



**California Children and Families Commission Meeting**

**August 19, 2020**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Agenda Item 1 – Opening Remarks**

George Halvorson called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Commissioners Present: George Halvorson  
Molly Munger  
Mayra Alvarez  
Monica Fitzgerald  
Shana Hazan  
Jackie Majors

Commissioners Absent: Muntu Davis

Ex Officio Member Present: Kris Perry

Announcements:

Chair Halvorson provided opening remarks, which included recognizing diversity as a huge asset and emphasized the importance of setting literacy goals to achieve success and equity.

Reports:

**First 5 California (F5CA) Executive Director – Camille Maben**

Ms. Maben provided an update on internal staffing:

- Laxmi Gurajada, promoted to Education Programs Consultant
- Kathy Ellis, Personnel Liaison – Retired
- Corey Hudson, New Personnel Liaison

Ms. Maben stated staff were in the final stages of interviewing candidates for an analyst in the Contracts and Procurement Office.

Ms. Maben gave an overview of the following:

- All 58 counties are participating in IMPACT and IMPACT 2020. At a local level, grantees continue to support COVID-19 response and recovery efforts to help keep child care providers' doors open.
- F5CA and California Department of Education (CDE) staff are working jointly to create a new QCC reporting portal that will streamline the fiscal and programmatic reporting process. The portal is expected to be launched in fall 2020.
- The book distribution program is progressing. Forty-two counties have issued Letters of Intent to participate with F5CA in the distribution of more than 500,000 books. Fifty thousand books have been purchased from Scholastic and will be shipped to the counties lead agency. Fraser Communications secured a donation of 2,000 books. F5CA is working with the Dollywood Foundation to support state efforts on a book infusion program and model.
- F5CA released a Request for Application (RFA) for Home Visiting Coordination in May 2020. The program originally promoted cross agency coordination of home visiting programs. Due to COVID-19, F5CA has pivoted to focus home visiting coordination to support families through the pandemic recovery.
- American Institutes for Research (AIR) modified data collection for the in-depth phase of the Dual Language Learner (DLL) pilot study from fall 2019 to spring 2020 to accommodate COVID-19 effects. Preliminary findings on the impact of the pandemic are expected this winter. F5CA released the RFA for the expansion phase of the study in July. The findings are expected to help F5CA learn about the measurable and sustainable practices to support DLL's during the pandemic.
- The Small Population County Funding Augmentation (SPCFA) funding will expire in June 2021. F5CA anticipates presenting SPCFA as an information item at the October Commission meeting with the goal of providing a proposal in January 2021.
- F5CA continues to provide emergency supplies to counties. F5CA maintains cross agency communication to minimize duplicate efforts and get the most out of the dollars being spent.

## **DISCUSSION:**

Commissioner Hazan asked for clarification on counties participating in the book distribution program and requested a list of counties not participating be sent to the Commissioners. She also requested a status report of F5CA staffing and vacancies to be shared at Commission meetings.

Ms. Maben responded that 42 counties have signed a Letter of Intent and that there is no funding for the counties in this process. She confirmed the list will be sent to the Commissioners and a status report on F5CA staffing and vacancies will be shared at future Commission meetings.

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**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

## **First 5 Association of California**

Melissa Stafford-Jones, Executive Director

Ms. Jones shared an overview of themes that provide a strong foundation for continued work in partnership between local commissions, the Association, and F5CA.

- The work of First 5 collectively is deeply rooted in shared purpose and values. The First 5 network's vision and goal are that one day California's success will be measured by the well-being of its youngest children has yet to be achieved. There are inequities but there are also advancements, and things to celebrate, build on, and recognize.
- Recognizing effective partnerships are needed within the First 5 network. Partnerships that embody a bi-directional approach and relationships between the local and state level to strengthen and shape policies and framework to improve outcomes for children and families.
- There are concentric circles around First 5's approach to the whole child and the whole family that result in positive outcomes. Addressing all circles is crucial to achieving the holistic whole child, whole family vision.
- Recognition and commitment to face and address racial inequities in opportunities and outcomes for children. The way forward is to listen, learn, and re-examine. Be prepared for the work to be hard and uncomfortable, but willing to build an inclusive process that encompasses several aspects of inequities.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

## **Agenda Item 2 – Public Comment**

Chair Halvorson opened the floor for public comment.

Dr. Doug Major, San Luis Obispo, shared that August is Amblyopia Awareness month, commonly known as "lazy eye." Dr. Major's stated his goal is to end ethnic, racial, and cultural disparities in vision care. He said the data shows:

- The prevalence of vision disorders is increasing for preschoolers, especially children of color.
- There is a huge unmet need for access to vision care for children in California.
- The most damaging vision disorders, amblyopia and hyperopia with astigmatism, can be diagnosed and should be treated by age 3.
- Early access to glasses can make a difference and aligns with F5CA's early learning and care goals.

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Dr. Major urged the Commission and F5CA staff to use their role as advocates for these children to help address these issues.

### **Action Item 3 – Consent Calendar**

The Commission considered approval of the consent calendar as detailed on the agenda.

**DISCUSSION:** None.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**MOTION/ACTION:** Commissioner Majors moved to approve the consent calendar.

Commissioner Munger seconded the motion.

**VOTE:** The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

### **Information Item 4 – Financial Update**

Marcia Thomas, Director of the Fiscal Services Office, provided an update on the Commission’s financial status and shared the following:

- Fiscal Services is working on closing the books for Fiscal Year (FY) 2019–20.
- Staff are working on the new graphics for displaying financial information to be presented at the October Commission meeting.
- F5CA continues to work with the First 5 Association, county commissions, and the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration (CDTFA) to resolve concerns around administrative fees, methodology on backfill, presentation of reporting, and mapping out processes to understand timelines around funding distributions.

Ms. Thomas shared attachments detailing the following:

- First 5 Children and Families Commission Trust Fund Allocation percentages
- Financial Plan for FYs 2019–20 through 2023–24
- F5CA Fund Condition Summary
- A comparison of April 2020 and May 2020 Revised Revenue Projections for Prop. 10 and Prop. 56 backfill through FY 2024-25

Ms. Thomas stated she plans to present the reconciled FY 2019–20 financial data to the Commission in October.

**DISCUSSION:**

Commissioner Majors asked if revenues are declining, how is staff looking at all of the work to be done?

Ms. Maben responded by stating that staff look at the planning, the financial projections, and one-time investments versus long term investments. She stated staff also look at the work that may need to stop, depending on the direction of F5CA's focus.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**Action Item 5 – Mass Media Communications and Public Relations Contract**

Jamiann Collins-Lopez, Information Officer I, requested \$67 million to release a Request for Proposal (RFP) to secure a vendor to develop and execute a new three-year media and public relations campaign. She stated the new contract, with a potential start date of March 2021, will expand on the Talk. Read. Sing.<sup>®</sup> campaign to incorporate other vital messaging points, and that the contract vendor will focus on researching, developing, and conducting multiple campaigns to reach target audiences, including culturally diverse and hard-to-reach populations. She further stated the campaign will develop strategies to increase public and policy maker awareness of the F5CA brand and policy priorities.

**DISCUSSION:**

Commissioner Fitzgerald asked about the criteria for measuring ethics, equity, and inclusivity in the RFP.

Ms. Collins-Lopez stated that the RFP specifically requests examples of previous campaign experience around those issues.

Commissioner Majors mentioned there have been previous discussions for F5CA staff to consider prioritizing diversity based on appropriate practices within the contracting system and processes.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Munger moved to release an RFP up to \$67 million for a new mass media and public relations contract.

Commissioner Majors seconded the motion.

**VOTE:** The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

**Action Item 6 – Shared Services Alliances for Small Early Learning and Care Settings**

Ms. Dubey, Education Administrator I, provided an overview on a Shared Services Alliance strategy to support early learning and care settings and requested the Commission's approval to reallocate \$1.5 million from IMPACT 2020 funds to support local grants for start-up or expansion of shared services alliances. She stated F5CA can provide funding to support the expansion of this framework at a time when providers are desperate to keep their doors open.

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She further stated Shared Services Alliances will help support small early learning and care businesses by helping them to become more financially sound and efficient so they can focus on the children in their care. Ms. Dubey gave examples of services, which include enrollment management, attendance tracking, and grant management and accounting.

**DISCUSSION:**

Commissioner Hazan asked for clarification on the non-business side of the model.

Ms. Dubey stated Shared Services Alliances creates learning communities similar to those in QCC and IMPACT 2020 which is why F5CA is recommending those efforts be leveraged to merge existing resources that providers normally wouldn't have access to.

Commissioner Majors asked about program utilization with regard to specific models in California.

Ms. Dubey responded by stating this is an opt-in strategy and voluntary for those who would like to participate. She further stated Shared Services Alliances is an emerging model in California and that F5CA is asking for more seed money to expand existing models and create new alliances in areas of the state where the Shared Services Alliances model does not exist.

Member Perry asked if there are any other funders or funding that can be leveraged.

Ms. Dubey stated staff can look into that, and that she knows there are private funders that are already investing in this type of work.

Commissioners stated they would like to hear more about possible public/private investing to increase the RFP amount.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**MOTION/ACTION:** Commissioner Alvarez moved to reallocate \$1.5 million from the IMPACT 2020 evaluation funds to support Shared Services Alliances.

Commissioner Hazan seconded the motion.

**VOTE:** The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

**Action Item 7 – Investing in Workforce Development and Support**

Ms. Dubey shared education and training is needed for new and existing providers to obtain knowledge in critical areas surrounding children's social/emotional development and trauma informed care. She requested the Commission approve reallocating \$1 million from the IMPACT 2020 evaluation fund to help support the early learning and care workforce post COVID-19. She stated data collected from the California Early Learning and Care Workforce Registry shows that since March there has been a 60% increase in new profiles in the Workforce Registry and almost 9,000 new participants in 3 months. She further stated there has been an increase in the usage of CDE's existing training portal with an increase of 1700% completion of on-line courses from February to May 2020, and that with the increase in usage,

there is an ongoing need for increased capacity, and breadth and depth of content. Ms. Dubey shared that funding for the professional development content aligns with the goals of IMPACT 2020 and will be included as part of a new professional development platform currently underway at CDE.

**DISCUSSION:**

Member Perry stated that since F5CA is developing content in partnership with others, she is concerned about intellectual property, and questioned as a major investor, if F5CA will own the content.

Ms. Dubey responded by stating that generally, when F5CA funds these types projects and this kind of development, it owns the content. Ms. Dubey shared that it is her understanding this would be non-proprietary so that it will be easy to access for all providers across the state.

Commissioner Alvarez asked if there is an opportunity to align this work with F5CA's commitment to equity and if there is opportunity to include racial equity as a focus in some of the content.

Chair Halvorson shared that he agreed that racial equity as a focus should be a requirement.

Commissioner Majors asked if the \$1 million is paying for the totality of the development of the curriculum and the process.

Ms. Dubey stated that the project will cost more than \$1 million. She shared that there is a lot of development yet to come and that F5CA will make sure the content is relevant, up-to-date, and easy to access for providers.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**MOTION/ACTION:** Commissioner Hazan moved to reallocate \$1 million from the IMPACT 2020 evaluation fund to support the development of a new professional development platform for the Early Learning and Care Workforce, on the condition that F5CA is part of the decision-making team.

Commissioner Munger seconded the motion.

**VOTE:** The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

**Information Item 8 – Home Visiting Workforce Study: COVID-19 Preliminary Findings**

Danielle Hegseth from Child Trends facilitated the briefing and provided the following overview:

Key findings on feelings about virtual home visiting:

- Overall transition to virtual home visits has gone well
- Families and home visitors find value in the virtual visits



- All home visitors reported they would like some component of virtual visits to continue after the pandemic
- Looking ahead, families have some concerns around returning to in-home visits

Key findings on meeting families' needs:

- All home visitors reported that families' needs have changed as a result of COVID-19
- Many home visitors reported successes in building rapport with families and supporting their social emotional needs
- Many families reported that home visitors helped them with parenting support, and accessing services and supplies

Key findings on support for home visitors:

- Almost all home visitors reported receiving some type of training for providing virtual home visits
- Almost all home visitors reported feeling well supported in terms of technology to conduct virtual visits and receiving guidance from supervisors
- Some home visitors reported concerns around their level of stress and issues related to work-life balance

**DISCUSSION:**

Commissioner Majors mentioned that the sampling group was small and asked about the percentage of the population.

Ms. Hegseth acknowledged it is a small sample. She stated there were 46 families representing 24 programs that participated, and that Child Trends asked home visitors who were comfortable sharing the survey with their families to do so.

Commissioner Majors stated she sees a huge opportunity with home visiting. She asked if race and ethnicity was taken into consideration and if there is some type of easy-to-use application that can be created to simplify the process for families to connect with their virtual home visitor.

Ms. Hegseth stated the study does have a component that tries to understand the skills and competencies that home visitors may need. She said Child Trends understands that post COVID-19, there will continue to be some component of virtual home visiting, and as a result of what was learned from survey, they would like to explore how the skills and competencies are changing to support virtual home visiting.

Ms. Hegseth shared that Child Trends did not include race and ethnicity in the survey. She stated a part of the study will include the home visiting supply and demand mapping to capture the various characteristics of families served by the home visiting program, including race and



ethnicity. She said Child Trends is also trying to capture the race and ethnicity and other characteristics of the home visitors to get a sense of what the home visiting workforce looks like in California compared to the families being served.

Debi Silverman, Education Administrator I, shared that the initial phase of the study will inform the next phase of the study where they are going to attempt to saturate the home visiting workforce field to have every home visitor and supervisor respond to the survey.

Commissioner Majors asked if there are any opportunities to redirect, or as an added support, send families to group virtual sessions.

Ms. Hegseth stated that if Child Trends does the qualitative data collection on the families' perception of home visits and skills needed, group sessions could be a component.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Ms. Francine Rodd, Executive Director, First 5 Monterey, expressed that they are proud to be participating in the home visiting project. She shared that one of the things their home visitors have found is the digital equity divide in terms of being able to connect with families. She said she supports working at the statewide level to get the infrastructure in place to address the challenges families face in accessing digital services.

Nina Machado, Executive Director, First 5 Amador, stated one of the things they've seen in Amador is that two parents participating in the virtual home visits has increased along with other family members participating. She stated she liked the idea of moving to virtual group meeting opportunities for individuals with similar experiences.

#### **Information Item 9 – Local First 5 Strategies to Serve the State's High Promise Children and Families**

Melissa Stafford-Jones provided an overview on some of the work that is being done by county commissions.

She stated First 5 county commissions play a critical leadership role in their local communities. Some of the highlights include:

- Being a dedicated voice to ensure that young children's well-being and a focus on prevention are prioritized
- Working with public agencies, community-based partners, and families to connect systems of care and bring partners together in intentional and integrated approaches
- Holding the vision on how systems can be re-built to have greater impact and positive outcomes
- Acting as the backbone among agencies and delivery systems

- Funders and co-architects of the work to continually adapt and ensure that they are building systems and programs that best serve the needs of under resourced and disinvested communities

Ms. Stafford-Jones shared that targeted universalism and the framework of universal goals combined with targeted approaches to reach them is a strong base for the working partnership between the state commission, the Association, and county commissions to advance equity.

## **PRESENTATIONS:**

Gina Daleiden, Executive Director, First 5 Yolo County, shared how F5CA funding is used to support local systems building. She stated funding for medium and smaller counties is carefully allocated to support sophisticated, higher impact initiatives that reach beyond systems improvements to create true system transformation. She mentioned funding has become a complex tapestry of programs and services woven together to allow a whole child, whole family approach. Ms. Daleiden provided examples detailing how multiple sources of funding are braided together to create tailored programs in Yolo County. She concluded by saying flexible and predictable funding will help counties be more strategic with their work on the ground.

Ruth Fernandez, Executive Director, First Contra Costa County, shared how First 5s center racial equity around the work and why it is essential to its vision. She stated that not all children have access to the same opportunities due to policies that systematically drain resources from communities of color. She explained that neighborhoods, health care, schools, and businesses on which families rely have been molded by policies that are counterproductive to their work. She stated taking an active, equitable approach to the work is not only integral but imperative to give all of California's children the best possible start in life. Ms. Fernandez shared examples of how Contra Costa County is working to ensure school readiness in all their communities.

Karen Scott, Executive Director, First 5 San Bernardino County (F5SB), shared how First 5s continue to meet local needs in spite of COVID-19. She stated that many child care providers reached out to F5SB for guidance on a number of issues. She said they were able to work with local resource and referral networks to ensure every inquiry was answered and needs were met. She stated F5SB partnered with public and private partners to quickly mobilize supplies, and that in response to elevated numbers of child abuse during the stay-at-home mandate, F5SB is working closely with the children's network and the children's assessment center to identify potential child abuse. Ms. Scott further stated that First 5s across the state are committed to supporting young children and families through the pandemic.

Tomasa Espinoza, Co-Chair, West County Regional Group (WCRG), shared that she is part of a group of parent leaders that advocate for healthy, safe, and equitable communities for young children and families. She stated WCRG has worked in collaboration with the First 5 Contra Costa County Community Engagement and Advocacy program to transform communities and the lives of families across Contra Costa. Ms. Espinoza shared that the pandemic has destabilized her community, and that within the group, 75% have lost their jobs. Ms. Espinoza explained that WCRG has met with elected officials, mobilized families, and testified at virtual board of supervisors and city council meetings to pass eviction and rent increase moratoriums. She stated they were successful in passing six local policies in six weeks. Ms. Espinoza stated

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WCRG and First 5 Contra Costa have been important supporters during the pandemic for policy and systems change, and the mental health of children and families. Ms. Espinoza thanked First 5 for their support of community led movements to build healthier, safer, and more equitable communities for its children.

**DISCUSSION:**

Commissioner Alvarez asked Ms. Espinoza how she found out about First 5 Contra Costa County.

Ms. Espinoza responded by explaining that she started attending programs at First 5 Contra Costa County when her oldest daughter was 2 years old. She said she met another parent at a center who told her about the community engagement program and regional groups that help build leadership within the community. She stated her children grew up with First 5 and that they have presented at city council meetings and are leaders in their schools.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**Information Item 10 – State and Federal Budget and Legislative Update**

Alexandra DeCaprio, Legislative Coordinator, shared the following state update:

- The state legislature has shifted focus to COVID-19 response and recovery.
- F5CA’s Level 1 priority bills currently moving through the legislative process are itemized in Attachment A.
- The regular legislative session ends on August 31, 2020. There is a possibility there may be a special session or multiple special sessions on specific issues or unresolved items that need urgent attention.
- Governor Newsom signed a \$202 billion dollar budget on June 29, 2020, for FY 2020–21. The budget avoids deep cuts proposed in the May budget revision. The budget allows for trigger cuts if federal monetary assistance does not materialize.
- Paid Family Leave is moving through the legislative process.
- F5CA continues to focus on early literacy priorities as outlined in the Master Plan.

She shared the following on a federal level:

- Senate Republicans introduced a new COVID-19 relief proposal delivering immediate assistance to America’s families, schools, and small businesses. House Democrats are expected to introduce their own version of a smaller bill. All relief bills passed and proposed fall short of meeting the immense child care needs across the country.
- Lawmakers introduced legislation to raise the high-water mark for child care funding from \$7 billion to \$50 billion.

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- Contingent upon what takes place at the state level, that will determine the amount of federal funding the state will receive.
- F5CA is preparing to release a Federal Advocacy RFP to expand capacity to engage in Washington on behalf of the First 5 network.

**Action Item 11 – Adjournment**

**MOTION/ACTION:** Commissioner Fitzgerald moved to adjourn.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Alvarez.

**VOTE:** The motion was unanimously approved by the Commission.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:53 p.m.

The next scheduled meeting is October 22, 2020.