends.
12 Why don't you help us as the kids. Why don't you tell
13 them that help us with my brother that he can continue.
14 He's supposed to say they have four goals so he can be in
15 one of the goals he can be in the four. I can be too."

16 I didn't say last -- when he has the same age I
17 didn't involve in this -- this community. Now I'm
18 involved and I say please, please think about the kids.
19 Think about the communities. Think about -- we live
20 there. We know them. We have the necessities.

21 Thank you.

22 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Thank you very much for your
23 comments. Now the Board will be able to pose questions on
24 part one of today's presentation and Professor Belshe,
25 that would be appropriate to please do so.

1 MS. AU: Well, I think that there's a little bit
2 of history that needs to be shared here and then lead to
3 some clarification. And I -- I think that for myself I
4 need to have some clarity as well regarding the other
5 commissioners on this board.

6 When Best Start was first thought about and
7 agreed to, it was really a product of the program planning
8 committee, and I'm looking at Dr. Kaufman and
9 Dr. Fielding.

10 And at first, Best Start was to be our -- our
11 effort to test out Place Based approaches and originally
12 it was to be five communities. One in each of the
13 supervisorial districts. But many of the concerns and
14 conversations that led the program planning committee to
15 decide on the Place Based approach and the five
16 communities also were present in our strategic planning
17 process which occurred subsequent to the program planning
18 committee's decision to test out the five Place Based
19 approaches.

20 And when we had finalized our strategic plans, it
21 became clear to the staff that -- that many of the
22 conversations and the conclusions and the decisions the
23 community -- the commission had come to was -- how should
24 I say? It was similar to and even almost exactly the same
25 as the conclusion that we came and reached through our

1 program planning committee. And that's how the original
2 five communities expanded to the 14.

3 Somehow in that transition, in my head, I began
4 thinking about the new strategic plans as Best Start
5 expanded and almost you could say on steroids because it
6 really -- it really embraced more of that comprehensive
7 approach which we -- we -- we conclude -- we came to some
8 realization that Place Based also needed to be supported
9 by a county-wide approach. That it wasn't just the core
10 in terms of family strengthening. But it also meant
11 community capacity building, but it also required policy
12 changes, systems changes, and broader county wide
13 approaches.

14 So in my head Best Start embraced not just Place
15 Based work, and not just family strengthening work, but
16 also county-wide approaches as well.

17 But when I hear Armando's -- I'm getting all my
18 names all mixed up here -- Armando's presentation, I'm not
19 clear as to whether or not it also addressed what in my in
20 my head was the family strengthening the community
21 capacity building as well as the county wide policy and
22 system changes as well.

23 So I -- I just want to pose that question.

24 Number -- you know,

25 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Let's get a response to that.

1 MR. DELGADO: You're correct. This description
2 is a literature review of what exists for Place Based
3 efforts.

4 The second part of the discussion which really is
5 what we do forward is to what extent do we integrate the
6 county-wide strategies and how explicit and intentional do
7 those strategies need to be to support the fortune of
8 Place Based interventions.

9 In addition, are there any considerations for the
10 additional work that we do as a commission to enhance the
11 four goals in the Place Based efforts.

12 Those are all of the other things that we have
13 funded as a commission. This purpose, or this discussion
14 was simply what we found in the literature and we found no
15 literature that had Place Based interventions supported by
16 policy efforts, public education, data systems integration
17 the strategies that we as a commission have identified to
18 provide that support. We did not find any literature that
19 had that model or framework.

20 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: I'm going to ask a question
21 about your review of the policy laden documents and to
22 what extent they are in alignment with what we described
23 as Best Start.

24 MR. JIMENEZ: Very much so. In fact, one of the
25 key alignments was the consideration of the lessons

1 learned in the article that was described talked about the
2 need for long term commitment. For Place Based efforts to
3 take hold and take root and to actually utilize the -- the
4 resources both existing resources from a service level but
5 most importantly the resource that's are described by
6 people, those require significant amount of time and that
7 was noted in -- in the article that was -- was submitted
8 to the commission why place matters.

9 It's also important to note that several of these
10 had several dimensions of looking at systems change and
11 environmental change and others that are in alignment with
12 what we found in the literature was well.

13 So there was a significant amount of alignment
14 between what was described in the article and what we
15 found in the literature.

16 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: All right. So you want to
17 pick up the balance of the answer to your question in part
18 two of the presentation, Commissioner Au. Because
19 otherwise I'm going to move around to another members of
20 the commission.

21 MS. AU: Absolutely. And I would like that. But
22 I would like to have the commissioners at least have some
23 conversation around whether or not when we think about
24 Best Start are we thinking about not only family
25 strengthening community capacity but also the county wide

1 approach. And for me that would be helpful. And then we
2 can move to the next question which is more about focusing
3 in on the Place Based.

4 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Noted. Additional questions?
5 Dr. Southard.

6 MR. SOUTHARD: Armando, I thought the focus on
7 the logic model was particularly helpful for us in moving
8 forward and. I'm wondering if you have plans to engage
9 for that logic model development other efforts that have
10 started to -- to come to the fore since we put Best Start
11 in place.

12 So, for example, for the implementation of health
13 reform one of the things that's happening is that the
14 mental health public health departments are looking at
15 help neighborhood as strategy for the implementation of
16 health reform.

17 It seems to us that doing that in conjunction
18 with already existing efforts like endowments efforts like
19 First 5's efforts might be a way of bringing them together
20 but I think it only happens if -- if the logic model is
21 made clear so it's not just a stew of different
22 activities.

23 So I think getting a clear logic model and then
24 having that able to be partitioned out to others will be a
25 very valuable step so I guess that's more of a suggestion

1 than a question.

2 And then the second one is as you look at these,
3 would you also take a look at the effects of trauma on
4 communities because one of the things that I've seen
5 pretty significant literature on is that merely witnessing
6 violence has a negative effect on those who happen to
7 witness it.

8 So a kid who sees a shooting in the neighborhood
9 that he's not involved in has a much worse life outcome
10 than the next door neighbor who everything is the same
11 except that he didn't happen to see the shooting. And
12 those changes in community outcomes and ways of
13 intervening if we can build those in I think it would be
14 very powerful.

15 MR. JIMENEZ: Thank you.

16 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Additional questions or
17 comments at this point? Thank you.

18 MS. TILTON: Just to add to Dr. Southard's
19 comment, I think it's important to remember that it's very
20 hard to be neighborly if you're afraid to walk out your
21 front doors. And so I think with everything that we do,
22 we need to remember that law enforcement plays a very
23 important and positive role especially in terms of the
24 community policing or the community involvement that makes
25 families feel safe and it's not as thought as so much as

1 prevention and warm and fuzzy. But it's really a
2 important part of assuring that -- that a neighborhood is
3 able to interact with itself.

4 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: All right. Sir.

5 MR. KAUFMAN: I was struck by one comment you
6 made. Actually many comments, but one I wanted to ask you
7 about.

8 You said that the research to define Place Based
9 strategies as small neighborhoods rather than the size of
10 our 14 communities.

11 Is that a fatal flaw? Are we trying to use
12 methodology that this commission called Place Based
13 strategy for something that's really not a place but just
14 happens to be a geographic area? Should we divide those
15 into smaller ones and do one at a time within eventually
16 getting to all parts. Is it ten times the size or each of
17 the 14 smaller neighborhoods?

18 Please elaborate on that comment.

19 MR. JIMENEZ: The literature -- what we found is
20 that primarily these Place Based efforts were groups of
21 census blocks or blocks and not at a level in which you
22 have, you know, literally hundred or 120,000 residents but
23 much smaller in size.

24 Although the literature does not say that there
25 was a threshold, my just initial thought is that for Place

1 Based efforts and size it's an issue of biting off more
2 than you can chew as opposed to what the literature says.
3 But again most of these efforts that were described in
4 literature were much smaller in size.

5 And again, I think there was a -- assumption in
6 many of these that they were hopeful to have them scaled
7 or moved further out. So one neighborhood would move to
8 another and to another overtime. But they started much
9 smaller.

10 MR. KAUFMAN: Right. But even those were across
11 the entire age continuum. And so there's two parts to the
12 size. One is the geographic size and the other is the
13 target population.

14 I presume we selected a larger geographic area
15 with a target prenatal to five population which ended up
16 being about the size of the number of individuals but we
17 spread that across the larger population and so does that
18 make it so that we're --

19 MR. JIMENEZ: I didn't see any specific records
20 necessarily to any population based size issues of the
21 ones we're facing. It was primarily geographic.

22 MR. KAUFMAN: And Sure Start in England has
23 communities much much smaller than ours focusing primarily
24 focusing on young children; correct?

25 MR. JIMENEZ: Yes.

1 MR. KAUFMAN: I guess that's an important
2 decision we need to continue to make. We have clearly
3 made it in the past. We'll have to reaffirm that issue of
4 target population target size. Obviously, that then leads
5 to different strategies, different tactics, different
6 approaches.

7 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: On that very point, I want to
8 make sure that we are comparing apples to apples.

9 It is not at all a surprise to anyone as it
10 relates to literature review that LA county will be viewed
11 as anomalous. To the extent that is the case, one has to
12 ask the question to what extent is the literature
13 sufficiently applicable to our experience in terms of
14 numbers in terms of our geography, our demographics. How
15 helpful is the literature in terms of the drill down to
16 like communities? Like experiences?

17 I think we really do need to be guided by that
18 set of concerns the theoretical obviously has a role to
19 play but when it comes to the question of our real life
20 experiences in this space, what are the learnings what are
21 the instructions what are the insights that we can gain
22 that help us refine and improve the program as we intend.

23 It seems to me that the literature may be falling
24 short to some extent within that regard. Therefore,
25 again, the board would benefit from citations of the

1 literature review.

2 Dr. Swilley.

3 MS. SWILLEY: Well, along that same line, I think
4 it's good to reiterate that the lack of evidence doesn't
5 suggest that the larger population cannot be served by the
6 things we're doing and -- and I think it just critical
7 that we do the research on any things that we initiate.
8 We may be the first ones to present the information.

9 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Certainly it would reflect
10 our reality more accurately.

11 MR. FIELDING: I fully concur with Neil that the
12 research is really smaller -- it's really more
13 neighborhood. We're using communities as a very general
14 term for everything, that people don't mind what a typical
15 community is and some would be small and some would be
16 big.

17 But I think most of the research is on those that
18 would be called neighborhoods than anything else. And so
19 in addition to the questions that have been raised by
20 Dr. Swilley and the chair, I think the question is does
21 that suggest if we're using a bigger area, we have to
22 think of subunits strategies as opposed to a more
23 homogenous strategy for the entire area.

24 The other question I have is related to Nancy's
25 comments and that is the logic model which is I think

1 very, very nicely done. It would be important to add to
2 this logic model the other components.

3 Now, I think the other components aren't just in
4 support of Place Based. I think we -- modification we
5 made broadly we're trying to get impacts all through the
6 county. But I think adding them to this logic model even
7 though it may make us a little dizzy would be -- would be
8 -- would add value. Because I could see where you could
9 see where they fit. You could see where they're
10 synergistic. You could see where there are gaps.

11 MR. JIMENEZ: Could I make a comment to the
12 chairs?

13 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Sure.

14 MR. JIMENEZ: I would agree wholeheartedly that
15 there were no studies that we found that had -- that
16 diversity of geography the diversity of population and the
17 diversity of both social and political issues that we
18 express and find here in LA county with regard to our
19 Place Based efforts. The other comment is that what we --

20 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Does that then call into
21 question the efficacy of literature review? I'm trying to
22 get somewhere here.

23 MR. JIMENEZ: And I think it brings up an
24 important question. I think it brings up caveats of the
25 work.

1 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Okay.

2 MR. JIMENEZ: And it does suggest certain
3 strategies the relationships between strategies and
4 outcomes, but clearly it probably does not reflect the
5 whole entire effort around Place Based and what it could
6 be which I think is something that this commission needs
7 to address in moving forward. What is our approach to
8 Place Based based on what we understand in the literature?

9 The other issue that we could not find that may
10 be related to the size is that we were not aware of the
11 funding that was available to do the work. Some of those
12 efforts may have been limited by the funding that they
13 had.

14 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: That's another important
15 feature, the resources. I mean, this has a direct bearing
16 on the capacity of the entities that we are partnering
17 with to do this work. It has a direct bearing that is
18 funding does has a direct bearing on capacity and
19 obviously then the projected outcomes; so I think you're
20 identifying very important and addressed the report is
21 locking in on this. Very important aspects of where the
22 deficits are in the literature in terms of how instructive
23 it may or may not be, in Dr. Swilley's point, the extent
24 to where our work may be cut out for us in terms of what
25 we may want to ultimately contribute to a literature

1 review as to a successful quote unquote Place Based
2 approach.

3 I know another hand wanting to be heard at some
4 point. Let's figure out if we can get to Commissioner
5 Au's question about the county-wide implications as she
6 has indicated that being a third piece of the work that
7 she at least thought would be engaged.

8 Other questions or comments? Sir.

9 MR. DENNIS: The only thing I would add is that
10 there are other Place Based initiatives in this state
11 through California community foundation as well as the
12 endowment, and I think what would help the discussion is
13 where are they in that progress are they communities
14 similar to ours.

15 Are they looking at the same metrics as we are?
16 Or are they just, like, totally different? And that would
17 -- I mean that would help in some of this discussion. I
18 mean, because as the chair suggests, then when we look at
19 communities outside of California there may be stark
20 differences but there are Place Based initiatives right
21 here in California that if they don't have formal
22 evaluation they do have some sort of progress with regards
23 to what has happened thus far, and I think they're a
24 little ahead of us as far as the process is concerned.

25 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Executive Director, perhaps

1 those specific initiatives and State of California ought
2 to be those that we are drawing on for additional
3 learnings pursuant to Commissioner Dennis's intervention?

4 All right. Other questions or comments for staff
5 on part one of our presentation today? 3:35. Going once
6 going twice.

7 Professor Belshe, you want to give us a little
8 wrap up on this portion?

9 MS. BELSHE: Yes, sir. Thank you Armando for
10 your presentation, for the good engagement and clearing of
11 commissioners.

12 A couple of observations I would share. One is
13 you, I think, Armando walked us through the major themes
14 from the literature not as evidence to not move forward
15 but rather to help inform our thinking about how we can
16 maximize our ability to be successful.

17 And as, Neil, you and other commissioners have
18 noted, what we're finding from the literature does call
19 out some important questions for us to move forward.

20 The value of a logic model as Armando articulated
21 is being clear about where we want to end. You know,
22 bringing specificity to the outcomes we seek and moving
23 backwards from there.

24 And so the overarching questions that the chair's
25 identify that we identify and identified last month and

1 again today really do reflect those threshold questions
2 and so what we have suggested as a road map forward and we
3 will look at does it require two meetings three meetings
4 obviously we all share a sense of urgency.

5 But our intent is to move forward a deliberative,
6 iterative process but one that is time bound. And our
7 intent is to take a crack at the first couple of questions
8 and pose them, identify options for the Board's
9 considerations, provide data and information from the
10 research from other experience who help inform Board
11 consideration of those options, provides some analysis
12 about trade offs, and then make a recommendations so these
13 are critical issues for this organization to lift up to
14 engage in to wrestle with and hopefully achieve consensus
15 to move forward.

16 It's going to take a little bit of time. But we
17 bring urgency as we know all members of the Board does,
18 because this is an investment of your time. But also
19 importantly an investment in on the part of our community
20 partners.

21 As Marsha indicated we are eager to not only be
22 hearing from and engaging to the Board, we also want to
23 get out and hear from our Best Start community partners,
24 and the same questions we're grappling with here over the
25 course of the next couple of meetings are the very same

1 issues we want to be meeting with our community partners
2 around as well. And then bring that learning back to you
3 will all to help further inform the key questions that
4 we've presented here.

5 So we will wrap up this piece of the agenda
6 unless commissioners have anything further to say.

7 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: I want to make sure we have a
8 relatively exhaustive round of questions on this piece,
9 because this is an attempt to push towards clarity.

10 Now, I don't know that we can fully embrace
11 clarity in the context of one setting, but this ought to
12 have far reaching implications for moving us in that
13 direction so if there are question that commissioners may
14 have following this presentation, it would certainly be
15 appropriate to formalize those questions and get them to
16 the attention of the executive director for further
17 distillation.

18 Dr. Fielding.

19 MR. FIELDING: Yes, I think that -- just to
20 remind you of that request, I think one of the things that
21 -- that's really important -- because we have questions
22 about the external validity of the research that's been
23 conducted so far is to be very clear in moving back from
24 the outcomes whether the intermediate changes you would
25 like to see. So we have an early-warning system if you

1 will for things that's are not going well and, you know,
2 early system to identify thing that are going well and to
3 suggest that we probably as in much of this research would
4 need some mid course direction.

5 So we don't want to have too much -- I mean, we
6 need structure because we need clarity but we also need to
7 have flexibility all the time because we may see
8 intermediate steps that are not consistent with our
9 efforts and aren't going to lead in a reasonable logical
10 way to the outcome.

11 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: That's to the point. Well
12 made. But the clarity that needs to be brought to bear is
13 of a policy nature, at least initially; so that we at
14 least have the policy formation situated in such a way
15 that staff has a clear sense of what the Board is
16 thinking, and prepared to embrace and that's of a
17 dialogical nature.

18 Obviously, we want input from staff as to how
19 this should ultimately take shape, and part based on the
20 experiences that have already taken the life of best
21 starts to date. But clearly there's a fair amount of work
22 to be done.

23 So the notion of flexibility is always useful in
24 my mind, Dr. Fielding, but it needs to be in the context
25 of the projected goals objectives and outcomes otherwise

1 you have a fair amount of improvisation freelancing et
2 cetera. That doesn't really get us to where we might wish
3 to be now. One of the important considerations that was
4 embedded in my query regarding the literature review
5 relates precisely to the issue of the diversity of the
6 various 14 areas that we are talking about.

7 Therefore, not only the demography of those areas
8 but in fact the sociology of those areas such that you
9 cannot expect what goes on in Long Beach to mirror that of
10 what goes on in Pacoima, unless you have a clear sense of
11 the range of issues from a cultural perspective, a
12 historical perspective, a range of issues of that sort.

13 It would seem to me that flexibility ought to be
14 informed by the range of experiences at that level. But
15 all of that has to be what in the context of what are the
16 defined goals, objectives and outcomes must be.

17 Commissioner Boeckmann, thank you. You've been
18 patient.

19 MS. BOECKMANN: Always. I was just wondering how
20 Best Start relates to LA Up? Are they doing the same
21 thing?

22 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Okay.

23 MS. BOECKMANN: And is there any kind of
24 relationship there? Or do we --

25 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: The question that

1 Commissioner Boeckmann posed is relationships between Best
2 Starts and LA Up.

3 Executive Director, you may wish to respond to
4 that.

5 MS. BELSHE: LA Up is a part of our
6 organization's prior strategy plan, and support extends
7 for a number of additional years. I think the current
8 grant is slated to expire in about '16 or '17.

9 So at one level, they're unrelated to the extent
10 the new strategic plan from moved to a grant making
11 initiative grant base, focus on the 14 Best Start
12 communities with the complementary county wide strategies
13 that we talked about, did reflect movement in a different
14 direction.

15 On the other hand, our LA Up early childhood
16 education programs are all over LA county, and I haven't
17 memorized the map, but I think there is a particular LA Up
18 sides, 14 Best Start communities. So there's an overlap
19 in the geography, overarching goals for our Best Start
20 communities to work in partnership with communities school
21 readiness.

22 So while the two programs have been on different
23 tracks relative to prior strategic plans and current
24 strategy plan, there's an overlap in terms of where
25 services are provided as well as overarching objectives.

1 And Antonio, you want to add anything to that?

2 MR. GALLARDO: I think what we're doing as a
3 staff is as a community partnership continue to work in
4 advancing their priorities is trying to come up with
5 opportunities to link with LA Up and any other existing
6 investments that we have throughout the county.

7 MS. BELSHE: And that's a very important point
8 that one of the Board's considerations when it made the
9 move that it did a number of years ago to a Place Based
10 strategy was a reflection -- reflected a belief that given
11 the concentration of Best Start, excuse me, First 5 LA
12 resources in particular communities with a lot of need
13 that there was an opportunity to really better integrate
14 and leverage those investments certainly our LA UP
15 investments are an important part of that.

16 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Clearly a point that needs to
17 be revisited. I take note of the fact that we have
18 approximately 45 minutes remaining for part 2 of the
19 discussion.

20 Please, members of the commission, for additional
21 questions to the staff for further looking at, as has been
22 proposed, there will be other opportunities for us to
23 engage at this level.

24 Dr. Kaufman.

25 MR. KAUFMAN: I'm processing this question.

1 Armando, in terms of the logic model, is there an
2 assumption that there should be more conversations to
3 refine -- I have some wonky little things to talk about,
4 and then slightly more conceptual that the whole group
5 doesn't need to hear, and for others, might we need to
6 lock this down at some point and say this is the logic
7 model? Did you expect that today as a vote? Did you
8 expect it to come back to us sometime as a vote, Armando?

9 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: And if you did Armando, it
10 won't happen.

11 MS. BELSHE: Lost your chance, Armando.

12 MR. JIMENEZ: No. The single most important
13 decision -- and this is my sense for the commission debate
14 -- immediately and in the future meeting is to decide upon
15 the outcomes that Best Start needs to make sure happen.
16 The change.

17 Upon that decision, I -- I believe that there
18 would be an opportunity for staff to present both
19 strategies that are potentially linked showing promise or
20 even theoretically related or having some evidence showing
21 changes in those specific outcomes the commission wants
22 but also the integrate issues that have been brought up by
23 Commissioner Au and also to show alignment with other
24 efforts that Commissioner Southard mentioned; so what I
25 imagine is that what would transpire and what would result

1 would be something very different from what the -- we
2 found in the literature.

3 But the most important thing is for us to decide
4 upon the outcomes both long term and intermediate
5 outcomes.

6 MR. KAUFMAN: Is that supposed to happen in the
7 next meeting on those four that were listed as first? And
8 the next meeting, that should be focused and is there a
9 liaison group that goes over that with staff or staff
10 bring it to the full commission?

11 The process is really my question.

12 MS. BELSHE: It's our recommendation that given
13 the importance of this issue for the Board as a whole, as
14 well as engagement and interests of the broader community,
15 that these issues be grappled with as in context of this
16 Best Start special committee of the Board.

17 We further would recommend that the next meeting
18 be focused exactly on the issue that our director research
19 evaluation is focusing on which is what are the specific
20 goals we seek to advance through our Best Start
21 investments and try to really then begin to drill down to
22 some of these critical issue that will flow from that.
23 But our recommendations would be that our work would be
24 done in context of the goal.

25 MR. KAUFMAN: So if we have Best Start liaison

1 Nancy, Tony, and Dwayne.

2 Would they be informing that prior?

3 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Dr. Kaufman, we're going to
4 continue to do as much of this as we can. As a, quote
5 unquote, "Committee as a whole," to keep everybody in it
6 just as explicit as possible.

7 The objective here is to kick off a policy -- a
8 policy clarifying process vis a vis Best Starts. It is
9 further to cause of the create an opportunity for the
10 entire Board to get on the same page by participating in
11 the definition or the redefinition of what we mean by
12 Place Based et cetera.

13 So there has been a proposal on the part of the
14 staff to have several meetings some of which will be for
15 the entirety of the committee of the whole. Others will
16 be in a different format.

17 But I think there will be enough dialogue between
18 the staff and the Board such that we can all begin to get
19 on the same page. So the function significantly as a
20 committee of the whole special committee.

21 All right, Dr. Fielding.

22 MR. FIELDING: Just a few more comments. One is
23 that no matter what we choose, we need to be sure we have
24 a baseline. And many things we'd like to look at we don't
25 have any baselines for. So either we have to add that to

1 what we want to do or we have to decide to choose
2 something else, or we have to be willing to say we don't
3 really know how much progress we've made, which I think is
4 not consistent with what we're trying to do.

5 Secondly, we need to have a kind of recording or
6 reporting of what is exactly happening in the communities.

7 Often times with this research even in the
8 neighborhood based research that Armando looked over,
9 there is not a clear definition of what actually occurred
10 within that neighborhood or community. And that -- that's
11 not going to work at all.

12 Third, I think it's important to have criteria
13 for the outcomes. And -- and I think that if we can agree
14 on those criteria and we have talked about them in the
15 past so I think we could revisit that and go over what
16 we've talked about in terms of measurable the fact that
17 they're measured over what time frame do we expect. We
18 expect the impact is going to be on the whole group or
19 less of or subsegment of the group, all these thing kind
20 of things, I think, would be particularly important and
21 then whatever we do.

22 I guess the one other thing I would say is we
23 need have to have a clear sense of what we do is
24 leverageable and sustainable. Because if we can do a lot
25 of the things we can reach our great outcomes we could

1 reach all of those goals and then funding declines as it
2 inevitably will that could all break. And that would be a
3 terrible waste.

4 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: On that note, let's move to
5 the next portion of our presentation today.

6 MS. BELSHE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And I'd like
7 to invite our director Marsha Ellis back up to walk us
8 back through a briefer presentation that speaks to our
9 suggested approach for providing some interim support for
10 our Best Start communities pending this deliberative
11 iterative exploration we spent the past hour talking
12 about.

13 Marsha.

14 MS. ELLIS: Thank you. There are three goals for
15 today's presentation. One, to share why we believe it is
16 important for the Board to consider providing interim
17 support to the communities as it goes through it's review
18 process for Best Start.

19 Two, we hope to -- what we hope to achieve in the
20 communities as a result of interim support.

21 And, three, to present to the Board options for
22 interim support and provide a staff recommendation.

23 I'd like to first begin with setting the context
24 for interim support over the past two years of
25 implementation. We've had experience in the 13

1 communities as well as lessons learned from metro LA which
2 is the pilot Best Start community that would help to shape
3 how Best Start moves forward.

4 From day one parents, residents, and community
5 stake holders have been actively engaged in Best Start and
6 are committed to ensuring the success of their
7 communities.

8 Today -- and you've heard this stat before --
9 over 5,000 community members have participated in our
10 activities and events and staff has conducted coordinated
11 and facilitated over 300 meetings in the 14 communities.
12 This includes partnership meetings, leadership group
13 meetings, as well as work groups and task fork forces.

14 Last summer the Board directed staff to define --
15 to define desired outcomes refine priorities and identify
16 measures and tools to track progress associated with Best
17 Start. This was voted in the development of the draft
18 Place Based logic model which Armando presented earlier.

19 In July of 2012, the Board approved funding for
20 three components of the community plans which includes
21 communication, partnership support and evaluation.
22 That -- that support was extended in November 2012, and is
23 scheduled to end on March 31st.

24 Staff recently provided two important updates to
25 the Board on Best Start implementation. At the January

1 commission meeting staff presented on family strengthening
2 which include welcome baby and home visitation. That
3 presentation was followed by one in February on community
4 capacity building and at the February meeting Board
5 decided to engage in a special process to come to
6 consensus on issues related to Best Start.

7 Today is first of several special meetings
8 occurred to -- planned to occur over the next few months.
9 And on March 14 staff will bring a Board action item to
10 the commission regarding interim support.

11 There are a number of important goals that we're
12 trying to achieve by providing interim support.

13 One of the goals is to allow work in the
14 communities to continue uninterrupted while the Board goes
15 through this process. Interim support would also help us
16 to maintain activities that are currently underway in the
17 community.

18 Some of these activities are related to
19 strengthening the community partnerships and others are
20 specifically designed to strengthen community capacities
21 or support the capacities which you learned more about in
22 February. Those are related to community engagement,
23 leadership, infrastructure, and investment.

24 I'm going to walk through two options for interim
25 support but you should know that staff reviewed a range of

1 other options. From suspending all support to the Best
2 Start communities to moving full speed ahead with the
3 community plans.

4 Staff considered both of these options premature
5 considering the Board's current review process for Best
6 Start.

7 So the first option is to approve continuing
8 support for three components that were approved in July of
9 2012.

10 Again, these components are communication,
11 partnership, support and evaluation. The total requested
12 funds under option one is \$1.2 million or \$85,000 per
13 community. And this would be for six months.

14 Examples of communications work includes
15 providing support for community events and First 5 LA
16 educational campaigns. For example, in the
17 Broadway/Manchester community they recently supported the
18 opening of two parks that resulted from our community
19 investment departments 50 Parks Initiative.

20 They conducted outreach, provided a speaker at
21 the events and also help to arrange for translation.

22 In Panorama City that community partnership
23 designed and implemented a health and fitness event called
24 Get Up and Move featuring nutrition and fitness activities
25 provided by local community organizations.

1 Over 600 children and parents participated in
2 that event.

3 And in Metro LA, the community partnership
4 developed a short video telling the story of Best Start
5 Metro LA from the community members' perspective.

6 Partnership support includes trainings and
7 workshops for partnership members as well as logistical
8 support. Some of the examples of trainings and workshops
9 that have been conducted across the communities include
10 decision making models, power dynamics, conflict
11 resolution, and public speaking.

12 Training topics are elevated by the community
13 members themselves commission staff as well as contractors
14 that are providing support to the partnerships.

15 Examples of logistical support include
16 transportation, and child care for meetings, and
17 simultaneous interpretation. Simultaneous Spanish
18 translation is provided for most larger partnership
19 meetings.

20 In Long Beach we also provide interpretation for
21 monolingual speakers and in Lancaster we provide American
22 sign language.

23 With regard to evaluation, each community is
24 responsible for conducting a community-level evaluation
25 which helps to document and evaluate community specific

1 activities.

2 A benefit of option one is that it maintains at
3 same level of resources in the communities while the Board
4 engages in it's review of Best Start. A disadvantage of
5 option one is that it limits the opportunities for
6 communities to apply skills and capacities that they have
7 developed over the past two years another disadvantage to
8 approving option one is that it can also raise concerns in
9 communities about First 5 LA's commitment to Best Start
10 which could lead to community disengagement and
11 participant attrition.

12 Option 2 outlines the targeted community capacity
13 with investment. The total requested over six months is
14 2.1 million dollars, or \$150,000 per community.

15 Option 2 builds upon option 1, but it takes it a
16 step further by providing resources to complete a
17 community capacity building assessment and implement
18 community based action research or C bar.

19 One of the underlying purposes of our place based
20 strategy is for First 5 LA to help parent and community
21 stake holders strengthen their skills and relationships,
22 networks and systems so they are better able to advocate
23 for resources.

24 As we have learned from our previous investments
25 providing direct services alone is not enough to sustain

1 the outcomes we seek for children and families.

2 In addition to building the capacities of parents
3 and residents First 5 LA will work with organizations in
4 the communities to help them improve the quality of their
5 services, attract other funding sources and become the
6 advocate for policies relating to young children and
7 families.

8 Over the past two years the commission staff has
9 done capacity building work with regard to helping the
10 community partnerships but we have not done a targeted
11 approach around building the Board for capacities.

12 The next phase of our work needs to focus on
13 building the community cap avenues primarily in the areas
14 of community leadership, infrastructure, and investment.
15 The purpose of the community capacity building assessment
16 is to provide an in depth profile that would inform the
17 partnerships of the communities assets where additional
18 capacity building efforts may be necessary. To provide --
19 and to provide baseline data for priority outcomes and
20 community level capacity.

21 In terms of C bar, it is a type of research that
22 involves community members as active participants the goal
23 of C bar is to combine knowledge with action to achieve a
24 social goal.

25 Unlike traditional research where community

1 members are often the research subjects or advisory gate
2 keepers with C bar the community members are key drivers
3 from the point of determining the research project to
4 disseminating the findings.

5 In February, our staff had the opportunity to
6 hear metro LA present on a C bar project around child care
7 and one of the take-aways was that these parents are
8 empowered, armed with data, and ready to be advocates for
9 their children.

10 A few of the advantages for approving option 2
11 are that communities will be able to utilize build,
12 develop, and strengthen over the past two years. There
13 would be support for conducting a baseline assessment
14 related to community leadership infrastructure and
15 investment and again, with a baseline assessment, the
16 commission will have a tangible way of determining if Best
17 Start is helping the communities advance in the four core
18 capacities.

19 Option 2 also helps to build momentum in the
20 community while the Board engages in its review process.

21 One con to call out with regard to option 2 is
22 that some of the activities such as C bar and conducting
23 the community capacity building assessment may take longer
24 than six months to implement in some of the communities.

25 Staff recommends option 2 as it best advances our

1 goals of providing interim support over the next six
2 months pending the Board's review and assessment of Best
3 Start supports activities that are underway in the
4 communities, strengthens the community partnerships and
5 strengthens the communities by establishing baseline in
6 the four core community capacities.

7 In terms of next steps we are eager to have your
8 feedback on the goals for interim support as well as the
9 two options that I presented and we will use that feedback
10 to develop a recommendation for the March 14 commission
11 meeting.

12 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: All right. Thank you very
13 much for your presentation.

14 We do have persons who wish to be heard and we
15 will call upon them now. Yvette Pineda, Sandra Sorrano,
16 Greg Overdorff, Rosie Pike, Carmel -- I think it says --
17 she says she's a student. And family literacy is the
18 organization.

19 Forgive me for not being able to make out your
20 name. I'd rather give you the opportunity to pronounce it
21 so that I won't butcher it. And then Diane Gaspar.

22 Please proceed.

23 MS. PADINA: Good afternoon, Commissioners. My
24 name is Diana. I'm the executive director of North Valley
25 Caring Services. We're located in the San Fernando Valley

1 and we're family friends and neighbors. And we are part
2 of Best Start community in Panorama City.

3 I just want to encourage that Best Start support
4 current First 5 investment community agencies have the
5 infrastructure needed to provide much needed services in
6 the community.

7 Some services already being provided through
8 family literacy and through family friends and neighbors
9 which has the home visitation model.

10 I understand that at some point Best Start staff
11 would like to step back and let the community lead. Why
12 not contract community agencies to continue and oversee
13 this work. Provide the facilities organize the community
14 provide the administrative oversight to ensure outcomes
15 are being met.

16 By supporting community organizations through
17 Best Start you're establishing a way for this work to
18 continue in the long term and you will be supporting your
19 current investments.

20 Thank you.

21 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Thank you.

22 MS. SERRANO: Good afternoon. My name is
23 Sandra Serrano. I believe the letter that some of you
24 already heard in the budget finance committee meeting but,
25 I want to say that we're going to share at this meeting

1 too.

2 I live at the Best Start metro LA area and I am a
3 member of the community guidance Best Start LA. I'm also
4 a member on the early attachment counsel at Hope Street
5 Family Center.

6 I'm here today to request that you continue to
7 provide funding for the school readiness and the family
8 literacy program that serve the Best Start community.

9 I believe that our community guidance body was
10 not frequently aware that staffing our community school
11 readiness with Family literacy programs were being
12 considered. These proposed cuts that many families would
13 lose services.

14 I don't believe our C G B has had any input into
15 these decisions. The school readiness program operated
16 hospital and Hope Street Family Center is an outstanding
17 program. It provides much needed early head start
18 programs to our community comprehensive and environmental
19 mental assessment mental health counseling prepared to
20 education for children and special needs. Over 15 percent
21 of our children served by school readiness are children
22 with special needs at hope street. School readiness
23 services provided by Hope street are very important to our
24 community and we want them to continue.

25 Also I believe that it would be a good financial

1 decision to continue to provide many with school
2 readiness. This is because the money that First 5
3 provides is used as a match for federal early head start
4 funds. So for every 20 cents the First 5 gives us we're
5 able to ask for \$1.00 from Washington D C The school
6 readiness money that First 5 provides allows us to receive
7 over \$1,000,000 from Washington. Without it, the school
8 readiness funds from First 5 -- without the funds from
9 First 5 we could lose this million dollars and even more
10 importantly the services that are provided.

11 I also very much support the planning committees'
12 recommendation to continue to provide funding for family
13 literacy. This is also, as I say, a much needed program
14 in our community and I urge you to consider continued
15 funding for all the programs.

16 We know that the value literacy has tremendous
17 benefits for children and parents is a good investment.

18 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: We're going to ask you to
19 conclude.

20 MS. SERRANO: Sorry?

21 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: We're going to ask you to
22 conclude.

23 MS. SERRANO: Thank you.

24 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Thank you for your testimony.

25 MR. OVERDORFF: Hello. My name is

1 Rick Overdorff. I am a resident of the Antelope Valley.
2 I was a guidance body member for Lancaster and Palmdale.
3 I have advocated for Best Start when it was just called
4 Place Based funding. I've been around for a long time
5 with this issue.

6 I have been a strong supporter of Best Start.
7 But I have to tell you and I -- and I don't want to be
8 nothing but negative but I think there's some information
9 that you need to know about.

10 First off, let's speak positive. I am a director
11 of a family literacy program and my people the people that
12 are families within our program received a great
13 opportunity to use this as a forum for leadership purposes
14 and it was very successful for that. It was a very good
15 thing for us.

16 However, first off, I didn't get this e-mail
17 until this morning at 9:30, so I didn't know about this
18 meeting until the last minute.

19 I -- I come from the A V. I think we need to
20 work -- have a little bit more notice there. There were
21 several items that we think was necessary. We need to see
22 -- we need to see more -- we need so to see funding for --
23 for program that are going to help our people and our
24 community. I'm speaking not for just myself, but many
25 people in the A V that express the same concern. They

1 want to see services and there -- I don't feel capacity
2 building and communication right now is the answer to
3 keeping our leadership and our families involved in the A
4 V.

5 We try to advise -- I have -- I have some
6 background in leadership and some background in
7 organizational government, we try to advise some of our
8 people with Best Start about things like rules and
9 regulations, and what else.

10 Anyway -- but this -- we didn't get a response
11 from them that would be helpful in organizing in a way
12 that worked. It's the best I can say.

13 Our staff, my staff at the program has spent
14 countless hours, countless all for free our families have
15 been involved as I said before. Most of the people are
16 very concerned that there just hasn't been anything done.

17 There's been promises made about funding for
18 programs. The first one was something to the tune of
19 \$7,000,000 per program. The second one was like \$1.7
20 million per program. And then we supplied all of the
21 information, and we did -- we selected programs, and we
22 submitted them. And that was canceled or denied or
23 whatever you want to call it.

24 And so people are a little upset and concerned
25 about this.

1 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: I'm going to ask you to
2 conclude.

3 MR. OVERDORFF: I'll be finished very quickly.
4 But I think please do not take my word for anything.
5 Check it out for yourself. Ask people. Thank you.

6 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Thank you for your testimony,
7 sir.

8 Next speaker, please.

9 MS. PIKE: Good afternoon. My name is
10 Rosey Pike. I represent the adult division with the Los
11 Angeles Unified school district and I want to start off by
12 saying thank you again for supporting our family literacy
13 program this year.

14 Everything I'm hearing today complicates a very
15 tough decision to make always about funding. I just want
16 to mention that the adult divisions family literacy
17 programs, not only the programs that you're funding
18 directly from adult division but the community based
19 organizations that are collaborate with the adult division
20 that we support offer a component that's vital and that is
21 adult education.

22 Parents need adult education to learn English to
23 learn how to support their children to get their GEDs and
24 high school diplomas and to get career training. And
25 without that, it doesn't matter how much we're educating

1 families on healthy babies. If they don't have jobs, how
2 do they support the food for their children? How do they,
3 you know -- how do they help their children in school?
4 We're doing all of that.

5 And I don't think you've done such a great job at
6 starting such a great program the adult division is barely
7 hanging in there again for another year. We started two
8 years ago with a 50 percent cut again this year with
9 another 50 percent cut.

10 But we're -- our family literacy programs
11 survived because of you. And I think this is a tremendous
12 help that you've given us, and I'm just asking that
13 besides the Best Start community programs which would
14 include three of our family literacy. Only three. That
15 you consider continuing the collaboration you have with us
16 it's such a great partnership we have a strong executive
17 director this year for adult education he seems very
18 supportive of the family literacy programs this year.

19 Looks forward to continuing them next year
20 assuming we get the funding.

21 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: All right.

22 MS. PIKE: So please take that into account.

23 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: We thank you for your
24 testimony.

25 Next speaker, please.

1 MS. GARCIA: Hi. Good afternoon. My name is
2 Carmen Garcia.

3 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Would you lower the
4 microphone so we can hear you, ma'am.

5 MS. GARCIA: My name is Carmen Garcia. And I'm
6 from San Pedro. I'm -- and -- I am a program for family
7 literacy. And I was so sad about the -- just the idea to
8 the program cut a little because I guess that you -- what
9 I study with my kids and all the families that are in the
10 program can agree with me that we live so much with the
11 kids and I -- I it's amazing how -- how everything can
12 have with the kids.

13 It's amazing the stricter we are making with our
14 kids because all things we -- we hear from there is for
15 our kids I feel so proud when I see and I can read to my
16 daughter and I can hear my daughter. And work to them.
17 I'm sorry.

18 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: No problem.

19 MS. GARCIA: And I just -- I'm just want to say
20 that a budget cut hurts all of our kids and I want to say
21 thank you for the program. And encourage you to continue
22 with this program. And -- and thanks for everything and
23 bless you.

24 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Thank you for your testimony.
25 Next speaker, please.

1 MS. GASPAR: Good afternoon, First 5
2 commissioners and staff.

3 I am Diane Gaspar, the community health services
4 chief at Los Angeles LA biomed, a nonprofit agency that
5 serves as the lead agency for the south Los Angeles best
6 babies collaborative. Which is one of the B B Cs funded
7 under the healthy first initiative and on behalf of our
8 collaborative we ask that you be strategic in
9 incorporating the investment you have made in best babies
10 collaborative to support the Best Start communities.

11 The funding extension being proposed and we thank
12 you for that for the B B Cs by the commission would be an
13 ideal time to identify the best strategies on how the B B
14 Cs can effectively support the Best Start communities.
15 The B B Cs have been serving high risk clients who reside
16 in the Best Start communities for over the past seven
17 years.

18 It is hoped that the capacity building and the
19 highly trained staff that have resulted can continue to
20 support the Best Start communities. Over the past two
21 years, we have documented some of the clients' stories on
22 our program through the use of digital stories which are
23 first person recorded stories with photos of people who
24 have volunteered to create a story in their own words
25 regarding the experience they've had on the program.

1 And the five client stories that I have on this
2 DVD I have two only one for the chair and one for Kim
3 Belshe. But I will be happy to make additional copies for
4 every single commissioner here and I just wanted to share
5 -- just a couple of the things that are also in the Best
6 Start communities Dina who's story on here a teen who
7 overcame post partum depression with the help of the
8 program Brooklyn a pregnant woman who had substance abuse
9 program when she was pregnant she overcame her substance
10 abuse with the help of the program and delivered a healthy
11 baby; and Bianca a teen who completed our program after
12 two years and not only did she graduate but she pursued
13 higher education and she breast fed her baby for one year
14 while on the program.

15 And there's several others on the DVD, too; so in
16 summary we ask that you be strategic in incorporating the
17 investment that you have made over the past seven years in
18 the best Start and the best babies collaborative in order
19 to continue to support the Best Start communities. Thank
20 you the very much.

21 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Thank you very much.

22 Final speaker, please.

23 MS. MARA: Good afternoon. I apologize, I think
24 I was actually supposed to speak after item two, but my
25 little sheet didn't get turned in.

1 My name is Kate Mara. I'm an attorney with the
2 Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles, and I have the
3 pleasure of serving as a cochair of the leadership Best
4 Start Long Beach.

5 Long Beach, as I'm sure you're aware, is an
6 incredibly diverse community.

7 We began this process in 2011 as a disparate
8 group of agencies parents and residents united around a
9 common goal. That goal became our vision statement.

10 Central Long Beach is a community where babies,
11 children, and their families are healthy and safe with a
12 passion for life and learning.

13 In the almost two years since then we have done a
14 lot of work and we've come a long way. We've broke into
15 work groups around each of the four goal areas and also
16 around the selection of a home visitation program family
17 strengthening services and community capacity building.
18 We reviewed research on best practices and data specific
19 to our community.

20 After over 100 meetings and thousands of hours of
21 work by our members we completed our year one plan and
22 presented it to our partnership for approval in late
23 April of last year.

24 I'm happy to say that the vote to approve our
25 plan was a unanimous one. We then submitted our plan to

1 this commission for approval.

2 In central Long Beach we've come a long way. For
3 almost a year we have continued to meet while waiting for
4 a decision from all of you. We do this because we know
5 that we've built something bigger than the sum of it's
6 parts and frankly bigger than Best Start.

7 While waiting for approval of our plan we have
8 transformed our meetings from a vehicle to develop our
9 plan to a forum for community education and capacity
10 building with the assistance of the amazing Best Start
11 staff.

12 And here I have to give a shout out to Ruben and
13 Freddy, who's in the room, and Linda who unfortunately is
14 not here.

15 We've conducted trainings at our partnership
16 meetings around each of the goal areas and the related
17 resources that are available in our communities. We've
18 conducted a four-hour communications training for members
19 of our partnership and we also have an intensive messaging
20 training scheduled for March 22nd.

21 In addition we've formed a new home visitation
22 collaborative and a child abuse and family violence
23 collaborative in Long Beach.

24 That being said we're strongly committed to
25 moving forward with our plan. And we ask that you trust

1 our knowledge of our community and support our efforts to
2 make our plan a reality.

3 Thank you.

4 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: All right.

5 Madam Executive Director.

6 MS. BELSHE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to
7 just offer a quick clarifying comment for the Board before
8 inviting Board feedback to the recommendation pending.

9 First off, there's two issues that will be coming
10 to the Board at your next full meeting -- I know we're
11 spending a lot of time together -- on Thursday March 14.
12 So I want to clarify that there's two funding-related
13 decisions that we have before you.

14 Number 1 is whether or not to provide some level
15 of interim support for the 14 Best Start communities
16 pending Board review determination and consensus on Best
17 Start strategic intervention. That was the subject of
18 Marsha Ellis's presentation and the issue that we'd like
19 to get some initial feedback from you on to help inform
20 the final recommendation that will come to the board for
21 decision making on March 14.

22 The second set of issues that's will come to the
23 Board on the 14th is whether or not First 5 will continue
24 to support a handful of grants that are slated to expire
25 at the end of this fiscal year.

1 And as we shared with the programming and
2 planning committee last Thursday morning. And which we
3 shared with the budget and finance committee this
4 afternoon, we have brought forward a framework for
5 decision making to help inform Board's consideration on
6 whether or not to support these expiring grants criteria
7 that are grounded Number 1, Whether or not there's a
8 Sustainability plan and secondly whether or not there is a
9 relationship to the work that is unfolding in Best Start.

10 So two separate but related decisions. Today is
11 not a decision making conversation. It's really to help
12 inform the final recommendations we'll be bringing forward
13 to the Board related to this first question. Whether or
14 not to provide interim support for the 14 Best Start
15 Communities which is slated to expire at the end of this
16 month as the Board engages in the process to bring greater
17 strategic direction and consensus to our Best Start
18 communities.

19 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: All right. Questions or
20 comments on part 2 of our presentation today? Being
21 informed by the fact that we will have another opportunity
22 this was essentially to give us a lot to think about over
23 the next week or so and then ultimately make our
24 determination Commissioner Au.

25 MS. AU: I --

1 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Did I see another hand?
2 Commissioner, please.

3 MS. AU: I guess I'm concerned about the
4 presentation from the gentleman from Antelope Valley, from
5 A V. And I think this speaks to some of the missteps that
6 have taken place in previous times in terms of our
7 implementation. And I want to be -- I want us to be clear
8 that even as we talk about the continuation of the interim
9 funding, we're not talking about funding for direct
10 services.

11 And I think that it was a lot of the disservice
12 in terms of the communications that went out to
13 communities during those initial Best Start conversations
14 or presentations especially when \$7,000,000 were thrown
15 out there and 1.7 million.

16 Please, just to be clear, this was not something
17 that the Board of Commissioners had authorized, and I'm
18 feeling quite concerned and upset that is there is still
19 this perception or this understanding on the Best Start
20 community folks that participated in the early organizing
21 work that there was an expectation that the communities
22 would be seeing initially \$7,000,000 and then subsequently
23 1.7 million.

24 And I want that to be cleared up today.

25 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Well, now, Commissioner Au,

1 if you are trying to clarify an expectation that moves
2 from 7 million to 1.4 million --

3 MS. AU: 1.4.

4 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Yeah. If you wish to clarify
5 that in one meeting, I would suggest that we not set that
6 expectation.

7 You'll probably have to have several meetings to
8 solve that is what I'm saying.

9 MS. AU: Yes. I guess at least for today.

10 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: It is on the record.

11 MS. AU: That we're not talking about these
12 dollars going out for direct services because the
13 commission has not really weighed in on that question.

14 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Yes.

15 MS. AU: And at least that communication should
16 go out to communities. And so they're not waiting for --
17 with un-- unrealistic expectation and become disenchanted
18 and we will lose their valuable partnership. Because they
19 truly are valuable.

20 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Yes. At least that was
21 communicated.

22 (Interruption from audience.)

23 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Valid concerns and there is a
24 reason for operating with this level of transparency so
25 that all can be party to our deliberations.

1 You need to take your seat, sir.

2 (Interruption from audience.)

3 MS. AU: This is what I'm concerned about.

4 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: It's not what I'm concerned
5 about. There -- there's an orderly way to be heard here.

6 Thank you very much, Commissioner Figueroa-Villa.

7 MS. FIGUEROA-VILLA: I -- I just wanted some
8 clarity because staff is recommending option 2. Are all
9 14 Best Start programs at that point to receive option 2?
10 Or can we -- is option 1 -- are they ready for one because
11 option 2 -- I think -- how did you assess that they're all
12 ready for option 2, I guess to make it simple.

13 MS. ELLIS: Well, all of the communities have
14 varying levels of capacity and readiness; so usually when
15 we present an option for funding it's up to a certain
16 amount.

17 So some of the communities, for example, have
18 already done their initial C bar orientation, are ready to
19 begin further work with the C bar technical provider to do
20 that work.

21 Some communities may take a bit longer. They may
22 want to focus on further building the capacities of the
23 parents and residents for example.

24 So we presented option 2 because it provided --
25 it provides the broader spectrum of opportunities for

1 communities to move forward.

2 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: All right. Thank you very
3 much for that question and response.

4 Any other questions or concerns to be raised at
5 this point in time?

6 Commissioner Kaufman.

7 MR. KAUFMAN: I'm not confused, I just don't
8 think I'm informed. There's a subtle distinction.

9 I don't exactly have a sense of the 14
10 communities and where they are along the continuum of the
11 providing support they're meeting with their -- et cetera.
12 And not understanding, for example, what partnerships
13 support they're doing or they have done recently and
14 understanding what we're going to be authorizing for the
15 next six months, is that something that lends itself to a
16 user -- to use a grid that you could present at the
17 meeting in only ten days?

18 Is there everybody else have a sense of this and
19 -- I think I'm seeing nods that others have the same
20 question. I'm not questioning it. I'm not -- I just
21 don't think -- I know that I don't have a sense of it.

22 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: All right.

23 MR. KAUFMAN: So it makes it very hard for me to
24 say yes, this is what I want to do.

25 MS. BELSHE: So maybe a -- and I would invite

1 Marsha either to respond or take it under advisement, but
2 what I'm hearing is trying to get at this issue of
3 concreteness; so what are examples of the kinds of
4 activities that are being undertaken in the communications
5 partnership development community capacity building.

6 MR. KAUFMAN: Yeah, I think, for two reasons.

7 One is I think it helps us to make a decision.

8 Two, it helps me be more informed at what's going
9 on. I hear bits and pieces on it. I read evaluations
10 here and there but I haven't been able myself to put it
11 together into coherent form and I know the that the other
12 entities that are up for not continuation of funding in
13 July somehow relate to that.

14 And some of them are sort of part of that and
15 some aren't. Because some of them are within Best Start
16 and quarter of it's not, or whatever.

17 So there's just all of these different things
18 floating around that I don't have my hands on.

19 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: All right.

20 Commissioner Dennis, I saw your hand.

21 MR. DENNIS. Number 1, I want to thank staff for
22 their two recommendations. Marsha, thank you very much.
23 I do believe that to some degree we -- we have in essence
24 as a commission developed an expectation within
25 communities.

1 And to some degree we have some responsibility in
2 -- in dealing with -- with that and that's on us. I mean,
3 that's our responsibility. I mean, we gave communities
4 the impression that they would have the ability to have
5 impact, affect change and take leadership, and so you
6 know, I would suggest that to that, we do have some
7 responsibility.

8 But at the -- as I'm saying that I don't believe
9 money should be distributed arbitrarily. So I do
10 appreciate the recommendations that came from staff
11 because they do clarify how the moneys would be used and I
12 -- I agree with Neil that all communities aren't at the
13 same place at the same time.

14 So I would be interested in the gradations
15 between communities with regards to their community
16 engagement activities because I think that would be
17 helpful for -- for the commission.

18 And then secondarily, and I say this after last
19 commission meeting at the time we approved the Place Based
20 model, there was a budget and a time line. So I'm really
21 interested in seeing where are we with regards to budget.

22 And you know, as far as the time, my suspicion's
23 that we are far behind in the spending according to where
24 we, you know, perhaps should -- should be. And so I would
25 like, you know, to see that information as well. Because

1 I think that would help inform what we're doing in the
2 future.

3 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Well, thank you for those
4 remarks and response to Commissioners Kauffman and Dennis.

5 I did see affirmative nods on the part of other
6 commission members that suggest to me that we should have
7 more information with which to work packaged in a fashion
8 that does somewhat of a comparative filling in the blanks
9 with respect to criteria and outcome as best as can be
10 assembled at this point in time, that would help inform
11 our deliberations on the 14th. So that the
12 recommendations of the staff could then be considered more
13 fully and completely by the Board.

14 So I think -- I take that as instruction for the
15 Board to come back with -- to us with more complete
16 information.

17 MS. BELSHE: We will take that back, Mr. Chair,
18 and pull together additional information to provide a
19 clearer and more complete picture of the type of
20 activities that our Best Start community partners have
21 been undertaking with First 5 support in these different
22 areas.

23 I would like to note, though, a final observation
24 in response to Commissioner Au's comment about services is
25 in my judgment that's a really excellent example of one of

1 the real tensions or fault lines, if you will, around Best
2 Start in terms of is there clarity as a Board with staff
3 and with our community partners about what will or will
4 not be supported with -- with First 5's LA's resources?

5 So when a Board made an allocation decision last
6 spring to set aside \$1.7 million per Best Start Community,
7 it identified three principle areas where resources could
8 go with Home Visitation and Welcome Baby being one,
9 Community capacity building being a second, and then a
10 third strand of activity that from what I've been able to
11 piece together in my limited time hasn't been very well
12 defined.

13 It's basically projects to support family
14 strengthening. And so in my mind the process we began
15 discussing this afternoon that will unfold with far more
16 specificity and clarity over the course of the next couple
17 of meetings is intended exactly to do what we need to
18 which is bring consensus and clarity.

19 So how you might be thinking of direct services,
20 Commissioner Au, may be a different definition of others;
21 so I think we have an opportunity by this process that
22 we're beginning to together to bring that clarity and I
23 hope our community partners who share our aspirations for
24 children in your neighborhoods in your communities
25 actively participate with us in this exploration and bring

1 the kind of definition we need and importantly our
2 community partners need to be able to move forward. But
3 absence that consensus it's going to be very difficult for
4 us to move forward and you've put your finger exactly on
5 one of those fault lines.

6 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: All right. Any further
7 business to come before us at this point in time?

8 Anyone wishing to be heard by public comment,
9 Madam Secretary?

10 While it appears Commissioner Au --

11 MS. AU: No. It's just that we obvious -- we
12 often end on some negative note, and I really want to
13 thank the staff. I mean, Armando and Marsha and the
14 others in back of you that worked with you to do this
15 presentation.

16 This was excellent and I am so excited because
17 it's given us a framework in which we can have this kind
18 of substantive conversation which is truly -- which was so
19 lacking; so I'm excited and -- and eager because I do know
20 that down the road we will have clarity. And that's
21 really exciting for me. Thank you.

22 MR. RIDLEY-THOMAS: Thank you very much. Well
23 stated. And let that reflect the sentiments of entire
24 Board. We're adjourned.

25 (At 4:36 p.m. the meeting was adjourned.)