



AGENDA ITEM: 8
DATE OF MEETING: July 15, 2009
ACTION: X
INFORMATION:

PROJECT LEGACY

SUMMARY OF REQUEST

First 5 California staff requests Commission approval to streamline the Project Legacy process (see Exhibit 1). The proposed process expedites the development of program criteria, hereinafter referred to as program goals, which will guide First 5 California's policy and fiscal program decisions.

BACKGROUND

The State Commission adopted First 5 California's 2008 Strategic Plan on September 29, 2007. The Strategic Plan includes an objective to:

Convene a First 5 California legacy programs assessment workgroup to develop criteria for assessing the ongoing viability of programs implemented prior to January 1, 2008 (Objective 2.1.1).

At its meeting on September 18, 2008, the State Commission approved the original Project Legacy process that included convening a workgroup to develop goals for all First 5 California programs. Also approved at that meeting were overall workgroup membership categories. However, due to the recent political environment, the Program Committee approved a staff recommendation to postpone full implementation of Project Legacy until after May 2009.

It is essential at this time for First 5 California to quickly develop program goals so that the Commission can make specific and targeted funding decisions during the state's current economic crisis. This crisis impacts numerous parents and young children and many of their critical support services are either being cut or threatened. First 5 California has an opportunity to develop and support additional evidence-based programs that impact desired outcomes and to help ameliorate the adverse impact of those cuts. In addition, the federal government has created opportunities for expanding and improving early learning through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The streamlined Project Legacy process will allow First 5 California to encourage and support agencies in applying for those funds, thereby potentially bringing additional federal funds into our state.

To expedite the development of program goals, First 5 California staff recommends that the Commission approve the implementation of a modified and streamlined process for Project Legacy that will meet the same objectives as the initial lengthy process, but within an accelerated timeline.

As proposed, First 5 California staff would convene a multi-day meeting with a panel of 10 to 13 experts in the fields of health, child development, education, and family interventions as well as individuals with deep knowledge of California's populations. The expert panel would be charged with recommending program goals. These recommendations would then be shared with county commission representatives, program administrators, advocates, and other stakeholders to receive their feedback and input. This input would be obtained at three forums throughout California (North, Central, and South). Following these regional input sessions, First 5 California staff would finalize the program goals and present them to the Commission for formal adoption.

DISCUSSION

The proposed streamlined Project Legacy process will result in specific measureable program goals that will enhance decision-making and accountability while improving outcomes for children 0-5. The streamlined process will continue to focus on building a legacy for First 5 California's future and impacts the same Strategic Plan Objectives as the initial process, in addition to Objective 2.1.1 cited above:

1. Convene a First 5 California legacy programs assessment workgroup to develop criteria for improving the programs implemented prior to January 1, 2008 (Objective 2.1.2).
2. Research and recommend innovative pilot projects, such as increasing quality preschool spaces, Children's Zones, Educare sites, and school-based health centers (Objective 2.2.1).
3. Develop implementation models for viable pilot programs (Objective 2.2.2).
4. Issue an annual report that includes trends, program outcomes, and policy recommendations (Objective 4.3.3).
5. Identify culturally appropriate best practices for assessing the needs of children 0 to 5 (Objective 4.2.1).
6. Identify culturally appropriate best practices for impacting the needs of children 0 to 5 (Objective 4.2.2).
7. Initiate a longitudinal study of First 5 California-funded programs to evaluate the impact of those programs on the well-being of children (Objective 4.2.3).

Exhibit 2, "Initial and Streamlined Project Legacy Process," summarizes the primary changes between the two processes. Initially, it was anticipated that the workgroup would complete its recommendations by September 25, 2009; the streamlined process strives to reach the same objective by August 2009. The number of experts and stakeholders participating in the workgroup significantly decreases under the proposed

process, as does the number of meetings. Initially, three meetings were scheduled; it is envisioned that one multi-day meeting will be conducted during July - August 2009. In addition, invitations to attend and participate in the regional input meetings will be sent to those individuals and organizations that were originally considered for workgroup participation. Collaboration and consultation with experts, such as the Ounce of Prevention Fund and members of the National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, will continuously guide the process. Even though the original workgroup process would have been more open-ended, discussions in this proposed streamlined process will be framed and guided by scientific research.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the First 5 California Commission approve the Streamlined Project Legacy process presented in Exhibit 1 for the reasons that: 1) keeps and/or accelerates the original timeline, 2) continues to meet the Strategic Plan objectives, and 3) does not impose additional costs.

FISCAL IMPACT

This agenda item does not request any new funding.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE REVIEW

On two separate occasions, staff consulted with the Commission's Program Committee, consisting of Commissioners Munger and Dartis, first to discuss the possibility of pursuing a streamlined process, and then to review the agenda item documents. First, the Program Committee members individually discussed the streamlined Project Legacy process on May 22 (Commissioner Dartis) and on June 4 (Commissioner Munger). The Program Committee members were presented with four different options for moving forward with Project Legacy. They asked staff to pursue a streamlined process that used staff expertise, a small expert group, and three regional stakeholder input meetings. They also requested that staff bring an action item back to the July Commission meeting that incorporated their direction for a streamlined process.

Second, on June 29, the Program Committee reviewed drafts of "Agenda Item 8 - Streamlined Project Legacy Process," Exhibit 1, "Streamlined First 5 California Project Legacy," and Exhibit 2, "Initial and Streamlined Project Legacy Process." The Commissioners provided suggestions, which have been incorporated into the final versions of these documents.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Description of Alternative 1

Reactivate the initial Project Legacy process.

Pros

- Maintains continuity with all aspects of originally approved plan

Cons

- Process too lengthy given loss of time
- More expensive than streamlined process

Description of Alternative 2

Replace the workgroup process with a process exclusively driven by First 5 California staff.

Pros

- Less costly than streamlined process
- Faster than original process

Cons

- Less inclusive than original process
- Lack of benefits from nationally recognized experts in the field

EXHIBITS

- 1) Streamlined First 5 California Project Legacy
- 2) Initial and Streamlined Project Legacy Process

First 5 California Project Legacy - Streamlined Project Legacy Description

First 5 California's Vision

"All children in California enter school ready to achieve their greatest potential." (2008 Strategic Plan)

Accomplishing this vision requires an ongoing commitment to ensure that children are born healthy, raised in nurturing homes, and ready for school. This commitment has been at the heart of the work of both First 5 California and First 5 county commissions in communities large and small across our state.

The work done over the past 10 years has helped countless youngsters grow toward their potential. This is our opportunity to learn from past efforts and do even more for our state's children in the next 10 years. This is where Project Legacy will contribute by pooling collective wisdom, lessons, and research.

What is Project Legacy?

First 5 California's Project Legacy will help First 5 California create its "Roadmap to the Future" by establishing a distinctive set of programs for children 0 to 5 and their families: two to three Signature Programs and additional innovative Pilot Projects. Project Legacy will result in general funding goals and specific measurable program goals that will enhance decision making and accountability while improving outcomes for children 0 to 5. First 5 California envisions applying the program goals to guide future funding decisions.

Purpose of Project Legacy

The purpose is to provide guidance and direction to First 5 California commissioners and staff in determining the programs to support, develop, and/or fund.

Why now?

It has been 10 years since the passage of Proposition 10. It is a time to acknowledge and celebrate our successes as well as learn from the past. It is time to look ahead and create our "Roadmap to the Future."

First 5 California currently faces two challenges that are the impetus for Project Legacy:

- Declining revenues. Proposition 10 funds, tied to the Tobacco Tax, are declining. Although that decline signals the hopeful trend of less tobacco use, it also signals a future deficit if First 5 California continues to fund programs at current levels.
- Desire to Strengthen Continuous Quality Improvement: Instead of evaluating programs individually, First 5 California seeks to develop programs that include a comprehensive evaluation cycle to continually improve service delivery and better demonstrate outcomes.

What are the impacts of these challenges?	Taken together, these challenges have two significant impacts: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. In the aggregate, funding for current First 5 California programs will diminish, and programs in their current configuration will likely need to be discontinued.2. The First 5 California Commission will set clear funding priorities for future Signature Programs and Pilot Projects.
What will happen to the programs currently funded by First 5 California?	Project Legacy's goals may be consistent with aspects or components of current programs and First 5 California may incorporate some of those components into future Signature Programs or Pilot Projects. No existing First 5 California program can continue in its current configuration. That is why the Legacy Workgroup's efforts in identifying the goals are so critical to the success of Project Legacy.
Why develop program goals?	These program goals are necessary to assist First 5 California in meeting its mandate of promoting, supporting, and improving the early development of children, prenatal to five years of age, by the coordination and integration of comprehensive programs emphasizing community awareness, education, nurturing, child care, social services, health care, and research.
What are the areas of emphasis?	These efforts will impact children by improving: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Family functioning▪ Child health, including tobacco cessation▪ Child development▪ Systems of care
What assumptions and primary funding goals will guide the work of Project Legacy?	Project Legacy will reflect First 5 California's Mission and Guiding Principles, as established by the Commission in September, 2007 (See Attachment A). Each of Project Legacy's Signature Programs and Pilot Projects will also: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Address School Readiness gap2. Emphasize comprehensive, collaborative, and integrated programs and services.3. Reflect on evidence-based and promising practices.4. Leverage lessons learned from past First 5 California programs.5. Promote collaboration with public and private partners building on existing systems to leverage resources and support.6. Include an evaluation component that assesses outcomes to support sustainability.7. Include a continual program improvement process.8. Maximize resources and impact to leverage public support of policy development.9. Promote systemic change.10. Incorporate incentives to improve access and quality, when appropriate

11. Secure funding commitments for multiple years
12. Incorporate a competitive process into the acquisition of funds to ensure only the best proposals are approved

Program goals consistent with First 5 California's vision

The program goals must be consistent with First 5 California's vision, "*All children in California enter school ready to achieve their greatest potential,*" and lead First 5 California toward attaining this vision.

Research to support need for program goals

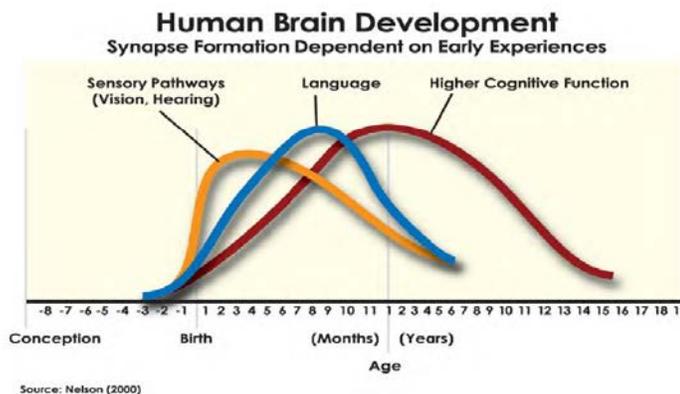
In defining program goals, it is important to capitalize on current research findings, especially those relating to brain development and program effectiveness factors. In doing so, First 5 California can better maximize its resources by developing programs that have the greatest potential of positively impacting children and families.

Brain research findings

Scientific research findings on the developing brain clearly support quality programs and early intervention for young children. "*The science of early brain development can inform investments in early childhood. These basic concepts, established over decades of neuroscience and behavioral research, help illustrate why child development – particularly from birth to five years – is a foundation for a prosperous and sustainable society.*"¹

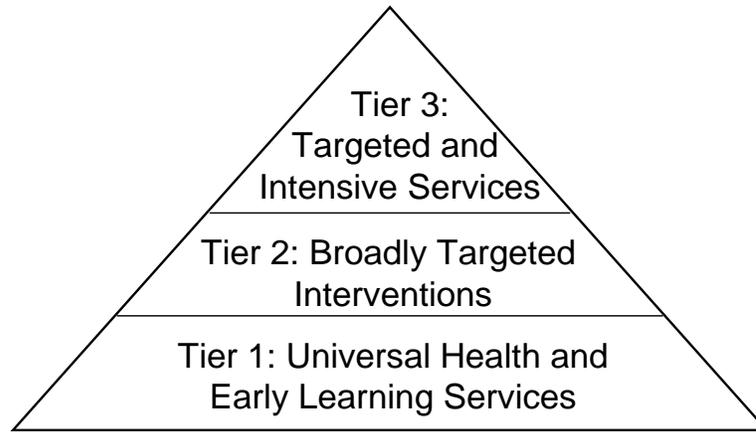
Human brain development

The chart below shows the sequence of brain development in a child's early years. Synapse formation for sensory pathways, language acquisition, and higher cognitive functioning peaks before a child's fifth birthday. This finding reinforces that early experiences shape brain development that lead either to a strong or weak foundation for the child's learning, health, and behavior.



Research points toward a 3-tiered approach to ensure healthy development

First 5 California seeks to impact systemwide change to ensure all children receive the support they need to achieve their greatest potential. As a result of First 5 California's limited resources, it is important to use a model that most effectively impacts the healthy development of children. The model below, from the Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University, reflects a science-based, 3-tiered approach that significantly impacts school readiness and ensures healthy development. It is based primarily on evaluation research, with a nod to the biology of toxic stress (multiple risk factors) and brain architecture.²



Tier 1

Focuses on providing basic health and early learning³ services to all children to help build and sustain strong brains and bodies.

Tier 2

Broadly targets interventions for children in poverty (e.g., income supports and early enrichment).

Tier 3

Requires narrowly targeted, specialized services for children experiencing toxic stress (multiple risk factors). These factors include severe poverty, neglect, abuse, parental substance abuse or mental illness, maternal depression, and exposures to violence that can damage the developing brain's architecture leading to disrupted circuits and a weakened foundation for future learning and health.

Program goals to support the 3-tiered model

First 5 California will modify the Project Legacy process to establish program goals for each tier of the 3-tiered model. Once adopted by the First 5 California Commission, these program goals will serve as a framework in guiding future First 5 California funding and programs.

Proposed Streamlined Project Legacy process

To develop the program goals, First 5 California proposes to modify its original process by accelerating the procedures. First 5 California will convene a panel of 10 to 13 experts in the fields of health, child development, education, and family interventions. The expert group will be charged with recommending program goals for each tier. These recommendations will then be shared with county commission representatives, program administrators/operators, advocates, and other interested parties to receive their input. This will be done at three forums throughout California (North, Central, and South). Following these sessions, First 5 California staff will finalize the goals and present them to the First 5 California Commission for adoption.

Timeline for proposed streamlined process

The streamlined Project Legacy timeline and process includes:

- July 15, 2009 - Seek First 5 California Commission approval for the streamlined Project Legacy process
- July - August 2009 – Convene expert panel to develop proposed program goals
- August - September – Hold three public input forums
- September 2009 – Finalize proposed program goals
- October 21, 2009 - Seek First 5 California Commission approval of the proposed program goals

¹ *The Science of Early Childhood Development*, (2007) National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University, <http://www.developingchild.net>

² Magnuson, Yoshikawa, Brook-Gunn. (June 2008) *What Research Tells Us About Program Effectiveness in the First Five Years*. National Symposium on Early Childhood Science and Policy. Center on the Developing Child. Harvard University.

³ “Early learning” is a term used to describe public and private services for children birth to five, including Early Head Start, Head Start, state preschool and child care (center based and family/home care).

Attachment A Project Legacy Definitions

SIGNATURE PROGRAM

In the future and for the purposes of this project, a “Signature Program” is a long-term, evidence-based, First 5 California-sponsored program that allows First 5 California to support children ages 0 to 5 and their families so children can maximize their potential. In addition, a Signature Program allows First 5 California to achieve its mission.

PILOT PROJECT

In the future and for the purposes of this project, a “Pilot Project” is a limited-term, experimental, First 5 California-sponsored project designed to impact a specific target population through promising practices.

EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE

An “evidence-based practice” is a service delivery process that repeatedly and consistently demonstrates desirable outcomes through application of scientific research methods. The scientific method and resulting outcomes should consider social and economic differences in study participants. Evidence-based practices are frequently referred to as “best practices.”

PROMISING PRACTICE

A “promising practice” is a service delivery process that demonstrates desirable outcomes. These practices may be too new to demonstrate repeated and/or consistent outcomes. This may include adaptations of evidence-based practices.

PROGRAM GOALS

The “program goals” developed by the Legacy Workgroup are the measureable standards or guidelines used to make decisions about program design.

IMPROVE FAMILY FUNCTIONING

Family functioning includes behavioral and mental health services, basic family needs, targeted intensive parent support services, and general parenting classes.

IMPROVE CHILD HEALTH

Child health includes services such as tobacco cessation education and treatment, breastfeeding assistance, nutrition, fitness, health education, health access, home visitation for newborns, oral health, prenatal care, primary care services, safety education and injury prevention, and specialty medical services.

IMPROVE CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Child development includes services and programs such as infant/toddler care and preschools, comprehensive screening and assessments, early education provider programs, and family literacy.

IMPROVE SYSTEMS OF CARE

Systems of care includes activities such as school readiness for children, service outreach, planning, support and program management, provider capacity building, training and support, and community strengthening efforts.

Attachment B

First 5 California Strategic Plan Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles

Adopted September 2007

Vision

All children in California enter school ready to achieve their greatest potential.

Mission

By 2012, be recognized as California's unequivocal voice for children 0 – 5 to ensure greater equity in their readiness for school.

Guiding Principles

Child Centered:

Focus all programs and activities on the needs of California's children.

Family focus:

Support families as children's primary caregivers and first teachers.

Diversity:

Ensure that families from all of California's diverse populations connect to services needed to succeed.

Public Support:

Build a foundation of support for a comprehensive, integrated, and holistic early childhood development system.

Quality Standards:

Incorporate the highest quality, evidence-based standards when assessing program effectiveness.

Partnerships and Leveraging:

Promote collaboration with public and private partners, building on existing systems.

**Attachment C
 Project Legacy Roadmap**

STEP	TASK
1*	Identify Project Legacy process. This includes the discussion and First 5 California Commission adoption of the First 5 California Project Legacy Description and the Project Legacy Workgroup Membership Categories.
2	Develop educational materials for Legacy Expert Panel. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Needs Assessment Report, identifying gaps in services where First 5 California can have the biggest impact. ▪ Initial lessons learned from the past 10 years of First 5 California programs.
3	Organize Legacy Expert Panel.
4	Convene Expert Panel to identify measurable program goals for Signature Programs and Pilot Projects.
5	Before finalizing the program goals the First 5 California staff will consider public comments obtained from 3 regional input forums in Northern, Southern and Central California.
6	Present Project Legacy Program goals to First 5 California Commission.
7	Apply program goals to develop Signature Programs and Pilot Projects.
8	Present detailed Signature Programs and Pilot Projects to First 5 California Commission for funding.
9	Release funding for Signature Programs and Pilot Projects.
10	Monitor and evaluate Signature Programs and Pilot Projects to glean lessons learned.

*Indicates need for First 5 California Commission approval.

Initial and Streamlined Project Legacy Process

INITIAL	STREAMLINED
40-members	10 -13 members
Three workgroup meetings: July 2009 September 2009 October 2009	One expert panel meeting: July - August 2009
Public input - November 2009	Three public input forums: August - September 2009
Workgroup meeting – December 2009	See footnote*
Present Commission with criteria (program goals) – January 2010	Present Commission with criteria (program goals) – October 2009

* While the workgroup will not convene after the public input meetings, collaboration and consultation with national experts such as the Ounce of Prevention Fund and members of the National Scientific Council on the Developing Child will continuously guide the process.