

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** First 5 Lake County Commission

**FROM:** Carla Ritz, Executive Director

**DATE:** February 6, 2019

**SUBJECT:** Executive Director's Report

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DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS – On January 11<sup>th</sup>, I reached out via email to leaders from: County of Lake Departments (Health, Social Services, and Behavioral Health), Lake County Office of Education, Mendocino Community Health Clinic – Lakeview, Redwood Community Services, North Coast Opportunities, Lake Family Resource Center, Easter Seals Bay Area, Redwood Coast Regional Center, Sutter Lakeside Hospital, Adventist Health Clear Lake, Hope Rising, Mother-Wise, LC Childcare Planning Council, LC Children's Council, LC Tribal Health, and Health Leadership Network asking for their support of a "State of the Children" and "Call to Action" to correspond with Child Abuse Prevention Month in April. Leaders from all agencies, except for ESBA, SLH, and LCTHC, have responded and all are eager to participate. We are currently in the data gathering phase of the project. The timeline is as follows:

- **Jan. 11 - Feb. 8** - Data gathering
- **Feb. 15** - Draft of State of the Children completed and shared with the group
- **Feb. 16-28** - Input period on State of the Children, steering committee creation
- **Mar. 1-15** - Creation of a Call to Action and implementation plan by steering committee
- **Mar. 16-29** - Review of Call to Action and signatures
- **April 9<sup>th</sup>** - Presentation to the Board of Supervisors and kick-off of implementation plan
- **April 13<sup>th</sup>** - Children's Advocacy Festival

Since that initial email, I traveled to San Diego for the Child Abuse Prevention Summit with representatives from several local agencies. The group has decided that the State of the Children and Call to Action will be the first steps in our local Child Abuse Prevention Plan's goal of increasing community engagement. The group is also reaching out to local law enforcement and judicial leaders in the county to garner their participation as well.

FEDERAL LEVEL – The shutdown of the federal government put several social service programs into a precarious position. WIC remained open for business during the shutdown and had a plan in place to provide services to clients at least through the end of March (due to State support) if the shutdown continued. CalFresh was only protected through the end of February.

On February 26<sup>th</sup> at 9am ET, ZERO TO THREE will release their "State of Babies Yearbook: 2019" at a policy forum on Capitol Hill. *For the first time, ZERO TO THREE and Child Trends are telling the state-by-state story of America's babies – and the picture isn't as rosy as you might hope. Examine how babies are faring across the country and learn how your state measures up on indicators related to good health, strong families, and positive early learning experiences.*

*The State of Babies Yearbook provides policymakers and advocates the information they need to advance national and state policies to improve the lives of babies and toddlers.*

STATE LEVEL – Governor Newsom appointed Dr. Nadine Burke Harris as California’s first Surgeon General. Newsom said in a news release that Dr. Nadine Burke Harris will focus on combating the root causes of serious health conditions and use her office to reach young families across the state. Burke Harris is founder and chief executive of the Center for Youth Wellness in San Francisco, which aims to improve the health of children exposed to toxic stress and trauma early in life.

Kris Perry was sworn in as Deputy Secretary of the California Health and Human Services Agency for Early Childhood Development and Senior Advisor to the Governor on Implementation of Early Childhood Development Initiatives. Kris will help lead efforts to implement Governor Newsom’s early childhood policy agenda, one of the key components of his “California for All” agenda.

The Governor’s California for All budget proposal includes more than \$2.7 billion in funding that could directly advance First 5’s policy agenda. First 5 Association’s review of the budget is **attached**.

STATE FIRST 5 COMMISSION – First 5 CA held a strategic planning retreat on January 23<sup>rd</sup>. The draft plan can be found at [this link](#) on their website. The First 5 Lake Commission will want to consider changes that are being made to the statewide strategic plan as it proceeds with the revision of its 2019-2024 plan. F5CA also released updated income projections for the next five years which I will incorporate into the next iteration of First 5 Lake’s long-range financial plan for review and approval at our next meeting.

FIRST 5 ASSOCIATION – On February 4<sup>th</sup>, First 5 Association of California and Children’s Data Network (CDN) launched a new tool to help service providers, policymakers, and government agencies more effectively support children and families and direct resources where they are needed most. The California Strong Start Index uses information collected at birth to understand the conditions into which California’s babies are born in a given neighborhood, county, or region. The index focuses on resources that promote resilience and shows wide variability in access to these resources among the half a million babies born in California each year. Visit [strongstartindex.org](http://strongstartindex.org) to see how babies are faring by zip code in Lake County and how you can use the Strong Start Index to advocate for children and families.

GRANT ACTIVITY UPDATES: *(These are Q2 highlights, and not intended to convey the full scope of the work being accomplished by each grantee.)*

AmeriCorps – As of the end of Q2, there were 6 AmeriCorps members serving 275 students in preschool settings. During Q2, AmeriCorps members focused on lessons pertaining to social emotional skills, health and literacy. They redesigned the structure of the lessons to offer 90+ minutes of weekly lessons connecting back to literacy activities. With the help of the First 5 evaluator, they were able to develop a meaningful assessment instrument appropriate to preschool children to determine how well students are retaining information and can practice the concepts discussed in the lessons. Recruitment has been challenging. There are many applicants, but few who are qualified.

Q2 Finance Report: Program expenses for the first half of the year were \$39,687. This is 22.8% of their First 5 budget for the year. With half of the year remaining, AmeriCorps still has 77.2% of their budget left to spend.

**Bloom** – Bloom staff participated in Heroes of Health and Safety in October to raise awareness of the program. Facebooks posts continued through Q2 as well as the related activities. December had the highest number of participants (66) in the monthly activity which was to share a favorite family tradition. Bloom staff gave a presentation on developmental milestones for Early Head Start parents. Staff would like to have more time in-person with families. Work continues toward revising the Bloom into Kindergarten booklets and finding the best way to fund the printing and distribute the booklets widely. Q2 Stats: 112 total visitors to the Bloom website in Q2 (89 new), 366 total followers of Bloom’s Facebook page, 100 Bloom into Kindergarten booklets distributed.

Q2 Finance Report: Program expenses for the first half of the year were \$15,574. This is 36% of their First 5 budget for the year. With half the year remaining, Bloom still has 64% of their budget left to spend.

**ESBA Early Learning Centers** – The Legacy playroom moved in late December to a new location with triple the space. The new playroom opened in mid-January. Collaboration with other service providers increased in Q2 with AAI starting a monthly small group playtime with three staff and their clients and a CWS caseworker using the ELC for parent reunification visits to foster quality play time. Two interns completed their service this quarter. The ELC received used children’s toys this quarter and many were passed on to other families. Two repeat families were the recipients of small kitchens that were not needed at the centers. A major barrier remains in opening the Legacy playroom for an additional day or half day with only existing staff. There is a possibility of opening for two morning sessions each month on Fridays. Q2 Stats: 173 total number of children 0-5 served through playrooms (51 new), 134 parents and 26 other family members served (62 new), 33 ASQs distributed with 4 returned.

Q2 Finance Report: Spending is 9% overbudget mid-year.

**ESBA ChildFind Healthline** – Staff provided infant massage training at RCS’s The NEST, manned a booth at the Heroes of Health and Safety Fair, presented regularly at Safe Sleep classes at both SLH and AH hospitals, provided and scored ASQs for Learning House PreK and LCTHC pediatrics and provided ASQ follow-up presentations for Early Head Start and foster agency staff. Q2 Stats: 35 calls to the HealthLine, 51 total children served directly from HealthLine calls, 15 people received technical assistance related to 0-5 development, 47 ASQs distributed via the HealthLine (43 returned), 20 children identified as needing additional support or referrals.

Q2 Finance Report: Spending is on track.

**Imagination Library** – Staff attended Heroes of Health and Safety to sign-up parents for the program. The program is now serving 61% of the Lake County’s eligible population. Staff have contacted St. Helena hospital to engage their staff in registering Lake County babies born there in an effort to capture more of the babies born out of county. Q2 Stats: 212 new registrations, 2,281 average total number of participants per month.

Q2 Finance Report: Program expenses for the first half of the year were \$34,330. This is 42% of their First 5 budget for the year. With half the year remaining, IL still has 58% of their budget left to spend.

**IMPACT** – QRIS Coaches are currently serving 23 IMPACT sites around the county. Staff are scheduling more community presentations to help providers and parents understand the program.

Q2 Finance Report: Program expenses for the first half of the year were \$83,010. This is 34% of their First 5 budget for the year. With half the year remaining, IMPACT still has 66% of their budget left to spend.

**Mother-Wise** - The Scotts Valley Tribe of Pomo Indians has offered to be the fiscal agent for the program at no cost until 501(c)3 status is finalized. Staff have started the paperwork and the process for nonprofit status and are forming a committee to assist. The goal is to have good momentum with the 501(c)s before the February First 5 meeting.

Q2 Finance Report: Program expenses for the first half of the year were \$38,460. This is 34% of their combined First 5 and DBH budgets for the year. With half the year remaining, MW still has 66% of their budget left to spend.

**Nurturing Families** – Facilitators launched a 7-week ABCs class in Q2 at Lucerne Elementary School. This is the first time this class has been offered in Lucerne and 4 parents completed the curriculum. Two community classes were held at Meadowbrook Head Start and the Learning House. The Meadowbrook class led to enough interest to begin a new 7-week ABCs class beginning in January. The Learning House class led to a request for a third session in February and additional training for staff on ACEs. A 3-day facilitator training was held in October with 11 new facilitators receiving training. A new drop-in class started in December from noon-1:30pm at Lake Family Resource Center’s Clearlake office. Q2 Stats: 6 parents and 6 children received intensive classes, 15 parents and 21 children received community classes, 4 parents and 7 children received drop-in services

Q2 Finance Report: Program expenses for the first half of the year were \$24,525. This is 44% of their First 5 budget for the year. With half the year remaining, NF has 56% of their budget left to spend.

**Oral Health Project** – Dental screenings were completed at LLES, LL PreK, LES, Lakeport PreK, and Kelseyville PreK. Students received an oral health lesson prior to screening to help prepare them. Parents participating in the Lucerne Nurturing Parenting class also received an oral health lesson. Healthy Start staff participated at Heroes of Health and Safety and distributed oral health information, toothbrushes, floss and referrals to local dental clinics for screenings and fluoride varnishes. Due to school closures in November, many scheduled screening dates had to be rescheduled multiple times. Stats: 395 children 0-5 received dental screenings and oral health lessons, 76 of those children were identified as having baby bottle tooth decay and 117 had untreated dental problems, 652 school-age children received dental screenings with only 57 found to be cavity-free, 3 parents (with 4 children 0-5) were assisted in completing health/dental insurance applications, and 3 children (0-5) received transportation assistance to dental appointments.

Q2 Finance Report: Program expenses for the first half of the year were \$39,393. This is 63% of their First 5 budget for the year. With half the year remaining, OH has 37% of their budget left to spend.

**Transportation Mini-Grants** – Adventist Health issued \$675 in gas vouchers and \$17.50 in bus passes serving 22 parents during Q2. These are used for travel to and from OB education classes and travel out of county for high risk OB patients. Postpartum group attendance has increased. AH is now recruiting for a new OB or certified Nurse Midwife. The AH travel fund Easter Seals Bay

Area served 16 families making a total of 31 trips in Q2 for a total of \$885. Sutter Hospital in Santa Rosa now contacts ESBA for families at their NICU who need assistance with travel.

**ADMINISTRATION**

Financial Statements – Financial reports for December submitted separately.



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Governor Newsom's "California for All" budget proposal includes more than \$2.7 billion in funding that will directly advance First 5's policy agenda, and additional aligned funding that will affect our communities, and support health and education systems.

Below are key proposals within the \$2.7 billion funding that will impact California's youngest residents and their families.

### **Family Resilience**

A signature component of the Governor's budget is the expansion of the state's Earned Income Tax Credit, renamed the **Working Families Tax Credit**. An important anti-poverty measure, the budget envisions doubling the state's investment in the program to \$1 billion, expanding eligibility to an additional 400,000 families, and converting the credit to a monthly benefit to better meet the needs of working families.

In addition, the budget proposes \$347.6 million to further increase the size of the state's **California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) cash grants**, eventually increasing to \$455.5M annually. These increases will begin October 1, 2019 and ensure no child in a family receiving cash aid from the state lives in deep poverty.

The budget also proposes to expand funding for **home visiting services**, directing an additional \$78.9 million to expand and make permanent the CalWORKs Home Visiting Initiative (HVI) created in the 2018-19 budget and \$23 million to double the federally-funded Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program operated by the California Department of Public Health.

Acknowledging the critical role of parents in child development, the budget proposal sets forward an ambitious goal that every newborn or newly adopted baby in California can be cared for by a parent or family member for the first six months. Currently, family leave protections only provide 6 weeks of paid leave and are applicable to employees working for organizations which employ 25 or more staff. The Administration will convene a **Paid Family Leave** taskforce to explore options to achieve this goal.

Finally, the budget allocates \$50M in one-time funding to establish **child savings accounts** in partnership with First 5s, local governments, and philanthropy to ensure families have the opportunity to start building assets for their children from birth. We will be working with First 5 CA and First 5s across the state to explore this proposal further.

### **Child Health**

Acknowledging the importance of early identification and intervention, the Governor's budget includes \$105 million to support child and family health screenings.

With the goal of better connecting families and young children to appropriate early intervention services, the Governor proposes \$45 million in state and federal funding to ensure all families on Medi-Cal receive **Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)** screens. The state Department of Health Care Services will establish a working group to build the screening tools and practice guidelines for young children, and we expect engage with state leaders to further refine the proposal.

The budget also includes \$60 million in state and federal funding to increase **developmental screening** rates for young children. Aligned with our advocacy for AB 11 in 2018, the budget outlines the American Academy of Pediatrics' recommendations for developmental screening.

On a debrief call about the budget, Jennifer Kent, director of DHCS, said they will add a new code for trauma screenings, since it's not reimbursed currently, and provide more guidance to providers on codes for developmental screening. DHCS hasn't yet considered the effect on referrals/intervention, but "that may come up in the May Revise once we know what the uptake looks like," she said. First 5 Association is excited to work with the administration on this, drawing upon our AB 11 background and experience.

Finally, building upon expansion of the **Black Infant Health** program last year, the budget provides an additional \$7.5 million to further address disparities in infant and maternal mortality for African American women.

### **Early Learning**

Building upon progress made over the past three years to expand access to early care and education, the Governor's budget invests significant resources to strengthen the state's early learning system.

The proposal allocates \$750 million in one-time funding directed toward local education agencies to remove barriers to **full school-day, full school-year kindergarten**, and an additional \$500 million in one-time funding to improve child care infrastructure, including support for **professional development and facilities**. In addition, the California State University system would receive \$247 million in one-time funding which could be used to expand child care facilities for students with young children.

Ongoing funding is proposed to ensure all children eligible for the **California State Preschool Program (CSPP)** have access to services. \$125 million would provide an additional 180,000 full-day, full-year spaces in 2019-20, increasing to 200,000 students by 2022. In addition to funding, the budget envisions changing policy to remove barriers to access by eliminating the current requirement that parents show proof of employment or enrollment in higher education to receive access to full-day programs.

Despite these significant and historic investments, the Governor acknowledges that there will still be significant gaps in the state's early learning system, especially access to infant and toddler care, and proposes allocating \$10 million to develop, in partnership with the State Board of Education, Department

of Finance, and Department of Social Services, a **roadmap toward universal preschool and quality, affordable subsidized child care in California.**

First 5 LA, in partnership with First 5 California, will continue to fund and coordinate the California Early Care and Education Coalition to influence the state's early learning spending plan and policy changes.

### **Community Priorities and Aligned Systems Funding**

In addition to these proposals specifically focused on early childhood and family support services, the budget includes significant funding plans to address community needs and strengthen our health and education systems. A few examples of proposals which will advance regional goals include:

- Funding to combat homelessness and accelerate the availability of affordable housing, including \$500 million in one-time funds to build emergency shelters and permanent supportive housing, and accelerated payments from the \$2 billion "No Place Like Home" initiative. A portion of one-time funds will be set-aside for housing projects in the 11 largest cities in California.
- An additional \$2 billion for the Local Control Funding Formula and \$576 million for expanded special education services provided by local education agencies, among other adjustments to TK-14 education funding.
- Continued funding for health provider rate increases, including more than \$1 billion in Proposition 56 funding (tobacco tax increase approved by voters in 2016). At least \$50 million in additional funding will be made available for Medi-Cal family planning services, and additional funds will be available for mental health provider training, whole person care pilots, and additional health systems incentives which could be modified to include early childhood priorities.
- Continued funding for state immigration legal services, including \$25 million in new, ongoing funding to develop an immigration rapid response fund at the state Department of Social Services. The fund would support community based and other non-profit organizations addressing emergency immigration needs in California.
- An additional \$50 million for 2020 census activities, bringing the total state investment to \$140.3 million.